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Neighborhood Association

Auburn Park

Site Development Permit No. 125168
Planned Development Permit No. 215840

Project No. 43239

With humility and respect for this wonderful opportunity to appear before you, here comes the community of Fox Canyon, and solemnly, but firmly solicits your strong support and requests from you a unanimous “YES” VOTE to **recommend approval**, in favor of the staff recommendation, to benefit Auburn Park.

Where as the community of Fox Canyon had the opportunity to review the following quality-of-life issues associated with this proposal and hereby, its findings:

1. PARKING:

Sufficient parking is allowed within the proposed development, according to City standards, sufficient enough to hold more than adequate in-house residential and over flow parking. Some community members voiced the concern that **overflow** parking could be problematic, and could adversely impact the surrounding community. Whether, to the south [*Rex Avenue*] and east [*52nd Street*], four [*4*] houses of worship exist, one **Buddhist Temple** [*3861-52nd Street*] and one **Monastery** [*3864-52nd Street*], The **Vietnamese Seventh-Day Adventist Church** [*3844-52nd Street*] and **Saint John of Kronstadt**, a Russian Orthodox Church [*5131 Rex Avenue*]. The association’s research show that these places of worship have their own dedicated and sufficient in-house parking facilities on/or near by to appropriately serve and accommodate their communities. In addition, in an example of excellent cooperation and brotherhood, they alternate meeting times. So on worship day, there is always ample and sufficient parking available to serve all worshipers. In addition, if overflow parking where to be needed, they all use the 5100 block of Rex Avenue. Expecting a greater than usual need for additional parking, on **Sunday, May 15, Buddha’s Birthday**, a day of particular celebration for the Buddhist community, the pictures on **Attachment 1**, were taken, between 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM.

Therefore, it is determined that, if needed, overflow parking for the proposed Auburn Park will **NOT** adversely affect the surrounding community in such great degree. Please, see **attachment 1**.

2. **NOISE:**

Some residents **advocating** for the Buddhist Monks expressed the concern that human activity and noise intrusion placed upon places of worship could adversely affect, specially the Buddhist monastery to the south. Although, noise is a management issue, the developer has made a great effort to respect this concern, especially regarding the south end of the development. In such effort, the developer has redesigned **building C** to place a greater setback [*distance*] than required to help mitigate this issue. Now, 31 linear feet form a buffer zone “window-to-window”. Landscaping at this location will provide an adequate noise screen, also. In addition, now the monastery is fully exposed and impacted by vehicular noise from University Avenue, the new building structures will shield the monastery from this type of noise. Moreover, in the building design, only the fourth deck will be at the same level [*altitude*] with the windows of the monastery. In addition, all human activity will be directed toward the front and the west side of the buildings facing University Avenue. One needs to note that the reason for changing the garage entrance to the front of the building, facing University, was so noise will be directed away from the monastery. Therefore, it is our finding that noise will **NOT** adversely impact the places of worship and/or abutting residents to Auburn Park, specially the Buddhist Monastery.

3. **PRIVACY:**

Some residents **advocating** for the Buddhist Monastery have expressed the privacy concern that the monks may need to have when conducting their activities in a peaceful and private way. Such concerns forced the redesign of buildings C. Such south facing walls will have no windows facing south, and those designed, needed for allow light in, will be **translucent** and placed high-up to provide the monastery with sufficient privacy and quiet. One may notice that only the fourth deck could have a potential direct line of sight into and impact the monastery. The third deck will face directly to the existing high-fence at the property line and the second deck will face the hill. Therefore, with the redesign of buildings C, privacy will not be an issue that could adversely impact the monastery.

4. **CRIME and GANG ACTIVITY:**

The issue of crime as a result of gang activity [*drugs*] was raised by some member of the surrounding community. These community members fear that affordable housing, **Section 8**, tenants only drag crime with them to their new living quarters. Although, again, a management issue, the

developer has included “Crime Control through Environmental Design”, “Eyes on the Street [*creek*]” and Community Policing principles in building design and, later, building management to help control and ameliorate this concern. In addition, **Police Problem Solving Meetings** are available, the third Wednesday of each month, just one-half block to the northeast, at the **SDPD Multicultural Store Front** [*5348 University Avenue, suite 100*]. Therefore, is our finding that such fear and concerns of increased crime and gang activity/drugs will **NOT** germinate to be true [*although NO one can warrant it either way*], and adversely impact the surrounding community. Please, see SDPD Crime Statistics, comparing Chollas Creek to Fox Canyon, **attachments 2 and 3**.

