



September 12, 2016

Subject: Pasadena City Council Public Comment Procedures

Dear Mayor Tornek, City Council Members, Commissioners and Staff:

The West Pasadena Resident's Association (WPRA) is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to maintaining and enhancing the character and quality of life in southwest Pasadena and throughout Pasadena.

As others have noted, the recent YWCA/Kimpton public hearing exposed problems relating to the City Council's public hearing process. A long staff presentation was followed by a closed session, while a large number of members of the public waited to comment upon the YWCA/Kimpton development issue. Ultimately, the public comment period did not begin until approximately 11:00 p.m., by which time many of those wishing to comment had left the proceedings.

The WPRA is grateful for the open nature of City Council proceedings and recognizes that sometimes it is useful to address matters of limited interest first. However, the City Council, being mindful of the public's time, would be wise to do all in its power to quash any appearance (however unfounded) that it is attempting to delay proceedings or to frustrate the ability of the public actually to provide comments, opinions, and facts.

Accordingly, the WPRA requests that on matters of significant public interest, public comment immediately follow any staff presentation, and precede significant comments or questions by the City Council, as well as any applicant presentation. (During the above-referenced YWCA/Kimpton matter in particular, the City Council participated in an extended debate before the public got a chance to speak.) The City Council should undertake whatever other measures are practicable to ensure that it always values the time and comments of Pasadena's citizens above all else during public hearings.

Placing public comments earlier in both City Council and city commission meetings is essential to preserving the intent and spirit of citizen involvement. Thank you for considering our point of view.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kenyon", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Kenyon Harbison, President
West Pasadena Residents Association

The WPRA is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to maintaining and enhancing the quality of life in southwest Pasadena. We represent 7,000 households, including 1,000 paid members.

Distribution:

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