CORRESPONDENCE

Peirce, Gwendolynn

From: [redacted]
Sent: Monday, July 16, 2012 11:01 AM
To: Peirce, Gwendolynn
Subject: 4151 Foothill Road Annexation

Members of the Santa Barbara City Council:

You are about to rule on the proposed development below. Please take the time to read up on this proposal as it has many implications for the future of Santa Barbara.

At the Planning Commission meeting on June 21, 2012 regarding the proposed Sansum Clinic to be built on Foothill Road, questions were brought up about the total lack of neighborhood notification about this massive project in a residential neighborhood. Mr. Towbes said about 50 letters were sent out. Well, there are over 1000 neighbors in the near vicinity and almost all will be affected by this massive project. If someone was going to put an addition on their home, maybe the 300 foot notification would be sufficient but for such a large project, we feel a much larger notification would be necessary.

The City of Santa Barbara needs to revisit this procedure. Almost everyone we have spoken to who live within a mile of here did not know what was to be built or when this project was going to happen. Therefore only a small handful were at the Planning Commission meeting to comment. Some commissioners were also saying the Upper State Street Plan was what drove their decision to approve. This is not State Street. If you drive from Goleta to Montecito, there is not one commercial development along Foothill Road. Other than residential, only a few schools and churches occupy this road. This is a 60 thousand square foot development with 225 parking spaces and 4 surgery rooms as well as many doctors offices; a true large medical clinic.

The perception in this neighborhood was that this project was developed in the dark without the knowledge of almost everyone, and the developers just went on their merry way to acceptance by the architectural board of revue and planning commission. Also, area wide notification was provided in a small newspaper only found in front of a few local businesses. This is not a good way to conduct the planning of a major development.

One commissioner said he liked the buildings out near the street with parking in the rear. This neighborhood thinks just the opposite. <u>This 260 long building facing Foothill is very similar to the parking garage behind the Granada theatre except it is longer and about the same height. Just drive down Anacapa street across from the County Administration Building and take a look at its massive size. This what will appear in our neighborhood if this building is allowed on the intended site.</u>

Mr. Towbes showed an earlier rendering of the proposed building set back against the foothill off ramp from Hwy 154. This is what was proposed to a neighborhood meeting several years ago and it got a good response. At the Planning Commission meeting, his architect said such a long building was not as feasible due to the lay of the land. He admitted at the PC meeting that this was the proposal for the Fielding Graduate Institute but when Sansum Clinic approached them they changed the location. My question is why couldn't they have 2 buildings near the off ramp with a small separation between them. They could easily be built in a lower set back location with much less impact for everyone to see.

As now proposed, anyone living on Cieneguitas Road below Foothill Road will have their mountain view corridor permanently blocked by such a long, tall building. Moving the long building back against the Foothill off ramp with parking in front and an earth berm with plantings would hide the parking lot and make a much more attractive project, not being so intrusive to the area and still providing mountain views.

We perceive some decisions from city commissions as being expedient and not considerate of the neighborhood in which they are to be located. Most projects would be received in a better light if there was more involvement from the neighbors as well as the developers. This project passed the planning commission on a 4 to 2 vote, not unanimous by any standards. A recent election voting down a proposed entrance and bridge on Las Positas road to a planned development showed citizen involvement kept this from happening. It has not happened here because, so far, hardly anyone is really aware of its scope.

Danny Kato, the city's development review supervisor, said the developer's plans to build close to the roadway are consistent with the city's urban planning guidelines. I have taken the time to read these guidelines as well as the Upper State Street Design Guidelines and there are multiple references to keeping the project compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. This is not an urban area and does not resemble State Street in any manner. They have given a C1/S-D-2 zoning to a parcel that is right in the middle of a residential area.

The members of the city council need to take a hard look at this development because it is precedent setting and can only cause poorer planning practices in the future if allowed as presented. If you want a great explanation of why this project should be either revised or denied, just go to the video archive of the June 21 Planning Commission meeting. At about one hour and 58 minutes into the video, Commissioner Bruce Bartlett detailed his opposition to this project in its present form. This is very informative and speaks to the deficiencies as proposed.