5. **VIEW:**

Some area residents **advocating** for the Buddhist Monastery have voiced the concern of impairing views from the north facing monastery’s windows, **puns hue** and the “up on a hill religious shrine” concept. The developer has moved the residential buildings toward the northeast to allow for a greater separation [*noise/visual/landscaping buffer zone*] between structures [*25 to 31 feet approximately*]. It has broken Building C in two sections to allow a north facing view corridor, at this location. In later conversations with the Buddhist monks from the monastery and the Chinese Friendship Association [*3876-50th Street*], it has been established that east/west visual connection between shrines is more important than the view towards the north/south. The Buddhist Temple [*3840-52nd*] sits directly to the east and faces west to the monastery and the **Chinese Buddhist Chapel** [*3876-50th Street*] sits directly west and faces east to the monastery. This visual connection is one of supreme importance, and of high cultural sensitivity, to the beliefs of this religion. Thus, this is one visual connection that will be best **NOT** to brake-up and one that must be maintained, especially when designing and placing future developments at this location. By allowing the variance of moving Auburn Park’s footprint to the north/east, towards the property line on University/52nd Street, the buildings will sit well to the north of the monastery, and such will respect the east/west visual connection from/to the monastery and the buildings to the east and west. Therefore, it is our finding that building Auburn Park as presently redesigned will **NOT** disconnect the visual connection between the Buddhist shrines in the immediate vicinity, or adversely impact, disrupt or intrude into any religious function-ability and beliefs. Please, see **attachment 4**.

6. **HEIGHT:**

Some area residents **advocating** for the Buddhist Monastery have expressed concerns about the building height in relation to the monastery. Building C has been broken in two to allow a view corridor and the bulk of it sits well below grade at this location. Building C [*four stories at the highest point*] is

just at the same height with the monastery's roof line. In addition, in conversations with the Chinese Friendship Association [05/16/05] it was expressed that if only the monastery's **PAGODA** will stick-out above the new development roof-top line, this concern will be of **NO** issue. Then, It was determined that the Buddhist Temple [3861-52nd Street] holds the highest degree of saintliness in relation to the other two places of Buddhist worship. The temple **does not** about the proposed Auburn Park, the monastery does. Therefore, we can establish the finding that building Auburn Park as presently designed will **NOT** be detrimental to the monastery's height or to the rest of the community. Please see, attachment 5

7. **HOUSING:**

Some community members have expressed concern about the housing quality elements proposed for this location. Among these are (A) ghetto building, (B) over concentration and (C) over saturation of affordable housing units within City Heights.

- A. Humans and their behavior create the "ghetto" perception, buildings, by themselves, do not. Although perfectly aware that building design, maintenance and management can contribute greatly to the detriment of a housing project, Auburn Park includes many building elements that will render this project a top of the line high quality one. In addition, a highly qualified management team will be in place to supervise appropriate maintenance and human behavior within and around the complex for the next 55 years.
- B. Having the ability, potential and the right to build up to a maximum of **77** unit total, within the proposed residential development, the developer has chosen to build only **68** residential units and one manager's quarter.
- C. The perception that City Heights has an over saturation of affordable housing units, in disadvantage to other communities, can be best viewed with the numbers provided by present demographics. The City Heights general population has increased by **3,085** inhabitants since the last US census to **01/01/04** [*SANDAG Profile Warehouse, 10/05/04*]. **38%** of these residents earn low to medium incomes (www.census.gov). **3.53%** is the index of **overcrowding** [*persons per household*]. Therefore, dividing the **3,085** population increase by the overcrowding multiplier [**3.53**] and multiplying the result by the poverty index [**.38**], you will get a total of **332** new units needed by 01/01/04 [**18 months ago**] just to keep-up with the affordable housing units demand to supply **overcrowded** housing to this segment of the population, in City Heights. But, if the **average** multiplier were to be use [**2.73**], the total jumps to **429 units**, just to keep pace with

