

Rancho Bernardo
COMMUNITY PLANNING BOARD
mailing address: 15721 Bernardo Heights Parkway
Suite B, #230
San Diego, CA 92128

May 1, 2008

City of San Diego
Development Services Department

RE: Land Development Code: Draft 6 th Update

Dear Sir/ Madam,

The advisory planning group of Rancho Bernardo has reviewed the above referenced 6 th draft of the Land Development Code (LDC). Our concerns/ comments are as follows:

1) Issue 16 - Consolidation of Processing:

- a) We are concerned that this consolidation will reduce the involvement of the local based planning advisory groups. If matters are brought to the City Council without other decision maker involvement then the avenue for discussion and appeal has been dramatically reduced. We believe that the local planning groups provide valuable input on projects from the area that a project would most directly affect.
- b) The purpose of planning is to provide better quality projects and correspondingly a better City. The stated intent that this change will save time and money for the City is confusing since the applicant pays for the costs of the permit process.

2) Issue 17 - Automobile Service Stations:

- a) We disagree with the change of the permit requirements from a CUP (Process 3) to a NUP (Process 2) in the CC and CR-1-1 zones.
- b) We disagree with the change of the permit requirements from a CUP (Process 3) to a Limited Use (Process 1) in the CR-2-1 zones.
- c) It is our concerns that Gas Stations are intensive uses that cause a substantial impact on the surrounding area. This reduction in the permit process would allow use decisions to be made at the counter level in certain causes, which would mean that there would be no review by/ or notification of the local planning advisory group. This is for a use that would, as already mentioned, have a substantial area impact.

3) Issue 22 - Companion Units:

- a) We are concerned that stated changes would increase the chance that the main unit and the companion unit would both be rentals, thereby creating a rental complex where one was not intended.
- b) Why are we not allowing concurrent construction of the companion unit?

4) Issue 26 – Landscape:

- a) Due the recent fire, has the City taken fire retardant plant material into account in the generation of the Landscape requirements and the approved planting materials tables.

5) Substantial Conformance Review:

- a) We are deeply concerned by what we see as an underlying trend to have decisions, whenever possible, occur at the staff level (discretionary) and to by-pass the advisory planning groups.

- b) We are also very concerned about the Development Services staff making findings of substantial conformance on applications. It appears that the SCR is being used to omit the advisory planning groups and the City review process from appropriate project involvement.
- c) We believe that the advisory planning groups provide much to the City and to the planning process. It appears that there is an attempt to mitigate their involvement so as to provide a more expeditious process for the applicants. A project involves more than just an applicant; it also involves the community that the project is being built in. Both are important and community participation should not be sacrificed to benefit the applicant.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these matters.

Sincerely,

John E. Woods, Architect
Chair, Development Review Committee
For the Rancho Bernardo Community Planning Board