As I stated earlier in the letter I sent to the planning commission, which is located at the end of this e-mail, I do approve of the project. It is solely the placement of a massive structure up against Foothill that is most unappealing. Please encourage the developer to relocate the massive building down and away from Foothill Road. It will make for a far superior development with neighborhood approval and retain the mountain views and other view corridors so highly sought after in this area.

Please read the following references from the "Upper State Street Design Guidelines". These references all pertain to views, building locations, parking and landscaping. Although this is not Upper State Street, the Planning Commission and Architectural Board of Revue have used these guidelines to make their decisions. It is my opinion that all of these references pertain to this development plan and they are outlined as follows:

Page 2-2, Discussion; Page 2-3, Goals, Guidelines #2; Page 2-6, #6 Rear Parking; Page 3-6, #16 & #17. These are only a few references but there are many more.

Respectively, David Jones, Concerned longtime neighbor of proposed Foothill Centre

Letter sent to the Planning Commission and entered into the minutes of the June 21, 2012 meeting

June 21, 2012

Madame Secretary and members of the Planning Commission:

My name is David Jones, also known as Bud Jones to most people I know. Rarely do I get involved with this kind of public meeting but I feel I have to speak up about the proposed Foothill Centre project. Whatever is finally approved, the whole neighborhood will have to live with the results.

I have read the application for the Foothill Centre, LP, 4151 Foothill Road and 681 Cieneguitas Road and I wish to comment on this proposed development.

A few years ago, residents near this proposed project were invited to a meeting at La Colina Middle School to hear Michael Towbes and his associates lay out a plan to develop the above mentioned property. At that meeting it was said that the proposed tenant would be the Fielding Graduate Institute. A layout of the proposed buildings was presented to those in attendance. All of the buildings were to be located at the rear of the property with parking in front, facing Foothill and Cieneguitas Roads. Personally, I liked this proposal and commented that after many years, I was glad someone with a reputation like Mr. Towbes was to be the developer. Having lived at my current address for 40 years, my wife and I consider our location to be in an excellent neighborhood of mixed residential and multi-residential homes.

My reason for commenting on this proposal is driven by several changes that have transpired since the original proposal. The proposed plan now has both buildings up against Foothill Road and Cieneguitas Road with parking in the rear. Just last week, story poles were erected showing the locations and the heights of these buildings. This has become quite a shock to residents of this neighborhood. It looks like Wall Street in New York and is very out of character with this residential neighborhood. This property slopes down to the South but the buildings are proposed on the topmost level.

Why has this new proposal been re-arranged? If the buildings were set back away from Foothill Road there would be much less of an impact on the high visibility and mass of these buildings. They would be much lower and be much less visible mitigating their large size.

I do not have any objections to developing this property but I believe it would be in the best interests of the developer and the residents to make the impact less adverse.

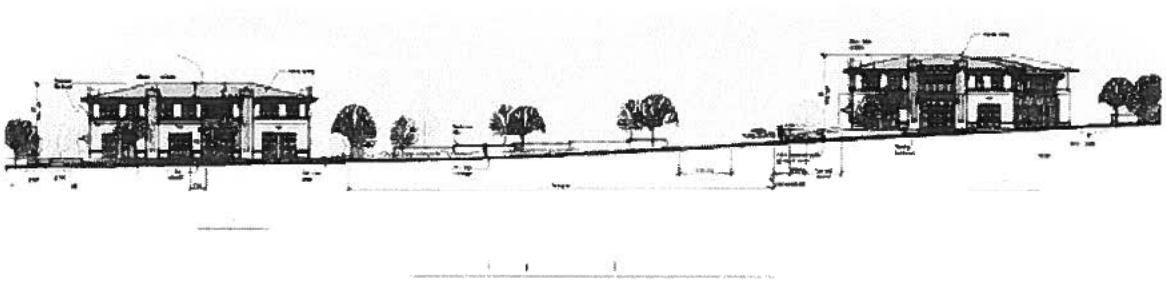
The building fronting along Foothill Road is over 250 feet long and is 2 stories with a total height of 37 feet. I believe this is too massive in that location. If moved back against the Hwy 154 off ramp or just placed on a lower level of the property, it would have a far lesser impact on the neighborhood. Also the view from Highway 154 would have less impact because the property slopes down considerably from Foothill Road.