population growth up to 01/01/04. To this number, please add the number of units **displaced** by school construction and those units needed just to **replace** the aging [*decaying*], dilapidated and blighted units now in existence, which by the way are between 30 to 35 years old, or older. And you will get a better picture of urgently need affordable housing in City Heights. Auburn Park with **68 units** is verily scratching the surface. By the way, this formula can be applied to figure out each community's real need for affordable housing and to measure where they stand individually in building affordable housing within their communities and in relation to City Heights.

Therefore, it is determined that the housing elements at Auburn Park will not be detrimental, but beneficial to the community.

8. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

Some community members have expressed concern about the availability of public transportation and its capacity to appropriately serve the proposed housing project. The proposed development is directly served by a bus stop right up front [*University/52nd Street*]. In addition, there is another bus stop at the beginning of the block [*west*] on University/50th Street.



Therefore, with this reality, the increase bus rider-ship will have sufficient and appropriate bus service to access future Auburn Park without any detrimental to the existing population.

Where as the community of Fox Canyon had the opportunity to review the following **existing conditions** and examined the site for (1) Litter, (2), Illegal Dumping, and (3) Graffiti.

1. **LITTER:**

Due to the fact that now these vacant parcels sit right at a busy intersection, within two mayor bus stops and without the appropriate care and maintenance from the rightful property owners, the site is the main collector to litter, trash and blight.



2. **ILLEGAL DUMPING:**

Illegal Dumping on and around this area is endemic, specially the dumping into Auburn Creek. Fox Canyon N. A. has done several creek clean ups during the last four years to help with this environmentally detrimental issue.



A white door dumped in the creek and some household items (not for sale) near by.



3. **GRAFFITI:**

Through the efforts of Rafa's Auto Repairs' owner and the Fox Canyon Neighborhood Association, the fence above Auburn Creek is constantly painted over graffiti, in a constant exercise to keep it clean of graffiti.

SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS:

Where as the Fox Canyon Neighborhood Association never intended or intends to master-plan another community other than its own, the issue of a park parcel development [*Parks Subcommittee Report parcel # 6*] got us heavily involved in the oversight elements of this proposal. Since the neighborhood of Chollas Creek is void of a Neighborhood Association [*community council*] it has been a Herculean and quite frustrating effort to gather the Chollas Creek transient community to attend meetings to seek their input and help. Although, a bit successful, after several intents, at the end of the process, on **March 23, 2005, 14** people attended a meeting, at the home of Jan Brady, 5205 Rex Avenue, to review Auburn Park. The concerns expressed at this meeting are some of those addressed in this review. And on **May 15, 2005, 16** people attended a meeting at the home of Alfredo Parra, 5069 University Avenue, # 1 [*the apartment building right next door to where the "Park" will be*], at such time seven [7] people signed letters of support to benefit Auburn Park. Please, see **attachment 6**.

Where as there is no need to express and emphasized the current affordable housing crisis, this housing proposal will help to ameliorate such crunch. In addition, it is in-fill and it will help clean up a blighted corner in City Heights.

Where as this project *proposal will also build a privately owned and maintain open space area accessible to the PUBLIC ["PARK"]*. Findings, Review and support e-mails were issued and such communications are attached in **addendum A**.

Where as the Fox Canyon Neighborhood Association members and president have issue strong PUBLIC support for this project, each step of the way and at every singly meeting of the Redevelopment Agency's City Heights Plan Area Committee, the City Heights Area Planning Committee and the City Council, it has also hold numerous Fox Canyon Neighborhood Association meeting to review each stage of the progress in this proposal. The Fox Canyon Neighborhood Association Board of Directors has heard this item many times, in public meetings and sees the project as a positive and desired improvement for the communities of Chollas Creek, Fox Canyon and City Heights. Please, see **attachment 7**.

Therefore, on my community's behalf and following their guidance, again, with a humble heart we request your support for Project No. **43239**, Auburn Park and voice our strong recommendation for approval.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Jose Lopez', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jose Lopez, President