



September 15, 2010

**VIA EMAIL**

Mayor Bill Bogaard  
Members of the City Council  
City of Pasadena  
100 North Garfield Avenue  
Pasadena, California 91109

RE: Proposed expansion of All Saints Church

Dear Mayor Bogaard and Members of the City Council:

The proposed expansion of All Saints Church appears to be inconsistent with the language and intent of established planning documents that guide civic center development. The board of directors of the West Pasadena Residents' Association (WPRA) believes this inconsistency is the product, at least in part, of city staff having misadvised the sponsors and supporters of the All Saints' project as to the applicable planning standards. The WPRA raises this issue with the City Council because the actions of city staff appear to result from a lack of clear guidance in policy directions provided by the Council.

Pasadena has several planning documents that guide civic center development, including The Mayor and Council's City Center Task Force plan of 1998, sometimes referred to as the "Gray Book." Other plans include the 1925 Bennett Plan, the 1990 Civic Center Specific Plan, the 1994 General Plan, and more recent plans. These plans complement and support each other, and inform the interpretation and application of various rules. No one plan supersedes all other plans.

In advising All Saints Church, staff presumed to limit the applicable plans to those they chose, rather than insisting on proper application of all relevant planning documents. Staff substituted their opinion for the vision and guidance established through committed citizen participation and the political process, and ignored approved and established plans.

The resulting plan appears to be inconsistent with established plans. Examples of these inconsistencies include:

- Building form or massing (length) along Euclid exceeds the maximum allowed by the 1990 plan (pages 27 and 95).
- Public courtyard character and orientation do not comply with requirements of the 1990 (pages 95-96) and 1998 (page 53) plans.

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- Building qualities, character, and materials along Euclid are not compatible with the church, as required by all plans (e.g., 1990 page 95)

The WPRA believes that staff's presumption results from both a lack of clarity in the policy direction provided by City Council and in the Council's apparent reluctance to correct similar staff presumption in the past. Until Council provides clear policy direction and rejects projects that deviate from that policy such presumption will continue, and projects that are inconsistent with approved plans, such as IDS (and perhaps All Saints), will continue to come to the Council.

Therefore, the WPRA asks the following:

- That the Council provide clear policy direction concerning the relevance and applicability to the civic center of all city planning documents, including the Grey Book and other plans referred to in this letter, such direction to emphasize the complementary nature of the plans and the use of prior plans to inform, interpret and apply more recent plans.
- That, following the Council direction provided above, the proposed All Saints expansion plans be reviewed by staff to ensure consistency with the applicable planning documents, and that inconsistencies or deviations from those plans be addressed through normal planning and approval processes.

The WPRA is particularly concerned that civic center plans and goals, established and refined over decades with the benefit of countless citizen volunteer hours and supported by the WPRA and other community and neighborhood organizations, were so easily ignored. Such casual disregard is a betrayal of public trust that undermines confidence in our civic institutions and decreases the incentives for public participation in our community. As a city we depend on the constant contributions of and participation by our residents in all aspects of civic life. How can we ask or expect them to do so if they see their efforts so cavalierly dismissed?

All Saints Church is an asset to our city in many ways, and the church and its associated buildings contribute to the character of our civic center. The efforts of our city to maintain that character, and the participation and commitment of our community to support that character are also assets to our city. Let's honor those efforts and that commitment by enhancing those assets in a manner that maintains the character of our civic center and says "thank you" to the community for their participation in creating the plans that guide our development.

Sincerely,



Michael Udell  
President

cc: Michael Beck  
Steve Mermell  
Antonio Gardea  
Planning Commission

**Distribution:**

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