

Jay Ross: A real citizen who actually lives in the neighborhood

To: Council members on PLUM Committee

c/o Holly Wolcott, City Clerk; Sharon Gin, PLUM.

Fr: Jay Ross, West L.A. resident, 1721 S. Granville Ave.

Re: Council file - 13-1070 (Appeal for 11764 W. Idaho Ave. / 1601 S. Stoner Ave.)

Date: Sept. 5, 2013

Please see the attached Determination for a project at 1641 S. Stoner Ave. from Planning Director Michael LoGrande and Zoning Administrator J.C. Romero-Navarro from just two weeks ago on Aug. 30, 2013 (TT-71823).

The building proposed here at 1641 S. Stoner Ave. is the exact same as the one proposed for 11764 W. Idaho Ave. / 1601 S. Stoner Ave. – construction of a 4-story condominium and demolition of 2 1-story houses. The adjacent properties are almost the same: 2 1-story houses, 1 2-story apartment, and 1 3-story apartment.

This project is located on the exact same block (1600 S. Stoner Ave.) as the subject project, which is on the corner of 11764 W. Idaho Ave. / 1601 S. Stoner Ave (which was rejected by the West L.A. Area Planning Commission). The two projects both have frontages on the 1600 S. Stoner Ave. block.

Mr. LoGrande and Mr. Romero-Navarro determined that a 4-story building was not warranted because no other 4-story buildings exist on the block, and it would thus violate the Community Plan. On p. 4, they add the Condition for "...a maximum height of 3 stories".

TENTATIVE TRACT NO. TT-71823-CN

PAGE 4

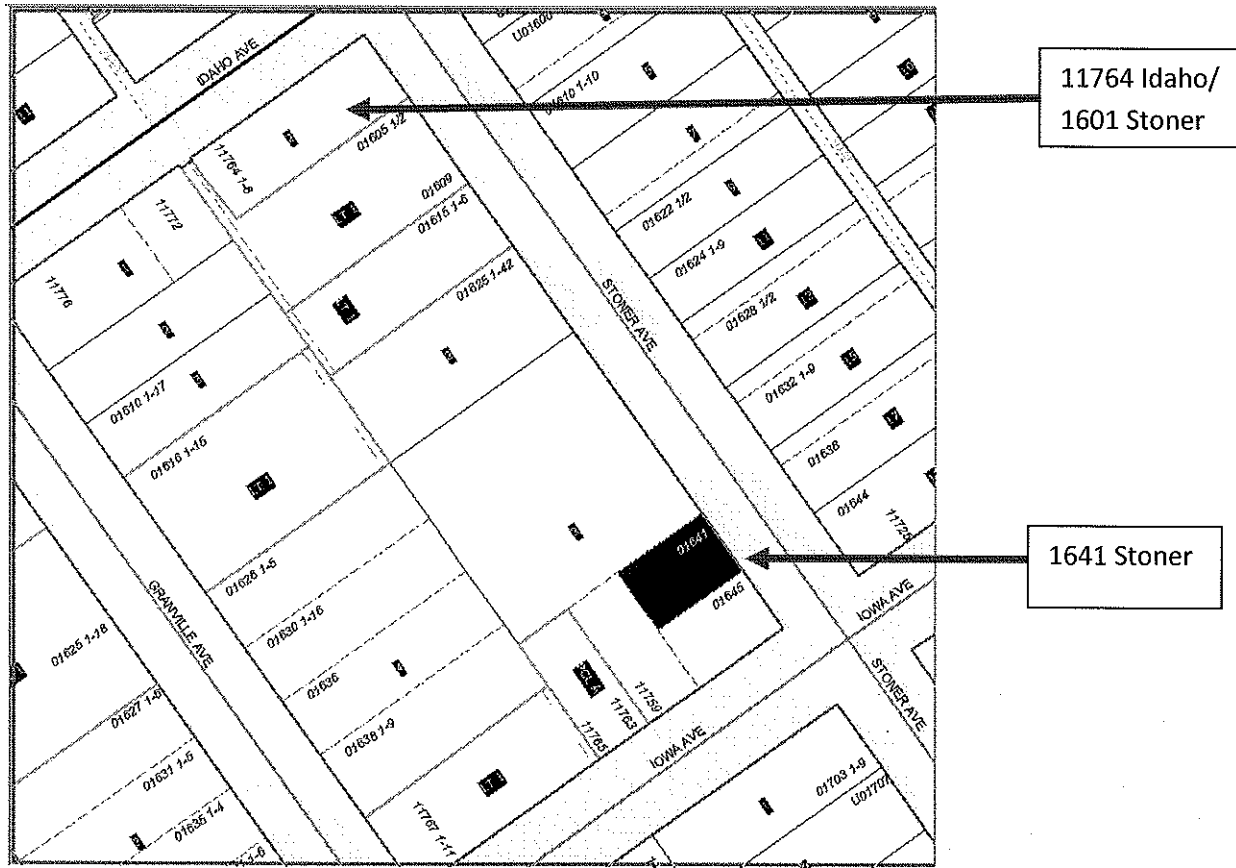
DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING-SITE SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

