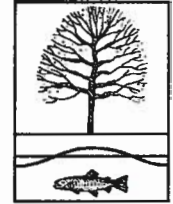


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SANTA BARBARA URBAN CREEKS COUNCIL

P.O. Box 1467, Santa Barbara, CA 93102

www.sb-urbancreeks.org (805) 962-8260 sbucc@sbucc.com
SANTA BARBARA CITY CLERK'S OFFICE



February 25, 2016

Santa Barbara City Clerk
De la Guerra Plaza
735 Anacapa St
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Re: APPEAL Planning Commission Approval Feb.18, 2016 of 251 So. Hope Ave. (MST 2014-00142)

The Santa Barbara Urban Creeks Council is a 501(c)(3) non profit organization with a broad membership base across the south coast. Our mission is to protect and enhance stream and wetland environments, and to promote sound watershed planning that will lead to recovery of stable and healthy conditions in our waterways.

Reason For Appeal

We are appealing the Planning Commission approval because the project as approved will not allow enough space for the City's Creeks Division to implement an important Arroyo Burro Creek watershed recovery project that is designated for the subject site. The approval conflicts with a prioritized goal that is identified and targeted for implementation in the Environmental Resources Element of the City's General Plan (ER21.4); to remove concrete from and to restore the section of creek that transects the property. The City's Creeks Division has invested dollars and planning efforts in this project, and has already done a feasibility study that shows that the project is doable. The Creeks Division project requires adequate space of a very minimal 50 foot setback. Section ER21.4, of the G.P. addresses Surface Water Drainage at this location. It designates the segment of Arroyo Burro Creek adjacent to La Cumbre Plaza, where 251 So. Hope Ave. is located, as a priority area for restoration.

Deficiency in the Process

We feel that the process has been deficient in that it did not allow alternatives to be considered that would create a win/win result. We believe that it is possible to design a housing and creek rehabilitation solution that addresses both the need for restoring healthy and functional creek conditions and the need for housing. We do not oppose the need for a housing project, but we do insist that all efforts be taken to find a solution that addresses both of the important General Plan goals. The Planning Commission approval does not address the goal of correcting flawed infrastructure design that seriously impairs the health of the creek.

Some Background

Many people in the watershed and throughout the city have serious concerns about this approval that ignores the need for creek planning . The range of concerns includes clean water, suitable habitat for fish and wildlife, and stability of the creek and upper banks downstream. Homeowner groups, environmentalists, and users of land along the creek do have legitimate interests in the outcome of this very important planning effort, as do many people who surf and recreate at the shoreline.

Conclusion

Please approve our request for appeal of this decision. Essential community interests will be well served by allowing this very critical planning item to be reviewed by the City Council, the body of city government that approved the General Plan goal calling for removal of the concrete at 251 So. Hope Ave. Many people in the community have asked us to file this appeal on their behalf. Our members and supporters find it quite difficult to comprehend this inability to arrive at an outcome that serves the interests of both housing and the environment. We trust that the appeal process will help to serve environmental interests in a way that is reasonable to all parties.

Thank you,



Rick Frickmann

President

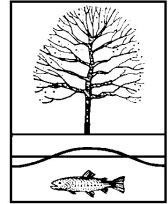
Santa Barbara Urban Creeks Council

cc: Friends of Arroyo Burro Creek
Arroyo Burro Creek Study Group
Creeks Division

cell: 805-680-8188

SANTA BARBARA URBAN CREEKS COUNCIL

P.O. Box 1467, Santa Barbara, CA 93102 (805) 962-8260 sbucc@silcom.com



March 14, 2016

City of Santa Barbara Mayor & Council
735 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Re: 251 S Hope Housing Authority Project

Dear Mayor & City Council

As you know, the Santa Barbara Urban Creeks Council has appealed the February 18 Planning Commission decision to approve the 251 So. Hope Ave proposal for affordable senior housing. We want you to know that we don't oppose a housing project at that location. We do recognize the need for affordable housing and we think the site is appropriate for that use. However, we have serious concerns that the project as approved very seriously jeopardizes another important City goal, that of removing concrete from and restoring the section of Arroyo Burro Creek that runs along the west boundary of the parcel. That goal is prioritized in the General Plan, as approved by the City Council. We are quite dismayed that the P.C. did not make certain that the approval would allow for both goals to be met. We feel that a win-win alternative plan is certainly attainable at this site, one that will allow the City to meet highly desirable environmental goals and also meet the need for housing.

Some new information introduced by the applicant at the Feb 18th P.C. hearing has perhaps lent confusion to the process, and may have resulted in less than full understanding of limitations on the potential for implementation of creek work that is targeted for the site. We are reviewing the Waterways Consultants Inc. report that provides 2 options for the creek work, and we are also evaluating the new conservation easement that has been proposed by the applicant. In addition, we are seeking legal advice about these new wrinkles that have been added, in order to better understand how a creek project that meets goals of the City's General Plan might be implemented.

We want to meet with each of you prior to the appeal hearing to discuss our concerns, and to learn what ideas you may have about this project and how it may allow for a solution to problems that have been identified as priorities by the city's process, with community input. We know that you as council members are committed to making sure that goals of the General Plan are met, and we trust that with your guidance a win-win agreement may be struck with the applicant.

We look forward to meeting with you soon,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rick Frickmann".

Rick Frickmann, President
SBUCC