Miriam Lens

From: gregjones@gregjonesrealestate.com on behalf of Greg Jones [ProspectHill@gregjonesrealestate.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 10, 2011 4:16 PM
To: Erik Pearson; Richard Patenaude; Miriam Lens
Subject: Mission Corridor Specific Plan Comments for Tonight's Meeting (2/10/11)

Erik/Richard--Please ensure the below letter regarding our neighborhood's input on the Mission Corridor Specific Plan is provided to the Planning Commission.

Sincere thanks.

---Greg

Dear Planning Commissioners,

The Prospect Hill Neighborhood Association (PHNA) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed Mission Corridor Specific Plan. The goals of the overall plan are to be applauded. As the plan is implemented, it is certain to have positive and long lasting impacts on the quality of life for our businesses, residents and visitors. Our neighborhood appreciates your efforts to ensure the Plan is thoughtfully considered and its importance in shaping the future livability and productivity of our community.

PHNA is limiting our comments to the areas of the plan that will directly impact our neighborhood. Who better to comment on the impacts of the Plan than those most affected by it, yes? Our Board requests the Planning Commission consider the following:

1. PHNA generally supports the "Preferred Regulating Plan" approach to Variable #1, Street Design. While it would be wonderful to reduce the number of lanes, increase the width of the sidewalks and install a narrow median strip, this alternative would not be consistent with the overall plan for either density nor future mixed use/redevelopment of the corridor. We, however, would like the actual design to incorporate the extension of the medians across Sunset and Simon Streets and perhaps Rose to eliminate southbound left hand turns into the neighborhood. This would also eliminate Northbound left hand turns and improve both traffic flow and safety along this stretch of Mission Boulevard. From the neighborhood's standpoint, this would significantly reduce the amount of cut through traffic in our neighborhood currently experienced and that expected by the mini-loop project. The median extensions should be included in the traffic analysis portion of the Environmental Impact Report to be accomplished. The broader and continuing question about the impacts of the mini-loop on our neighborhood will still require further study at some future time, but the EIR for this plan must also evaluate any changes to use, density, zoning and enhanced public space on traffic.

PHNA would also like to emphasize the installation of improved street lighting along the northerly stretch of Mission Blvd, consistent with downtown design guidelines. This portion of Mission Boulevard serves at the entrance to our City, and deserves to represent the City well. At the northerly end of the boulevard, we suggest an entry feature be included in the landscape plan marking one's arrival in our beautiful city.

2. One of the more distinguishing characteristics of this historic, downtown neighborhood, are the views available to residents of the western portion of the hillside. The building heights along the Mission Boulevard frontage are of concern to the neighbors. PHNA understands that residential density will be necessary to reinvigorate the corridor, and mixed use may require additional height to create the mix of commerce and residential uses that will enliven this part of our neighborhood. However, this should not be at the expense of one our oldest neighborhoods in the city. The three story limitation on heights should be maintained from A

Street north to the City limits as an overlay for the T-5 zone. In fact, I suggest that the three story designation be made clearer and the restriction be in feet above grade, rather than as a "story" limitation. For example, parking could be placed below grade and not impact above grade heights. The policy decision for the Commission here regards views, not the number of stories for new buildings.

3. PHNA supports the expansion of the civic space from A Street north to the "Big Mike" property. We were disappointed the City didn't acquire the Big Mike property, which was recently on the market as part of advancing this plan and had been voiced both by the Commission and the City Council. However, the goal remains and we would like to see more civic space in our neighborhood. We would hope that plans for this space would include active uses to encourage positive activities rather than downtown loitering. Design is everything!

Again, thank you for the opportunity for our neighborhood to share its views. We care deeply about the flavor, character and future of our downtown neighborhood and trust that you will consider our comments carefully in your deliberations.

Sincerely,

Greg Jones
President, PHNA