I believe there would be many residents of the area here today to object to the building location along Foothill Road. However, with the 300 foot limit of notification, hardly anyone was notified of this project. I know I wasn't notified and I live about 600 diagonal feet away. There are only a few properties facing the development. It is only due to the erection of the story poles last week that anyone knew something was about to happen. But they did not know what it was to be or what they could do about it. Again, this is a residential and multi-residential area and this massive building facing Foothill Road is very imposing.

Thank you for your consideration of my concerns in this matter.

David T. Jones
[redacted]
Santa Barbara, CA 93110-1212
[redacted]

Granada parking garage facing Anacapa Street



View from Cieneguitas Road

Note that if a line is drawn from the bottom of the long building facing Foothill Road to the lower building, it basically reduces the height by 50% due to the downward slope of the property. For this reason, it is far superior to place this massive building in a more suitable location. The Towbes architect said at the Planning Commission hearing that sloping played a part in relocating the building to its proposed site after discussions with Sansum Clinic.

The questions should be not what is only good for the developer but what also is good for the neighborhood. Either relocation of the massive building or moving it further westward where the existing gas station building sits would be preferred. If it has to stay in its location, the neighborhood would prefer it be situated even lower than proposed to mitigate its immense size.

Michael D. Rittenberg, DVM
Foothill Pet Hospital
675 Cieneguitas Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

RECEIVED
JUL 17 2012
MAYOR & COUNCIL
SANTA BARBARA

July 13, 2012

City Council
City of Santa Barbara
c/o City Clerk's Office
P.O. Box 1990
Santa Barbara, CA 93102-1990

Subject: Foothill Centre (MST2008-00496)

Dear Honorable Council Members:

I am the owner of Foothill Pet Hospital located at 675 Cieneguitas Road in Santa Barbara. Foothill Pet Hospital is adjacent to the project site located at 4151 Foothill Road which is proposed to be developed as the Foothill Centre. It is my understanding that the proposed project will be before your Council for approval on July 24. I am writing to advise you of my concerns with respect to the project.

It is being proposed that both the project site and the Foothill Pet Hospital parcel be annexed to the City of Santa Barbara in connection with the approval of the project. Upon such annexation, the existing pole sign identifying Foothill Pet Hospital would become nonconforming. Although the City's Sign Regulations would appear to allow the sign to remain as a legal nonconforming sign, I am advised that the City Attorney has indicated that the sign would have to be removed following annexation unless the Sign Committee approves an exception. I have been offered no assurance that such an exception would be granted. I must therefore conclude that the annexation will result in me being forced to remove my sign.

The removal of the pole sign could have serious adverse consequences for my business. The sign provides visibility for my business from both Highway 154 and Foothill Road. Without the pole sign, the business could no longer be seen from either of these major transportation corridors. In addition, the cost of removing the pole sign and installing replacement signage would be considerable. It certainly seems inequitable to me that the approval of the Foothill Centre project should be allowed to have these detrimental impacts on my business.

To address these concerns, I urge you <u>not</u> to approve the annexation of the Foothill Pet Hospital parcel to the City. It is my understanding that the only reason the annexation is being proposed is because LAFCO suggested that the additional parcel be added to the Foothill Centre annexation. The annexation will not benefit the City in any way and will only create a nonconformity with respect to the sign. In addition, other properties in the immediate vicinity,

specifically those located on La Barbara Drive, are not being proposed for annexation. I do not see the reason for singling out my property.

It should also be noted that the pole sign is located on the northern portion of the Foothill Pet Hospital parcel in the area where parking is proposed for the Foothill Centre project. I ask that any parking allowed on this parcel be located so as to not to require the removal of or any alterations to the pole sign.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely yours,

Michael D. Rittenberg

Michael D. Rittenberg, DVM

cc Allison de Busk, City Planner (Via email)
N. Scott Vincent, Esq., Assistant City Attorney (Via email)
Richard G. Battles, Esq., Howell Moore & Gough LLP