

Communication from Public

Name: Resident 1

Date Submitted: 05/02/2024 05:41 PM

Council File No: 24-0490

Comments for Public Posting: Public Comment ED1 Note 5-2-24 As a former low-income resident of the Larchmont & Windsor Square resident and participant in the GWNC neighborhood council, I am writing in strong opposition to this proposal. Los Angeles is facing a historic housing crisis, a crisis particularly acute in “high resource” areas that encompass many of our HPOZ’s (including ones in Councilmember’s Yaraslovsky’s district, such as Hancock Park and Windsor Square). However, unlike the eras in which Hancock Park and Windsor Square were constructed, and unlike during our last major housing crisis Post WWII, over the past 50+ years, our city has made it illegal to build many types of multi-family housing in LA via restrictive single-family zoning. Namely, it is now illegal to construct the types of missing-middle structures like duplexes, quadplexes, and low-rise apartment buildings with generous family-sized apartments across over 75% of zoned residential land in Los Angeles, types of market-rate housing that were robust in Los Angeles before the 1970’s and some of which are protected under existing HPOZs in LA. I believe that this council proposal is made in bad faith, and has little to do with preserving the “character” of historic neighborhoods. (It should also be noted that the desire to preserve neighborhood “character” is a nice buzzword used to support policies that have resulted in Los Angeles being more economically and racially segregated today than it was in the 1990’s, when Councilmember Katy Yaraslovsky’s father, Yev Yaraslovsky, began his political career. Would the Councilwoman also agree that it’s necessary to preserve slave plantations in the American South for the sake of “character”?) Instead, I believe Councilmember K. Yaraslovsky’s proposal is a direct response to the anger of a handful of few but vocal longtime homeowners in her district. I feel Councilmember Yaraslovsky has made this proposal in bad faith and purely as a political move to appease wealthy donors and CD 5 residents. If you look at the other “communications from the public” for this file (23-0623-S1) that have already come in, most of them use the same form letter with language to voice their opposition to one specific project, at 800 S. Lorraine. This is especially disingenuous because there is a multi-story apartment with a parking garage directly across the street from this project. This project fits into the neighborhood character, and any argument

against that is disingenuous. While this form letter states that many of the people supposedly support affordable their housing, these same residents and neighborhood groups often oppose any new housing along their streets, and only accept housing along their polluted, busy, and loud corridors. Because of this, Hancock Park and Windsor Square have largely remained frozen in amber due to zoning restrictions and special carveouts of HPOZs, while neighboring Koreatown (a park-poor but transit rich neighborhood) has seen an explosion of housing. May I ask why Hancock Park (65% white, 16% Asian, 11% Hispanic, 4% Black) and Windsor Square (51% white, 27% Asian, 13% Hispanic, 4% Black) are getting a special request by their councilmember to be shielded from new development (without extra, expensive discretionary review that makes new housing less likely) while Koreatown (33% Asian, 30.6% Hispanic, 12% White, 5% Black) is expected to continue receiving the majority of growth next door? It seems to me that the only historical trend Hancock Park and Windsor Square are preserving is racial (and economic) segregation. It is deeply hypocritical for this city and these Councilmembers to suggest that more multi-family housing is somehow anti-historic, when really it is the notion of single-family only zoning that is new. While it is legal for wealthy buyers to DOWNSIZE duplexes and triplexes into single-family homes (a practice which actively removes RSO protected apartments from the rental market), single-family dominated HPOZs like Hancock Park and Windsor Square make it difficult if not legally impossible to do the same thing in reverse, and divide large mansions into more affordable apartments or condos – a common practice in large cities across the world and one already exhibited in less wealthy neighborhoods, particularly around Downtown LA and USC. Instead of proposing leeway that would allow more naturally affordable, smaller units to be carved out of multi-million dollar mansions and mini-mansions in Hancock Park and Windsor Square (while still preserving the exterior only historical “charms” and “character” of the neighborhood) the council member is opposing the fast-tracking of 100% affordable housing in our wealthiest and highest resource neighborhoods. She is saying that anyone who does not already rent or own in this neighborhood should be considered, at best, guests and, at worst, blight and denying access to the resources not only preserved but (CONT'D IN NEXT COMMENT).

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It should be noted that in response to ED1 projects in her district (prior to the law being amended to exclude single-family zones), Councilmember Nithya Raman of CD14 correctly pointed out that housing approvals could not be challenged without risking adhering to special interests (in this case, entitled wealthy homeowners) and continuing LA City Council’s messy legacy of corruption, gerrymandering, and political favoritism of the rich at the expense of the hardworking Angelenos who desperately need more housing. In proposing this “emergency ordinance,” Councilmember K. Yaraslovsky is upholding our city’s corrupt legacy. . We all know single-family homes are the most expensive form of housing there is, and the only LA will solve its housing crisis is by easily permitting inexpensive multifamily construction or subsidizing housing for working and middle class families – just like it did in Park LA Brea . Whether it’s via the Mayor’s ED1 directive, other affordable housing incentives, or massively needed upzoning across the entire city that builds more homes period (market rate or affordable) there is general agreement that LA will not fix its housing crisis by building less, upholding its current segregationist zoning practices, or slowing (and thus increasing the expense of) building. Our LA City councilmember needs to make building as easy and affordable as possible. If external aesthetics and livability are really the issues, then it needs to legalize single stair buildings like Seattle, subsidize housing and build public housing so that buildings are build with the considerations of future residents first and profits last, and build more community greenspace that isn’t blockaded behind private walls, lanes of traffic without crosswalks, and private fences. Anything less is just maintaining the divided, inequitable, and terribly regressive status quo of housing in L.A.

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Comments for Public Posting: (CONT'D COMMENT): It is deeply hypocritical for this city and these Councilmembers to suggest that more multi-family housing is somehow anti-historic, when really it is the notion of single-family-only zoning that is new and goes against the historical, natural growth and expansion of cities according to the economic needs of its workers'. (It should be noted that Zoning was created as a DIRECT response to the end of red-lining and the desegregation of schools, practices which Hancock Park and Windsor Square flourished and expanded under.) While it is legal for wealthy buyers to DOWNSIZE duplexes and triplexes into single-family homes (a practice which actively removes RSO protected apartments from the rental market), single-family dominated HPOZs like Hancock Park and Windsor Square make it difficult if not legally impossible to do the same thing in reverse, and divide large mansions into more affordable apartments or condos – a common practice in large cities across the world and one already exhibited in less wealthy neighborhoods, particularly around Downtown LA and USC. Instead of proposing leeway that would allow more naturally affordable, smaller units to be carved out of multi-million dollar mansions and mini-mansions in Hancock Park and Windsor Square (while still preserving the exterior only historical “charms” and “character” of the neighborhood) the council member is opposing the fast-tracking of 100% affordable housing in our wealthiest and highest resource neighborhoods. She is saying that anyone who does not already rent or own in this neighborhood should be considered, at best, guests and, at worst, blight and denying access to the resources not only preserved but SUBSIDIZED through our HPOZ zones, without offering any better alternative to open up the neighborhood to more workers and residents of all income brackets. It should be noted that in response to ED1 projects in her district (prior to the law being amended to exclude single-family zones), Councilmember Nithya Raman of CD14 correctly pointed out that housing approvals could not be challenged without risking adhering to special interests (in this case, entitled wealthy homeowners) and continuing LA City Council’s messy legacy of corruption, gerrymandering, and political favoritism of the rich at the expense of the hardworking Angelenos who desperately need more housing. In proposing this “emergency ordinance,”

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