

Varsh, Tess

From: Jill Shook <Jill@makinghousinghappen.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2021 12:43 AM
To: Varsh, Tess
Subject: re; letter to the Planning Commission for Feb 25, 3021. from Jill Shook

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Dear Planning Commissioners,

We are in a severe housing crisis with churches eager to help by offering their land at a discount to provide sorely needed affordable units. With a shortage of sites to build, we trust you, our commissioners, will do all you can to allow congregations to participate this way. This means a by-right process with enough density that will allow for feasible projects. The community is there to support you in this, demonstrated by a significant number of letters and comments in prior commission meetings and over 100 in attend the Planning Departments workshop with almost no opposition.

To do excellent affordable housing for which is city is known, it takes zoning predictability with enough certainty so that funding sources can be accessed, and housing can get built. This can be achieved, with by right zoning that is sensitive to the character of our community.

In areas like N. fair Oaks, just below our city's boarder, sits 10 churches, 8 which are Historic Black churches several eager to use their excess land to help stay off so much displacement. These churches are hurting, bleeding members in a large part due gentrification. With Pasadena long history racial exclusionary housing practices—racial covenants, Urban Renewal which displaces 20,000 residents where Parsons now sits, the construction of the 210 Freeway, which displaced even more—it is only right and fair that these and other churches be allowed to provide housing. This is one way help turn the long shadows Pasadena's racist history, today manifested in extreme displacement (one church has only 8 members left) into a shining example for other cities to follow.

City leaders have been concerned for years that adjacent cities supply little to no affordable units. If we get a good policy that allows churches to do this by right with the proper density needed that allows funding sources to kick in, other cities can follow our lead to adopt similar policies. There are churches and elected leaders in adjacent cities, waiting to see what Pasadena will do. One of the first questions often asked by public decision makers is, "What are other cities doing?" Pasadena is the city others look to for leadership in the area of affordable housing.

Please pursue a generous policy that will encourage others to also be generous at a time when we need affordable housing more than ever considering the effects of the pandemic.

Thank you!!

Dr. Jill Shook, ED MHCH, Making Housing and Community Happen.

Jill Shook, Missions Door, Catalyst <http://www.missionsdoor.org/missionaries/shook-jill>

Doctor of Ministry, Bakke Graduate School

Blog: makinghousinghappen.net Websites: www.makinghousinghappen.org and makinghousinghappen.com

Author/Editor: *Making Housing Happen: Faith Based Affordable Housing Models*

Jill@makinghousinghappen.com Phone: [626\) 675-1316](tel:6266751316)

