

Coalition Of Squeaky Wheels



March 1, 2016

Los Angeles City Council
Planning and Land Use Committee

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

Dear Chair Hussar and Honorable Members of the PLUM Committee:

The current shortage in housing in Los Angeles can be attributed to a serious lack of supply combined with a high level of demand. Rising rents is evidence to signal that more households would like to live in the area than there is housing to accommodate them. As the City's population grows, the shortfall in housing availability will have far-reaching and devastating effects on the Los Angeles region if City policymakers and community stakeholders fail to make a positive commitment to change.

COMMUNITIES continue to remind policymakers and Council there are more unaffordable luxury housing units being constructed than there are affordable. MOST consist of projects that have demolished established affordable housing.

Key strategies to increase the housing stock include updating the City's Zoning Code to encourage responsible development, streamlining the approval of building permits, and expediting housing production when appropriate
COMMUNITIES continue to remind policymakers and Council that development has been conducted incredibly IRRESPONSIBLY and has already permanently damaged the affordable housing stock to our city.

The City should consider increasing the site plan review threshold from 50 units to a higher threshold so that only the largest projects are subject to the review while the development of in-fill housing consistent with the Zoning Code in already urbanized areas are permitted to be built. Projects that comply with the underlying zoning, meet design guidelines, and reach local affordability goals could be exempted from site plan review and allowed to proceed through the building permit approval process.

COMMUNITIES continue to remind policymakers our Mayor Eric Garcetti implemented a "Constituent Bill of Rights" that constituents are included in all land-use decisions in their neighborhood.

The Site Plan Review Amendment proposal is vague and ambiguous designed to eliminate neighborhood input all together. It undoes years of efforts and years of hard work put forth by our previous policy makers and constituents who worked incredibly hard to sustain the integrity of our neighborhoods.

COMMUNITIES have been repeatedly requesting our policymakers to take proactive measures in preserving existing affordable housing which is decreasing on a daily basis.

Both of these proposals lead us in the opposite direction. Before beginning to make accommodations for this unforeseen rise in population, we need to consider the citizens already here.

Thank you for your consideration,

D. J. Rich,
designated representative for the Coalition of Squeaky Wheels.



Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

Opposition to Motion to Raise Threshold for Site Plan Review and Expedite EIRs

1 message

darcyharris@aol.com <darcyharris@aol.com>

Tue, Mar 1, 2016 at 2:35 PM

To: 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

I would like to register the opposition of myself and other members of the community I have been speaking with, (in particular, the Silverlake, Echo Park and Hollywood communities), to two items on the agenda for today's PLUM committee.

1) Item 14-0057-S3 ✓

There is no good reason to raise the threshold above 50 units to an unspecified number and allow those projects administrative clearance with no public notice or comment. Site Plan Review performs an important function, and the costs outweigh the benefits of expedited review with no public input. 50 units can have a massive impact on neighbors and communities and is fundamentally unfair to have such projects go "under the radar". A few months to a year or even two delay to have a meaningful public process is worth it, when the buildings that go up last for 50-100 years and there is no undoing bad decisions.

2) Item 14-0057-S7 ✓

Using outside consultants to prepare and review project EIRs to facilitate project approvals through "Expedited" processing unit appears to simply be an end-run around CEQA requirements. Streamlining the process without compromising the actual review process is a fine goal, but fast-tracking things so much makes the entire process a sham and vitiates the purpose of CEQA.

Again, there should be proposed solutions to address the need for affordable housing that do not up-end all thoughtful planning and public input into the process. Part of the reason there is such a high demand for housing in Southern California and Los Angeles in particular is that there is a high quality of life here. Rushing through tremendous growth that will have effects for decades may have unintended consequences - it may not simply increase supply, but ultimately lower demand by significantly and adversely impacting quality of life for many Angelenos. That may help reach a new "balance" of supply and demand, but surely is not the balance we want.

Sincerely,

Darcy Harris
604 Belmont Ave
Echo Park



Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

Attention: Comments relative to PLUM mt 3/1/2016 Items 2 and 3

1 message

Shain Sylvie <spacestashain@yahoo.com>

Tue, Mar 1, 2016 at 2:18 PM

Reply-To: Shain Sylvie <spacestashain@yahoo.com>

To: "sharon.dickinson@lacity.org" <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

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

Please pass on the following statement to the members of the PLUM Committee:

Dear Honorable Councilmembers,

It has come to my attention that action will be taken on council files 14-0057-S3 and 14-0057-S7 today at the PLUM committee mtg. I implore you to consider the voice of the community on these matters...a voice that is too often silenced by a process that already favors developers and the litany of consultants and experts available at their disposal. The public input process is the only opportunity for average citizens who cannot afford to pay consultants to do their bidding, to engage in the discussion of the changing landscape or their communities. Please do not attempt to short-change and expedite the process even more, which will only result in less input, more frustration, and more litigation. As a stakeholder I respectfully ask you to support the voices of the people in this city, who are increasingly frustrated by a system that is tipped in the favor of developers-many of whom do not even live in Los Angeles, when we are the ones who live, work, and vote here. Please vote against increasing the thresh-hold for Site Review past 50 units and to further expand the already expedited planning process.

