



SOUTH OF MARKET PROJECT AREA COMMITTEE
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Advisory Body to the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency

SPECIAL ZONING COMMITTEE
Tuesday September 25, 2007
5:00 Noon

Presiding Chair (5:03 PM)
Chris Durazo

Chair's Report (5:03 PM)

Ms. Durazo welcomed everyone and announced that she would like to begin the Special Zoning Committee meeting discussing issues that members are currently concerned about.

Roll Call (5:04 PM)

Present: Chris Durazo/SOMCAN, Ingrid Aquino, John Melone/SAN, Charles Range/SOM Health Center, Raymon Smith and Antoinetta Stadlman

Absent:

PAC Staff: Karen Nolan

Agency Staff:

Guests: Joshua Morgan/SOMPAC, Andrew Harris/Rancho Parnassus and Jamie Mencini/DCYF

Review of Minutes (5:05 PM)

No minutes to review.

Agenda Order (5:05 PM)

It was agreed to follow the agenda as is.

Announcement of next Special Zoning Committee meeting

After a brief discussion, members agreed to meet on Tuesday, October 16th at 5:00 PM.

Agenda Item 6. Review and Discussion of Draft EIR on East SOMA by Chris Durazo (5:06 PM)

Ms. Durazo passed around a map of the Eastern Neighborhoods and the greater South of Market reflecting the current heights and the proposed heights. She asked for member comments and concerns.

Ms. Aquino stated that she has been trying to wade through this 700 page document and she does not see much in the way of low and moderate income housing for this

area. She is concerned that the transportation corridor being proposed does not serve the people of this area. **Ms. Aquino** stated that she does not see open space represented and this concerns her.

Ms. Stadlman stated that she has a concern with these 40-50 story skyscrapers they are now building. She stated that even with the additional affordable units there is still too much market-rate housing. **Ms. Stadlman** stated that she would like to see all of this stopped as it is not worth the trade off for the minimal amount of inclusionary housing that no one in this area can afford anyway.

Mr. Melone stated that according to ABAG San Francisco tops the list with 150% market-rate housing and only 42% moderate, and very few low-income units. He stated that we should be building very low and low-income housing and must concentrate on this because this city is aging and a large number of baby boomers will be retiring and must have very low and low-income housing.

Mr. Melone stated that Folsom Street from Cesar Chavez all the way down to the Embarcadero is designated as the major transit thoroughfare. When you have 400 units of housing being built at 5th and Folsom Streets with 1:1 parking, you are creating a congestion nightmare. We will have traffic that never stops. **Mr. Melone** stated that this 13-14 story building is going to cause wind tunnels and too much traffic from all the cars going in and out of the garage on Folsom Street.

Mr. Morgan stated that he belongs to Clementina Cares and they have met with AGI Capitol with regard to this project. The building will be 85 feet and the entrance to the parking garage will be on Tehama Street, not Folsom. **Mr. Morgan** wanted to point this out as members are speaking of concerns over the height and the traffic congestion on Folsom Street from the parking garage.

Mr. Smith stated that he is not sure of his concerns at this time as he does not believe this is the time to ask, but he does have concerns over the lack of open space. Families are moving to this area and you must have open space and activities for children.

Ms. Durazo wondered if members have thought about the higher arterial heights having an affect on the small industrial businesses. **Ms. Stadlman** stated that she is not in favor of more density for the area. **Ms. Durazo** expressed concern that a great number of small businesses are affected, but not well represented on the PAC. **Mr. Smith** stated that small businesses could not afford parking lots or garages and this affects their businesses because people will not stop if there is no parking. He pointed out that there are many families here that have been here for many years and the height increase would affect the quality of life for the neighborhood.

Mr. Morgan stated that the perspective of property owners is for new buildings to have as much parking as needed. He stated that aside from low-income buildings, market-rate buildings have cars and will need parking. **Mr. Morgan** would like to see a Community Benefits District in this area for improvements and to have more say in our sidewalks, street cleaning, tree planting, etc. A CBD engages business owners and property owners more because they have a vested interest. **Mr. Smith** stated that he would be concerned over what types of businesses come here.

Mr. Range stated that he understands the tax increment dollars are governed by Board of Supervisor policy. He referred to the Intercontinental Hotel and stated that the owner wanted to ensure that the funds for community benefits stayed in the South of Market for housing in this area. Because of a city ordinance the money must go to the general fund and the Mayor and Board of Supervisors determines where those funds go. **Mr. Range** stated that the only control over community benefit funds was when **Supervisor Daly** passed special legislation for the Rincon Hill funds to go specifically to SOMA. You must have special legislation or a CBD in order to direct funds for a specific area. **Mr. Range** reminded everyone that the Board of Supervisors were not happy with **Supervisor Daly's** legislation regarding Rincon Hill and **Mr. Range** is not sure how difficult it would be to do this again.

Mr. Range referred to the parking issue and stated that at one time the Planning Commission was backing away from 1:1 parking and pushing for housing to be built with no parking. If they are backing off from this policy, then that is another issue and we must find out what the policy is at this time. We might want to look into restricted parking with residents of an area having a parking sticker allowing them to park on the street. **Mr. Range** referred to the entrance and exit to parking garages on arterial streets and stated that in proposing the Westbrook Plaza project to the community, the neighbors insisted that there be no entry on Moss Street. They had to change the parking garage entry to 7th Street in order for the neighbors to support the project.

Ms. Durazo referred to the Rincon Hill funds that **Mr. Range** spoke of and stated that she could speak on this issue as SOMCAN was very instrumental in pushing for those funds. It was set up as an impact fee because this is the largest high rise west of the Mississippi. This fund was set up to lessen the impact on the South of Market. These funds do not go to **Supervisor Daly's** friends as some have alleged, they go to MOCD. **Ms. Durazo** referred to the CBD that **Mr. Morgan** spoke of and reminded everyone that a CBD is additional taxes that property owners must vote on.

Mr. Range referred to the proposed heights and stated that if you have 40 foot heights in the alleys and allow 85 foot heights on the arterials, it will be like putting a fortress on the arterial streets and walling in the alleys. It would become like a prison with no sunlight and no privacy for the alleys. **Mr. Melone** reminded everyone of the wind tunnels this would create, not to mention the strain on an already weak sewage system. He referred to liquefaction, landslides, sewage, tsunamis and wind and stated that this EIR does not follow what we already know from the Loma Prieta earthquake. **Ms. Durazo** wanted to know if the South of Market has a water reservoir for emergencies. **Ms. Stadlman** stated that there is a reservoir in the Sunset and the Haight, but not here. **Mr. Smith** wanted to know what document **Mr. Melone** was referring to so he could ensure that he receives a copy. **Mr. Melone** responded that he is referring to the Eastern Neighborhoods EIR. He referred to the traffic and wanted to know what this would do to our schools, senior meal programs and our housing.

Ms. Durazo expressed concern over whether or not we would be able to change anything. **Ms. Stadlman** reminded everyone that the Western SOMA Planning Task Force is working on zoning for the Western SOMA and will be meeting tomorrow night at City Hall in room 421. She stated that the meeting begins at 6:00 PM and they will be discussing this EIR as well. **Mr. Range** pointed out that for a developer to go only ten feet higher to 50 feet does not cost out for them and is not worth it economically unless they can go to 85 feet.

Ms Durazo stated that she would list all of the concerns and get them to members so they could be reviewed before she forwards them to the Planning Department. Everyone agreed to meet again on Tuesday, October 16th at 5:00 PM.

Public Comment (5:58 PM)

Meeting Ends (5:59 PM)

**Chris Durazo
Chair**