

Takeda, Michi

From: Laura Ellersieck <eewna@earthlink.net>
Sent: Monday, July 26, 2021 8:43 PM
To: Takeda, Michi
Subject: Comments on 3.A. East Pasadena Specific Plan draft

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I find it interesting that the public comments completed six months ago on the same document is just now being presented to the Design Commission, without any access or feedback to those comments.

A major impression is how most of the areas subject to the specific plan are proposed to have significantly higher densities and heights than the current EPSP limits. During the general plan process we kept getting told that the general plan numbers would be high so the environmental impact report could cover all possibilities, but the specific plan could always have lower numbers. Then when the specific plan presentations/workshops come around we're told "that's what is in the general plan". Public participation seems to be more about convincing the public that what the consultants/staff want is right than really considering public feedback.

Repeating a few of my comments submitted last January on the draft plan:

1. The old specific plan's designated Commercial Office D and D-1 area between Sierra Madre Villa and Rosemead, north of Electronic Drive, is being lumped in with the retail area to the south as as Commercial R&D Core. While the designation sounds mild, when you look at the allowed uses, such as Big Box Retail (with only a P), this is completely inappropriate. It should remain a Commercial Office sub-area.
2. Page 16. General Retail. Not allowed in "Commercial R&D Core". But that zoning designation has been put over the entire shopping center where Ralphs is as well as most of the shopping center where Best Buy, Ross, Nordstrom Rack. It would allow "Big Box Retail" to move in, but "General Retail" would not be allowed? This makes no sense at all.
3. Page 23. 5.1.2 B. 3. I object to specifying putting in palm trees in the CC zones. Palms are stupid and useless, and the excuse of not blocking parade viewing doesn't apply to the eastern end of Colorado or Foothill. Leave the tree details to the street tree plan.
4. Page 41. Table 6.1-1. CRDC (presumably means Commercial R&D Core) Max height 56'. That's 5 stories, plus the roof parapet. Then the next page says up to 12' higher allowed on up to 30% of the building, so 68'. That's not a big deal in areas like zone A, which sit below Rosemead Blvd. But along Sierra Madre Villa, especially as it approaches Rosemead, that is obscenely high.
5. Page 42. 6.1.2. Height B. Varied Roof Lines. I suggest that if 12' added height is allowed, and the parcel has a slope, the added height should be toward the lower side.

6. Page 47. 6.2.1 A. 4. "In CRDC Zone, non-residential additions less than 30% of the existing building footprint are exempt from the street frontage requirement."

Huh? Why this big loophole allowing eliminating existing setbacks on current buildings?

So if you have an existing big building, and therefore a big footprint, you can eliminate the existing setback by adding onto the building all the way to the sidewalk because doing so would add less than 30%? For example, take the building between Sierra Madre Villa and Halstead, immediately north of Electronic Drive. It currently has a nice setback along Sierra Madre Villa, but that area is a small fraction of the building's footprint. Other buildings in that block have a similar situation.

7. Page 58. Facade and Modulation examples. In my opinion, these are rather hideous examples and I hate to think architects will think messes like these are desired.
8. Page 70. 6.5.2 Vehicle Parking A. 1. a. So it is assumed there will be sufficient street parking for all employees and customers of such businesses? If you only have a few such businesses among larger ones with their own parking, it might work out. But when there is a whole row of small businesses that have customers coming and going, you are looking for trouble. Even more so when they have to parallel park on a busy street. I know the notion of CNS is that only nearby neighborhood residents will use those businesses, and they'll walk to them. That is fantasy.
9. Page 70. 6.5.2 Vehicle Parking A. 1. b. What is magic about outdoor dining that makes it not require parking when indoor dining would? Is there some strange assumption that the only people who dine outdoors are nearby people who walk to eat?
10. Page 70. 6.5.2 Vehicle Parking A. 1. b. & c. I could see allowing a finding that requiring additional parking for an enlargement or change in use of a specific historic structure is not reasonable or necessary. But an automatic blanket reduction to 35%, especially for anything built before 1960 (which is very common), is just crazy. And is that 35% of the already reduced TOD amount?

Thank you for your consideration,
Laura Ellersieck
East Eaton Wash neighborhood