Respectfully,
Sylvie Shain



Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

(no subject)

1 message

Jena Lee <jenarolee@gmail.com>

Tue, Mar 1, 2016 at 2:03 PM

To: sharon.dickinson@lacity.org, councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org, councilmember.englander@lacity.org, councilmember.huizar@lacity.org, councilmember.fuentes@lacity.org, councilmember.harris-dawson@lacity.org

Dear PLUM Members,

Regarding Item 14-0057-S3 (Cedillo - O'Farrell), the proposal to amend the Site Plan Review Ordinance:

I am deeply opposed to this item. This should not be allowed and would be disastrous for LA neighborhoods. There are so many issues with projects that are over 50 units and these issues have a major impact on the neighborhood. Due diligence must be given to the development of large unit sites to determine their fit with regards to quality, neighborhood character, noise impact, parking (of course), and traffic among other many other things. Traffic in particular is a huge concern in Los Angeles, and where I live accidents have been increasing due to the influx of these projects. These issues are very complicated and it takes time to assess whether they are being built safely and neighborhoods can support them.

Please remember that your stakeholders are your voice. They are the ones that show up for you and give input on whether these projects are a benefit to the community. There are many developers that are not following City-Wide protocol and it is important that the process currently in place remain to keep them in check. I urge you to make the responsible and intelligent choice to NOT RAISE the limit on site plan review.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jena Lee



SCOPE STRATEGIC COMMUNITY AGENDA

March 7, 2016

Honorable Councilmember Herb Wesson
President, Los Angeles City Council

Council Members of the Los Angeles City Council
Via email

RE: Clean Up Green Up Ordinance (CF#15-1026)

Dear Council President Herb Wesson,

On behalf of SCOPE, I respectfully submit this letter in support of the Clean Up Green Up Ordinance, which we understand is currently under review by the City Attorney's office for approval within the next coming months.

We strongly support the proposed new development standards for the three pilot zones, Pacoima/Sun Valley and Wilmington because they provide much needed relief to address issues arising from the proximity of incompatible land uses – large homes, schools, parks and other places where vulnerable populations gather with the cumulative adverse impacts that result from concentrations of certain sensitive uses.

In addition, we support the Los Angeles Collaborative for Environmental Justice, Better Environment, Coalition for a Safe Environment, Pacoima Beautiful & L.A. United's effort to monitor the ordinance as it moves forward for passage by the full council. The proposed ordinance contains the strongest local regulatory and land use tools possible, including a proposed conditional use permit for oil refineries and asphalt manufacturers.

SCOPE sees the potential of the CUGU program to serve as a model that can be replicated in other disadvantaged communities highly impacted by pollution and poverty. We look forward to eagerly anticipate the passage of the Clean Up Green Up policies and look forward to the implementation of the three pilot zones, which will lead the way to economic innovations and a healthier Los Angeles.

COMPOSE

Inbox (16)

Started

Import...

Sent Mail

Drafts

All Mail

Trash

Holly

Shannon

New

Dear Sharon Dickinson

I realize that there are moves to introduce legislation regarding Home St Angeles. Whereas I think that it is always good to have guidelines, some measures that have been proposed are, I feel, unnecessarily draconian. I payng a City Tax I think that to negotiate a rate would certainly be a go wanted to write to you to tell you how this may seriously affect my perso and possibly result in my not being able to afford to stay in the Condo w 10 years ago, which is my home and which I love.

I am British born and work as a freelance Opera Director & Choreograph which is tremendously rewarding for myself and audiences alike. I was g card in 2002 when I came to the USA to live. I was fortunate to be a gue of a wonderful friend in Marina del Rey. He was tremendously generous say, experiencing such wonderful hospitality here in the US, set a fine ex how one should behave. Finally, I was able to find my feet and bought a del Rey in 2005. It was a dream come true. Initially, I hosted friends for : to help me with the mortgage and property tax payments. As I am sure y working in the Arts can be precarious in terms of work contracts. In add majority of my work takes me away from home, Opera being an internat profession. As a result my Condo is empty for weeks at a time which car risk. A couple of years later a friend introduced me to Airbnb, VRBO and I decided to take the plunge and in so doing it has given me the security To be quite frank, if I was not able to practise home sharing, I will most p to sell the Condo.

I vet my renters very thoroughly. I study previous reviews and have very rules in terms of noise and the amount of people allowed in the propert people who have come to stay are delightful and I have had many renter visit their families who live close by, to visit newly born grandchildren w afford to go to an hotel or parents coming to take their children to Loyol or to attend their graduation. Several renters have told me that staying i a home away from home and have returned time and time again becaus affordable and comfortable. I have introduced them to local restaurants businesses thereby promoting the local economy. A couple of friends act Managers (who get a percentage of the rental which helps them and the have a housekeeper who relies on the money I pay her to clean on chang have never ever had a complaint from any neighbors.

I very much hope that you will be able to recommend a balanced solutio

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



Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

(no subject)

1 message

Kirk Vaughn <kvaughn@glendale.edu>
To: "sharon.dickinson@lacity.org" <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

Tue, Mar 1, 2016 at 4:43 PM

Dear PLUM Members,

I am writing you in comment of Item 14-0057-S3 (Cedillo - O'Farrell) regarding amending the Site Plan Review Ordinance.

I am heavily in opposition to this item. This should NOT be allowed and would be disastrous for neighborhoods. This takes any interest and concern for your stakeholders OUT of our hands. There are so many issues with projects that are over 50 units and these issues impact the neighborhood GREATLY. Especially in the middle of Los Angeles and the city wide building frenzy that is happening. Of course there is parking, but in addition there are huge traffic implications of projects this size and infrastructure is a huge concern of neighborhoods. These issues are very complicated and take time to assess and make sure that these projects are being built safely and the neighborhoods can support them. Traffic in Los Angeles is a huge concern and where I live the accidents have increased due to the influx of these projects.

We are the voice of the community. Please listen to us.

Kirk Vaughn
1023 Everett St.
LA CA 90026