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August 23, 2020

To: Land Development Team Oversight Subcommittee

Re: August 25, 2020 meeting/Novak Report

Allied Neighborhoods Association is pleased to submit some initial comments to the Novak Report.

1) A process improvement that should be implemented right away (because it's already required) is to make sure all submittal requirements are included before a project is put on an agenda; this will make the process more efficient plus provide the necessary and expected information for review. For example, plans without required adjacent property building footprints should not be agendized.

2) Recommendation 26: Eliminate the Single Family Design Board (SFBD) or reassign its duties.

This section lacks historical context of why the SFDB was formed, which includes:

- Too many appeals
- ABR meetings too long, often late into the evenings
- Separate design review for single family homes

Through a process that involved meetings every other Friday afternoon spanning at least a year and a half, the NPO (and SFDB) was born. The Committee had representatives from City Council, Planning Commission, design review and two neighborhood/citizen representatives.

It's widely agreed by previous City Councils that the SFDB has been successful, and achieved many goals:

- Appeals of single family homes were greatly reduced
- The workload of ABR was reduced to a manageable level (important to note this was years before the AUD Program, and the new workload of AUD)
- The NPO created a framework - including FARs, which addressed lots below 15,000 sq. ft, and guidelines for larger lots above 15,000 sq. ft., the 20 closest homes

analysis when applicable, etc. Created goal posts both for applicants and neighbors about what size of development or property addition could be acceptable.

3) The Novak Group at Council earlier this year said the results of design review were generally regarded by all groups as very successful.

Our lovely community and built environment reflect the success of our design review process. It is not uncommon for an applicant to mention (to a design review body) that their project is much improved due to the process and design review input.

4) A bit shocking (alarming) to read, bottom of pg. 46. *"Participants in the Process Improvement Exercise identified the number of design review boards as an area for simplification when it comes to the land development process. They recommended that the City pursue combining or eliminating design review boards. This change would allow staff to approve projects without review by a board."* (Emphasis added)

Let's not forget, neighbors and the community are stakeholders in the process, and staff approval would eliminate their input. (Additionally, noticing neighboring property owners and residents would be eliminated as there would be no meeting to notice about.)

We appreciate your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,
Allied Neighborhoods Association

Cc: Rebecca Bjork
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