



Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

14-0057-S3 and 14-0057-S7

1 message

Liz Amsden <LizAmsden@hotmail.com>

Tue, Mar 1, 2016 at 1:26 PM

To: sharon.dickinson@lacity.org

Hi Sharon

I have been advised that PLUM is discussing amending the Site Plan Review Ordinance to raise the threshold above 50 units to an currently undefined number and to establish an administrative review process for these projects that currently require one.

With the current lack of affordable housing, complaints about gentrification, developers avoiding Neighborhood Council input, etc. we would like to see MORE control over multi-unit construction and more neighborhood input and that MUST be fully open to the public and the NC system so there can be input from all concerned.

Moving to an administrative process appears to be a way to avoid the transparency and vigorous oversight that is necessary to keep the City and its government answerable to the people.

I am also strongly opposed to any expediting of EIRs. In my experience, that is short hand for pay-offs to allow developers to get around issues that are important to the people but will cost them in time and money. We the people elect our officials to protect neighborhood interests, not those of developers.

An EIR should give them guidelines and they can then come up with smart ways of addressing these concerns. If they spent more time and money working with the rules instead of trying to buck the system, they would not run into the very problems they are trying to avoid. And save themselves the money they would have to pay to have the project EIR expedited.

Sincerely,

Liz Amsden
5158 Almaden Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90042



Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

URGENT - PLUM Agenda items 14-0057 S3 and 14-0057-S7

1 message

Janet Carper <janet.carper12@gmail.com>

Tue, Mar 1, 2016 at 1:37 PM

To: Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

Cc: councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org, councilmember.englander@lacity.org, councilmember.huizar@lacity.org, councilmember.fuentes@lacity.org, councilmember.harris-dawson@lacity.org, Martin Schlageter <Martin.Schlageter@lacity.org>

I respectfully submit the following for public comment on PLUM Agenda items 14-0057 S3 and 14-0057-S7:

14-0057 S3 This item clearly is seeking carte blanche for the City and Developers to do whatever they want, at the exclusion of proper process and public input, as evidenced, for instance by the fact that it does not even provide what the new number of units would be, while wanting to lift it from the current 50-units. Currently, a Site Plan Review is required on projects 50 units or more. It involves a findings/determinations public process. If eliminated these projects would be essentially by-right and approved internally at the Planning Dept.

I find this, frankly, insulting and egregiously trying to encode violating public interest. This does not serve urban planning. This is clearly to allow unbridled, developer-driven, density-promoting, rampant over-scale building. Zev Yaroslavsky said a million new units could be built in LA with no zone changes. The only urgency behind foisting such over-scale development is for money. To want to eschew public input and hide what is being planned and allowed—even more than shamelessly already happens—and to want to lift the existing 50-unit number flies in the face of proper urban planning and must not be allowed.

Thank you.

14-0057-S7 This measure for "expedited" processing of new EIRs is symptomatic of a builder/money driven system that is spinning out of control, at the public expense. Voters are being shunted out of the process which is entirely unacceptable. To weaken the CEQA system to satisfy builder greed is outrageous and must not be allowed.

Weakening the process by forcing a timeline potentially as fast as 3 months (when there is no housing "crisis," just developer lust and huge sums of developer money flowing freely to City Hall) instead of the normal 12 - 18 months is a violation of the public trust City Hall is supposed to uphold since it would obviously, be a violation of CEQA scoping and hearings requirements. This would be the very least of the damage from such an indulgence by elected officials in favor of unbridled development and must not be allowed.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Janet Carper

EAST SUNSET HILLSIDE ASSOCIATION

P O BOX 26048 LOS ANGELES, CA 90026

March 1, 2016

PLEASE INCLUDE IN THE
ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD

Los Angeles City Council
Planning and Land Use Committee
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Council File 14-0057-S3 (Site Plan Review Amendment) and
Council File 14-0057-S7 (Expedited Processing for EIR Review)

Dear Chair Huizar and Honorable Members of the PLUM Committee:

We encourage the Planning and Land Use Committee to stop the above referenced Motions in their tracks. Both proposals are a waste of time and Department resources. Both disingenuously refer to the supposed "housing crisis" as the primary rationale for stripping the public of its ability to participate in the land use decision-making process. They both falsely use "the production of affordable housing" as the vehicle to move forward two proposals that are very unlikely to have any measurable affect on affordable housing production. Both of these proposals are designed to eliminate neighborhood input and narrow the opportunities to contest the aspects of project proposals that are incongruent with neighborhood character and infrastructure limitation.

The Site Plan Review Amendment proposal is championed by Councilmember O'Farrell references vague concepts of fast-tracking projects currently requiring SPR if they "meet design guidelines" and "reach local affordability goals." However, both criteria are undefined, leading us to believe that this will be an across-the-board elimination of SPR for all projects—especially since no alternate threshold has been proposed. SPR protects our neighborhoods with the following stipulations:

SITE PLAN REVIEW FINDINGS:

A Site Plan Review determination requires the decision-maker to make findings relative to the project request. The applicant must assist the decision-maker by attaching information supporting the following findings:

1. That the project is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan, applicable community plan, and any application specific plan.
2. That the project consists of an arrangement of buildings and structures (including height, bulk and setbacks), off-street parking facilities, loading areas, lighting, landscaping, trash collection, and other such pertinent improvements, that is or will be compatible with existing and future development on adjacent properties and neighboring properties.
3. That any residential project provides recreational and service amenities to improve habitability for its residents and minimize impacts on neighboring properties.

Please, take a look at the above required findings -- Are they really so, so bad? You want to eliminate recreational amenities, improved habitability, neighborhood compatibility, etc.? This makes no sense, except when one considers the measurable contributions made by developers to campaign funds.

Please don't sell us out! SPR hasn't stopped development, it only provides an opportunity for better projects to emerge out of the public input process. This is an unnecessary proposal. Affordable housing projects are in no way hindered by SPR.

Regarding the proposal to further expedite projects requiring a new EIR, you should NOT move forward with this report and review process. On its face, it would not comply with the CEQA-mandated scoping and hearings process. You can't force CEQA into the EPS timeline, regardless of how inconvenient the developers might consider that process. In fact, reliance on outside contractors to produce and produce findings on EIRs in the City's pipeline would likely create a conflict of interest and a legal vulnerability that would ultimately upend what you are attempting to achieve with this proposal.

Again, Councilmember Cedillo has wedged in a reference that this somehow aimed to increase "affordable" housing. However, of the 23,700 units the Motion references in its text, we never get to know how many of those are actual affordable units that will be available ONLY to those who meet low income requirements. Most affordable housing projects, because they are funded with state and federal dollars don't ask for (or want to pay for the up-charge of) Expedited Processing. The project timeline for these truly affordable housing projects is long and drawn out because of the funding process. EPS is moot, as is the basis of the argument for this misguided and deceptive Motion.

Sadly, both of these proposals speak more about how our elected officials spend much time and energy on efforts to marginalize the input of the citizenry while simultaneously spending resources to facilitate unnecessary luxury housing development. If both of these Motions were exclusively limited to 100% affordable housing projects, we would be the first to applaud them. But, they are not.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Deines, on behalf of
East Sunset Hillside Association