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Pasadena, CA 91107

July 9, 2021

Members of the Pasadena Planning Commission  
Pasadena, CA  
By Email ([tvarsh@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:tvarsh@cityofpasadena.net))

Re: Planning Commission Meeting 7/14/2021 – Non-Agenda Item: The Need for Urgent Action to Approve an Overlay Zone Allowing Congregations to Build Affordable Housing on Their Underutilized Land

Dear Members of the Pasadena Planning Commission,

My name is Sonja Berndt and I am a longtime resident of Pasadena. I am writing to urge you to support an Overlay Zone in North Fair Oaks and throughout the City that would allow congregations to build affordable housing on their underutilized land. We desperately need more affordable housing in Pasadena! Some of our schools have closed due to young families with children moving away from the City because they cannot afford to live here. Additionally, other workers in our City have to travel great distances because they cannot afford to live where they work. The high cost of housing in our City continues to displace tenants and shut our young people out of the housing market.

A handful of churches across Pasadena are stepping up to offer their land for affordable housing, but they need the zoning to be changed so they can accomplish their vision. This zoning change will speed up the process of building the housing we need and will make the process considerably less expensive, making affordable housing dollars stretch further.

New Life Holiness Church has already chosen an affordable housing development partner with hopes to build 52 units of affordable housing on their underutilized land. They plan to use the money from the ground lease to help struggling families pay their rent or mortgage...but they need the zoning changed to do this work!

Despite correspondence and comments from numerous residents, the City Council has failed to put the matter on its agenda, opting to punt the issue to the Housing

Task Force which is working on the Housing Element. Putting this matter in the housing element process delays it and makes it less certain to be enacted.

Please do the right thing for our City and our residents: put the issue of an Overlay Zone on the Commission's agenda and make a recommendation to the City Council to approve the zoning needed. Thank you.

Sincerely,

/s/

Sonja K. Berndt  
Pasadena