

Takeda, Michi

From: Christle Balvin <gobalvin@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 1:57 PM
To: Takeda, Michi
Subject: Metro Gateway/Panda Inn projects

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Because of the covid virus and the difficulty in arranging in person meetings, cities and their planning staff are having great difficulty analyzing and working through concept designs for new projects. Without laying out the blueprints, it is very difficult to determine just how projects will look and develop. That is why many residents of Pasadena would like to see a temporary slow down of major developments within the city until all needed staff can be at the table and not just around a video screen. And we look forward to a time when community members can again be present in the Council chambers to voice their concerns and not allow developers on video screens to run the proceedings.

I am writing now to voice my concerns about the major changes that are now being requested by the developer of the Metro Gateway/Panda Inn project sites. What started out with a town square surrounded by trees will now require the elimination of approximately 70 of them. And this in a Tree City USA. And suddenly the project will change from a major residential project into one that includes more commercial and office space. And the recommended facade will now become just another stark commercial project probably shepherded through by the infamous Richard McDonnald.

The way we work has changed drastically as more and more people are working from home. Yet Pasadena is continuing to recommend the building of hotels and more commercial space when we do not yet know that it will be used. What we may find is that we will need more green space and less commercial space as people adjust to the new realities. Please let's slow it down. And let's pay attention to the role that trees play in purifying our air and shading our asphalt streets. Let's be planners who have an eye on the environment and a willingness to look beyond the need to fill city coffers through outmoded development projects.

Christle Balvin