11. Prior to the recordation of the final map, the subdivider shall prepare and execute a Covenant and Agreement (Planning Department General Form CP-6770) in a manner satisfactory to the Planning Department, binding the subdivider and all successors to the following:
 - a. Limit the proposed development to a maximum of 7 dwelling units and 17 parking spaces, and a maximum height of 3 stories.

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If the Planning Director already agrees that the Community Plan can be used to limit height, and has established a precedent for doing it on the very same block, then we ask that PLUM deny this appeal today at the Committee level.

There being no reason to forward it to the full Council.



Thank you for your service to the city and citizens who created a fine Community Plan. We ask that you ensure that our neighborhood is safeguarded properly, and our Plan is respected.

Jay Ross

1721 S. Granville Ave., L.A., CA 90025

(310) 979 -9255 Ross_Jay@Hotmail.com

DEPARTMENT OF
CITY PLANNING

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VAN NUYS, CA 91401

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PRESIDENT

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INFORMATION
www.planning.lacity.org

Decision Date: August 30, 2013

just 2 weeks ago

Appeal Period Ends: September 9, 2013

Twen Ma (A)
Twen Ma Architects
195 Mount Olive Drive
Bradbury, CA

*same block as
11754 Idaho / 1601 Stoner
corner lot*

CASE NO.: TT-71823-CN

Related Case: None

1641 S. Stoner Avenue

West Los Angeles Planning Area

Neighborhood council: West Los Angeles

Zone: R3-1

District Map: 126B149

Council District: 11

CEQA: ENV-2012-2073-MND

Legal Description: TRACT PACIFIC
FARMS, Block BLK 8, Lot FR 3, Arb 3

*same
zoning*

In accordance with provisions of Section 17.03 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC), the Advisory Agency approved Mitigated Negative Declaration ENV-2012-2073-MND as the environmental clearance and approved Tentative Tract No. TT-71823-CN composed of 5 condominium units, located at 1641 S. Stoner Avenue for a maximum 7 units and 17 parking spaces, as shown on map stamp-dated August 2, 2013 in the West Los Angeles Community Plan. This unit density is based on the R3-1 Zone. (The subdivider is hereby advised that the LAMC may not permit this maximum approved density. Therefore, verification should be obtained from the Department of Building and Safety which will legally interpret the Zoning Code as it applies to this particular property.) The Advisory Agency's approval is subject to the following conditions:

NOTE on clearing conditions: When two or more **agencies** must clear a condition, subdivider should follow the sequence indicated in the condition. For the benefit of the applicant, subdivider shall maintain record of all conditions cleared, including all material supporting clearances and be prepared to present copies of the clearances to each reviewing agency as may be required by its staff at the time of its review.

DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING-SITE SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

11. Prior to the recordation of the final map, the subdivider shall prepare and execute a Covenant and Agreement (Planning Department General Form CP-6770) in a manner satisfactory to the Planning Department, binding the subdivider and all successors to the following:

a. Limit the proposed development to a maximum of 7 dwelling units and 17 parking spaces, and a maximum height of 3 stories.

b. Provide a minimum of 2 covered off-street parking spaces per dwelling unit, plus ½ guest parking space per dwelling. All guest spaces shall be readily accessible, conveniently located, specifically reserved for guest parking, posted and maintained satisfactory to the Department of Building and Safety.

If guest parking spaces are gated, a voice response system shall be installed at the gate. Directions to guest parking spaces shall be clearly posted. Tandem parking spaces shall not be used for guest parking.

In addition, prior to issuance of a building permit, a parking plan showing off-street parking spaces, as required by the Advisory Agency, be submitted for review and approval by the Department of City Planning (201 N. Figueroa Street, 4th Floor).

c. **Note to City Zoning Engineer and Plan Check.** The Advisory Agency has approved the following variations from the Los Angeles Municipal Code as it applies to this subdivision and the proposed development on the site.

