

Title: Transit-Oriented Community Project Impact and Community Input (CPC-2017-1914-MSA + LA Municipal Code 12.22 A.31)
Item No. 6
Meeting date: 2019-05-21
Agendized by: Patricia Lyon, PLUC Chair
Contact person: Patricia Lyon, PLUC Chair Phone number:
Committee Vote (if appropriate): Passed, Unanimous on Voice Vote
Does this item have a fiscal impact on the Neighborhood Council? ___ Yes _X_ No
Additional documents attached? __X_ Yes ___ No

RECOMMENDATION: There are a slate of newer density incentive ordinances in Los Angeles creating unintended consequences regarding the “on the ground” reality in our community that risk safety, quality of life, and housing affordability for our community stakeholders.

Given the challenges our community currently faces regarding rapid development and high-density incentive options for developers (SB1818, Transit-Oriented Communities, Accessory Dwelling Units, etc) requesting Planning temporarily suspend approvals of TOC projects in the Reading/Ramsgate area.

And that Councilman Bonin

1. Create a working committee of CD11 staff, unconflicted volunteer land-use experts, community stakeholders, and NC elected members.
2. Charge this committee—as a multi-faceted sounding board—to identify and study *specific* development projects of concern, with the goal of proposing solutions and/or modifications that become strategic “template” planning options for similar cases as they arise in the NC geography.
3. Begin this committee’s work by studying the TOC “hot spot” of Reading/Ramsgate neighborhood.
4. As agreed upon by the our community, translate these strategic “template” planning options into official guidelines in our in-progress Community Plan Update process.

BACKGROUND: LA’s new ordinance defining developer density bonuses and other variance incentives for building multi-unit housing near “major transit stops” (see definition and other TOC ordinance information in agenda Addendum). The ordinance states that the “affordable housing incentive area” is defined as being one-half mile radius (2640 ft) around a major transit stop.

Given these parameters, the 150 parcels which make up the Reading/Ramsgate neighborhood area all qualify for TOC density bonus projects.

Discussion of concerns regarding this TOC “hot spot”:

- Removal of the current housing from the rental market (legally viable due to the Ellis Act), followed by mass tenant evictions, then demolition of what is now current low-density rent-stabilized multi-family housing area.
- The loss of a crucial, strategic opportunity to develop more affordable housing units in the Reading/Ramsgate area, beyond the bare minimum the TOC ordinance and the Housing and Community Investment Department (HCID) require.
- Planning Department approval of multiple projects without any community input on the non-by-right aspects of new TOC developments in the area.
- Unexamined questions of future public safety and quality of life in this potentially hyper-densified multi-family housing area.
- The potential for a missed opportunity to do proactive, community-serving “big picture” planning to overlay the parcel-by-parcel conversion of RSO-to-TOC housing.

DISCUSSION: PLUC committee concerns included:

- Noted Ellis Act is huge liability for protecting and growing affordable housing in our community.
- TOC projects in the Reading/Ramsgate area are not coming before PLUC/NC, yet are being approved without community input by Planning.
- Developer Scott Walker in particular has multiple parcels and building projects in the pipeline, giving him the un-official, unintended position as “master planner” of this TOC conversion of Reading/Ramsgate, without any community insight or input.
 - Noted Scott Walker bought 8922 Reading Ave (originally 4 RSO units) for \$1.4M and “flipped” the building in 2019 for \$5M. All without community input.
- Recognition of need for transparent oversight re community concerns:
 - Tracking what Ellis Act-vacated tenants are being paid (HCID) and how that payment was calculated;
 - Administration of first-right-of-refusal for affordable units in new TOC building;
 - How replacement of RSO with Affordable is being calculated (share the math with community);
 - Clarification re terms by which a developer can reach “net zero loss of affordable” with a combination of TOC affordable units + RSO re-dedication of new units—a new and possibly questionable method for satisfying project affordable allowances via Planning and HCID the PLUC is not aware of.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

- 2019-05-21 PLUC Meeting TOC Presentation
- LA Times Article on TOC - <https://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-affordable-housing-transit-zoning-20190526-story.html>

MOTION:

Rapid development and high-density incentive options for development (e.g., SB1818, Transit-Oriented Communities, Accessory Dwelling Units) pose serious challenges in public safety, quality of life, and housing affordability for our community. Given the complexity and quantity of certain land use challenges, motion to request

1. The Planning Department temporarily suspend further TOC plan approvals related to the 150-parcel area of Reading/Ramsgate (90045).

Further, that Councilman Bonin support the WPNC Planning and Land Use Committee's efforts by:

- 2.a. Creating a working committee of CD11 staff, unconflicted volunteer land-use experts, community stakeholders, and NC elected members.
- 2.b. Charging this committee—as a multi-faceted sounding board—to identify and study *specific* development projects of concern, with the goal of proposing solutions and/or modifications that become strategic “template” planning options for similar cases as they arise in the NC geography. And, as deemed appropriate by the community, translate these strategic “template” planning options into official guidelines in our in-progress Community Plan Update process.
- 2.c. Initiating the committee's work by making the TOC “hot spot” of the Reading/Ramsgate neighborhood its first matter of business.

[end]