

North Park Planning Committee
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Uptown Planners
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June 22, 2011

Honorable Councilmember Lightner:

As you are aware, the Community Planning Committees of North Park (NPPC) and Uptown (UP) have been working to stop inappropriate & illegal demolitions of historic or potentially historic structures in our communities as well as others throughout the City of San Diego for over two decades.

In 2007 the NPPC and in 2009 the UPs submitted memos with recommendations for modifying the Land Development Code (LDC) and guidelines for implementation of the LDC as it applies to demotions of historic or potentially historic structures.

As a result of actions taken by City Council following History Day last year a number of changes we requested have taken place. Further these changes were developed with input from our cpg's, SOHO and others. These improvements include:

1. There is now a requirement for a physical inspection by the Historical Resources Section.
2. Notification is much improved with DSD now sending the weekly Demo Report digitally to cpg's who request them.
3. Re: 45-day review
 - a. The reinitiating of the 10-day review period by a cpg and/or Preservation Organization prior to a demolition permit being granted to an applicant
 - b. The notification process now includes automatic digital notification to the designated contact for a cpg and/or Preservation Organization
 - c. The form has been expanded and clarified
4. Community Plan Updates are underway in North Park and Uptown and include Historical Resources Surveys which are helping staff and communities identify historic resources appropriate for preservation and conversely areas that might be appropriate for redevelopment.

There is still much to be done if we are to save our history and what makes our communities unique and marketable. The following open unresolved and newly identified issues including but not limited to:

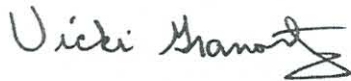
1. Allowing demolitions to be misclassified as remodels, leading to no community review at all and the destruction of historic resources.
2. Inadequate noticing that still occurs continues to encourage short cutting the permit process.

3. Penalties are too low to discourage unpermitted demolitions, leading applicants wanting to circumvent the process to consider the limited dollar amount the price of doing business.
4. Demolition by neglect is still an ongoing scourge when trying to protect historic resources rather than seriously consider adaptive reuse.
5. Allowing vinyl windows to be approved ministerially and outside the 45 year review process is bizarre at best given once vinyl windows replace wood windows the ability to receive historic designation is made all but impossible. Further when property owners later apply for designation they no longer meet the requirements for designation.
6. Errors in processing applications by staff or misinformation by applicants continue to result in demolition of historically significant structures.


Our communities, and Golden Hill, Point Loma, Old Town and La Jolla are regularly impacted when there are failures of policy and in the systems that allow for reckless demolitions. In March 2011, the UP and NPPC elected new board members. The newly elected groups unanimously reaffirmed their support for policies to curtail reckless demolitions in our older communities by readopting the memos by our cpg's (See the attached memo). We continue working together and want to acknowledge the other cpg's that have also weighed in supporting the policy reforms suggested in the UP and NPPC's memos.

With the interest you have already shown, your experience as a former cpg member and as a resident of a historic community there is a renewed sense of hope for resolving these issues and others not included in this letter. We look forward to working with you in anyway we can, please do not hesitate to let us.

Respectfully,



Vicki Granowitz
Chair NPPC



Leo Wilson
Chair UP