

LINDA VISTA-ANNANDALE ASSOCIATION
MADISON HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
WEST PASADENA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

May 24, 2020

Mr. David Reyes, Director of Planning & Community Development
Members of the Planning Commission
c/o Tess Molinar tmolinar@cityofpasadena.net.

Re: Planning Commission Meeting, 5/27/2020; Agenda Items 3. and 6.C.

Director Reyes and Planning Commissioners:

The Linda Vista-Annandale Association, the Madison Heights Neighborhood Association, and the West Pasadena Residents' Association, representing many of Pasadena's historic single-family neighborhoods, comprised of thousands of single-family homes, have joined together to express shared concern with recent permit activity, ADU's, mansionization and neighborhood protection.

We recently expressed concerns to Director Reyes and Deputy Director Jennifer Paige, which helped to result in Agenda Items 3 and 6.C. on the agenda for the Commission meeting scheduled for May 27, 2020. We appreciate staff including these matters on the agenda. The purpose of this letter is to comment on, and seek focused information about, certain of these important agenda items.

1. Director's Report: 3.C. Recent Permit Activity. Our Associations have expressed our joint desire as members of and representatives of the public to receive up to date and timely information on development and permit activity in the City. Too often lately, items on various Commission agendas or other agendas such as the Hearing Officer have been surprises with inadequate or no notice. We thank staff for updating and providing copies to us toward the end of April, 2020 of the March, 2020, Activity Report, but now we are looking for the April, 2020, Activity Report. Can these Activity Reports be provided to the public (including posting on the Department's website) in a more timely manner? Is it possible for the reporting "lag" to be less than a month? Could the reporting include permit and entitlement extensions? Would it be possible for the Director to provide an oral development and Permit update at each Planning Commission meeting?
2. Director's Report: 3.A. Mansionization. What is the status of this important policy matter? Our Associations are very concerned about this issue, and it appears to us that despite certain infamous single-family mansionization projects, nothing is being done to correct the situation. We do not want all the good previous staff work to be ignored. Despite the efforts of the State Legislature to undermine single-family zoning and single-family neighborhoods (discussed below), we continue to be very concerned about new home construction and home additions that are out of scale and out of character.
3. Agenda Item 6.C.: Accessory Dwelling Units Update. Our Associations are very concerned about the implementation of the state-adopted Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) law mandating

permission for up to “Three on a Lot”. Exactly how is this state mandate supposed to work? How are the “three” determined and counted? How are the “three” configured and placed on a lot? What lot and house sizes are mandated? How many detached ADUs are permitted? What is the role of “Junior” ADUs and garage conversions? How about Pool House conversions, and what is the role of previous non-habitability covenants? Can Pasadena require that the owner live on the property in one way or another? Some of these issues may have been clarified previously, but there is confusion as to the current legal status of ADUs in single-family neighborhoods in our experience. What is the status of public safety issues in the Hillside? What is the status of Landmark Districts and other historic status issues such as eligibility?

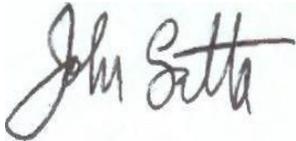
4. The Future of Single-Family Neighborhoods. We are very concerned that the “three on a lot” ADU legislation undermines single-family zoning and single-family neighborhoods. It seems clear that speculative development in our single-family neighborhoods will create multi-family and “boarding house” projects. Even more concerning is the current “four on a lot” proposed legislation in the Legislature (the successor to SB 50) that will only exacerbate this situation. What is the status of the “four on a lot” proposed legislation? How would this proposed legislation interact with “three on a lot”? Are these two approaches contradictory? What is the status of Pasadena’s efforts to protect and maintain single-family neighborhoods, including unique and historic ones?

Thank you for your consideration of and attention to our concerns.

Respectfully,

Nina Chomsky

Nina Chomsky, President
Linda Vista-Annandale Association



John Latta, President
Madison Heights Neighborhood Association



Dan Beal, President
West Pasadena Residents’ Association