Not Applicable

d. That prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy, a minimum 6-foot-high slumpstone or decorative masonry wall shall be constructed adjacent to neighboring residences, if no such wall already exists, except in required front yard.

e. The applicant shall install an air filtration system(s) to reduce the effects of diminished air quality on occupants of the project.

f. That a solar access report shall be submitted to the satisfaction of the Advisory Agency prior to obtaining a grading permit.

g. That the subdivider consider the use of natural gas and/or solar energy and consult with the Department of Water and Power and Southern California Gas Company regarding feasible energy conservation measures.

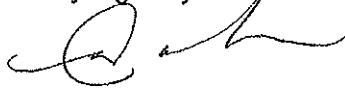
h. Recycling bins shall be provided at appropriate locations to promote recycling of paper, metal, glass, and other recyclable material.

max height is 45' but ZA limits it based on Community Plan + no other 4 story buildings on the block

- 5) In addition, prior to obtaining a building permit, the subdivider shall consider building construction techniques, such as overhanging eaves, location of windows, insulation, exhaust fans; planting of trees for shade purposes and the height of the buildings on the site in relation to adjacent development.

These findings shall apply to both the tentative and final maps for Tract No. TT-71823-CN.

Michael J. LoGrande
Advisory Agency



JOSE CARLOS ROMERO-NAVARRO
Deputy Advisory Agency

JCR:KG:th

Approved by Director

*(WLAPC approved
11754 Idaho / 1601 Stone)*

Note: If you wish to file an appeal, it must be filed within 10 calendar days from the decision date as noted in this letter. For an appeal to be valid to the City Planning Commission, it must be accepted as complete by the City Planning Department and appeal fees paid, prior to expiration of the above 10-day time limit. Such appeal must be submitted on Master Appeal Form No. CP-7769 at the Department's Public Offices, located at:

Figueroa Plaza
201 North Figueroa Street
4th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 482-7077

Marvin Braude San Fernando
Valley Constituent Service Center
6262 Van Nuys Boulevard, Room 251
Van Nuys, CA 91401
(818) 374-5050

Forms are also available on-line at <http://cityplanning.lacity.org>

The time in which a party may seek judicial review of this determination is governed by California Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6. Under that provision, a petitioner may seek judicial review of any decision of the City pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.5, only if the petition for writ of mandate pursuant to that section is filed no later than the 90th day following the date on which the City's decision becomes final.

Dr. David Shorter
11759 Idaho Ave., no, 2
Los Angeles, CA 90025

September 2, 2013

Los Angeles City Council
City Clerk, room 395
City Hall, 200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: 13-1070

Dear Planning and Land Use Management Committee:

Thank you for inviting comments regarding the Council File No. 13-1070. I have read the documents regarding this file and would like to simply point your attention to a major discrepancy in the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Reza Sarafzadeh and his representatives are making the case, quite well, that their building plans should not have been modified due to the lack of other four story buildings in the neighborhood. Four story buildings are everywhere. And this is exactly why the project should have been denied completely.

One of the reasons why construction plans go through an approval phase is for the urban/city planners to work with communities to determine the benefits and costs (not just economic) of proposals. For a range of reasons, this proposed project on Stoner is unreasonable (as was the most recent proposal for Stoner/Idaho). I will truncate an earlier letter to make this as brief as possible:

- 1) The construction will require the removal of the last six tall trees populating that corner. The church across the street removed three grand trees for their parking lot. These trees provided shade for existing houses, yards, and apartment buildings. Keep in mind; most of us in West LA do not have air conditioning in our units. These trees were huge and provided shade. When the trees go, so do the birds, the

bees, and the squirrels. You can simultaneously remove the environment from our lives and wonder why our neighborhoods look like alleys.

