



Community Development
Department

Memo

DATE: January 28, 2025
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Robert (Dean) Flores, Senior Planner
RE: Additional Documents, Item No. 2

The attached written comments were received by 12:00 p.m. on January 28, 2025.
(Attachment 1 – Public Comments)

Attachment 1

Public Comments Received

Dean Flores

From: Joanne Nuckols
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:23 AM
To: PlanningComments
Subject: 1/28/2025 Planning Commission #2

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Planning Commission:

We want to address below key strategies that we feel are important to the work currently being done related to Design Review Reform, revisions related to the Cultural Heritage Commission and proposed amendments to the SP Municipal Code within the Housing Element that will help South Pasadena meet its housing goals while maintaining our community's unique character and values.

1. Preserving Historic Character through Objective Design Standards

It's important that new developments align with South Pasadena's historic charm. We urge the City to adopt **objective design standards** that require high-quality design elements, including:

- **Building articulation** to create visual interest.
- **Material variation** to avoid monotony and enhance aesthetic appeal.
- **Reduced massing** to appropriately scale buildings to their surroundings.

These measures will ensure that new developments respect and preserve South Pasadena's historic character while allowing for the housing growth we need.

2. Incentivizing Affordable Housing with a Local Density Bonus Ordinance

Affordable housing is a pressing need, and adopting a **local density bonus ordinance** can help incentivize such projects. This ordinance should:

- Allow developments to exceed the height limit by **only one additional story** or deviate from other code requirements for certain level of affordability.

This approach will make it easier to produce affordable housing while maintaining the City's ability to oversee development.

3. Expanding Housing Options with a Mixed-Use Overlay

Lastly, we support the creation of a **mixed-use overlay** in non-residential zones to permit residential development. This would:

- Increase housing capacity in underutilized areas, such as the Ostrich Farm area and along Huntington Drive.
- Encourage smart growth by integrating residential and commercial uses, supporting walkability, and reducing vehicle trips.

By implementing these strategies, the City can achieve context-sensitive housing growth that contributes to South Pasadena's long-term vision while preserving its character and meeting the needs of current and future residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Harry Knapp, Former Mayor

Clarice Knapp, Former Cultural Heritage Commissioner

Joanne Nuckols, Former Freeway & Transportation Commissioner



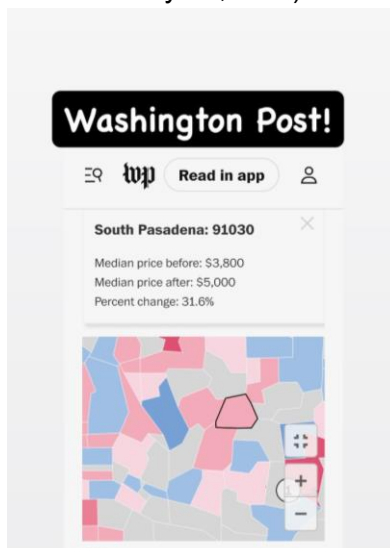
January 28, 2025

To the Planning Commissioners of South Pasadena,

South Pasadena Tenants Union is calling up on our Planning Commissioners to assist 53% of South Pasadenans who rent their homes. At the last council meeting, immediately following the disaster, we presented a letter from 129 residents, renters and homeowners, requesting the City enact emergency tenant protections.

The time for delay is over—we need emergency protections now now to protect our homes and the future of South Pas naturally occurring affordable housing inventory. South Pasadenans have suffered loss of income and many are experiencing health issues as a result of the environmental fallout caused by the fires.

With rents in South Pasadena having already increased by up to 30% since January 8, 2024, landlords wishing to further increase their profits may be compelled to impose illegal rent increases on their tenants. (Washington Post “Rent Rose by 20 Percent across L.A. County after fires. That’s illegal” published on January 25,2025)



While there are laws in place to cap that increase at 10% (AB1482), even before the fires, SPTU consistently receives requests for assistance from South Pasadenans who have been given increases above the legal limit. We do not have the bandwidth as a grassroots volunteer

operated community organization to respond to an influx of these cases. The City must do it's part to serve and protect its residents at this horrible time! An emergency rent freeze ordinance will equip thousands of South Pasadenans who live in multiunit buildings, as well as those who rent single family homes and condos, to defend their housing stability in the face of this unprecedented regional disaster.

We also requested an **eviction moratorium** to prevent landlords from displacing tenants to exploit the current crisis for financial gain. If residents are forced out of their homes by investor landlords or profiteering agents seeking to replace them with fire victims desperate for housing, how will they survive on a relocation fee of just one month's rent? There is literally nowhere for anyone to go at this time. A family from Altadena that we assisted with mutual aid after they lost their home on the night of January 8, reported yesterday that they have applied to a dozen rentals in South Pas and surrounding communities and have not be able to find a new home! Does the city want to add current renters in South Pasadena to that mix?

The Council can easily enact this ordinance as they did in 2020 in the face of COVID 19 lockdowns. Protecting South Pasadena housing is both a health and economic priority for our city. Tens of thousands of people are newly homeless, and many more who have lost income are at risk of joining them. South Pasadena must implement robust measures in the form of an emergency rent freeze and eviction ban in order to prevent South Pasadenans from becoming homeless.

This new crisis should not be news to anyone of you or the council. You can look at any media outlet, regional, statewide or national and see daily stories about rent gouging, massive increase in rents and very real fears of evictions. Please, please will the Planning Commission recommend to the council, support our requests and stand in solidarity with 53% of South Pasadena residents.

We urge you to protect South Pasadena residents with a rent freeze, an eviction moratorium, and increased relocation fees without delay. Our community is counting on your leadership in this critical moment.

Sincerely,

Anne Bagasao
Lula Cummings
Casey Dukes
Erica Rede
Priscilla Zaragoza

The Committee of Mothers
South Pasadena Tenants Union