- 2) The construction will require the removal of the two houses on that corner. You just approved a deal that will remove the two older houses on Idaho and Stoner. In one house, a lady has lived there since 1950. Her husband planted the lemon tree that's directly outside my residence, which I harvest for the families on the street. These actual houses add character to our neighborhood. They provide a little bit of green space, some garden space, some history and depth to West Los Angeles. What is more important than that to any community? What does NOT help our community is another building of mostly temporary residents. Less houses means less long-term residents because renters and condo-owners have less investment in the properties.
- 3) The increased population per square foot will exacerbate an already problematic traffic situation in our neighborhood. We already have reached the limit for nighttime parking. It seems people in your situation have a history of approving these deals with very little concern for our lived lives afterward. We have cars simply driving around and around and around looking for parking at night. We live with our windows open and that means we have exhaust and noise pollution at already unbearable levels. The underground parking that you approve for these buildings does not provide enough spots for the residents and their guests.
- 4) Our current situation is that from 6am to 9am and from 4pm to 7pm our neighborhood streets have vehicles speeding to avoid the traffic on Santa Monica Blvd and Olympic. We also have two charter schools in our one square block. Simply consider not what's legal; of course people are allowed to invest in communities and make money. But at what expense? Consider what is best for people's actual lives. That is your job: one of your primary functions. You cannot simultaneously complain about traffic in Los Angeles, and yet continue to build high-rise living complexes in our neighborhoods that were not built for that capacity.

Please deny this building permit completely if at all possible. You are the people charged with the responsibility of keeping trees in our neighborhood, keeping our little, already packed, streets from becoming dangerous for our pets and kids due to people speeding to avoid Santa Monica Blvd. or

Olympic. You are responsible for figuring out how the loss of trees and additional cars and A/C units affects our air quality. You are responsible for asking if we need another year of major construction so that eight units can be rented to thirty renters/subrenters/students/subleters at the expense of homes with gardens and yards. Do NOT decide that such buildings are good for local businesses: we already cannot get into our local Trader Joes, Ralph's, Starbucks, taquerias, etc. because this square block is thoroughly over-crowded.

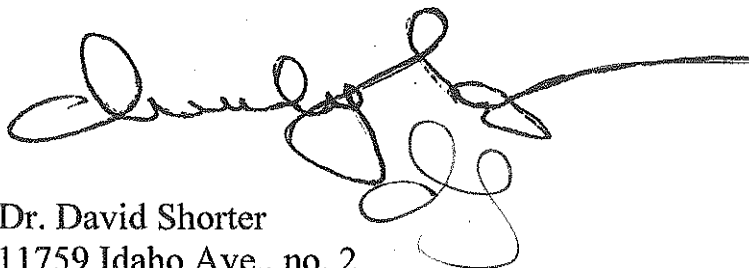
I have taken enough of your time. I appreciate your patience. Just let me add that us neighbors are getting the sense that this approval process is rigged, causing some distrust in the larger planning and land use system. Those of us who have jobs are working when you have your meetings. Otherwise you would have more people speaking up. The meetings to discuss such projects are during when people work or are held up in traffic. They are when we need to feed our kids. We are asked for signatures, but from whom? The people who live in the condos (you already approved) where we cannot get door to door? I should take time off work to stand outside condo buildings? A year ago, before we were even asked what we thought about the Idaho/Granville building, I coincidentally met a guy at a local bar who after learning where I lived said he was going to put in that building. (Sure enough I see him there all the time working with contractors.) In that chance meeting a year ago I told him I would oppose such a building because it was unneeded and would hurt the neighborhood. His response was a laugh, saying, "These things are approved before you even hear about them. They can't be stopped. Everyone wants their money." So why show up when the developers have showed their cards saying nothing can be done anyway?

You should put this entire project on hold. We do not have a need for this type of housing. And we definitely cannot justify it based on its effects to open space and the environment. And if they proposers say the environmental plan is solid, remind that the environment is not just flooding and toxins. Our environment includes the animals, the shade, the breezes blocked by a tall building, the view of the sunset or sky, and the ability to walk across the street without getting hit by cars that cannot see well due to all the other cars vying for parking or rushing through our neighborhood streets. Please do your research: we have an overage of these sorts of spaces: between Barrington and Bundy and between Santa Monica and Olympic there are approximately thirty signs listing condos or apartments in

units! One quick search on WestsideRentals.com or PadMapper will tell you that there are hundreds of the exact sizes of living spaces available at a range of prices. We have no need for these buildings. So what reason do we have now to lose the houses, trees, parking, animals and views of the sky? What overriding reason could you find to approve another building?

It seems the owner of the Granville and Idaho project was correct. Everyone wants his or her money. Who cares about trees, character, history, walkability, birds, bees, and views of the skies, essentially, the great things about life? This neighbor does. And my neighbors are relying on you to stop putting one more drop in the bucket. Please put this entire project on hold. Or at the very least, require them to keep the trees, provide more parking to avoid overcrowding our streets, and restrain the numbers of units so that we do not have further overcrowding of our neighborhood.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Shorter', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr. David Shorter
11759 Idaho Ave., no. 2
Los Angeles, CA 90025