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H C N C
Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council



HISTORIC CULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
c/o Koban @ 307 E First Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

President: ltmanjuman@msn.com
Secretary: hcncla@gmail.com
Treasurer: hcnctreasurer@gmail.com
t. 213. 849.0012
f. 213. 613.0282

14 March 2015

Councilmember Jose Huizar
Council District 14
200 N. Spring St., #425
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Arts District Development Plan

Dear Councilmember Huizar,

As you well aware, the city's Planning Department has embarked on an effort to introduce a new Land Use Ordinance for the Arts District that will, for the first time in history, permit new ground-up construction geared towards residential projects. This plan will substantially increase density in the Arts District.

HCNC and a number of other community organizations and individuals took an active part in providing the Planning Department with input designed to help shape the ordinance in a manner that will preserve the unique characteristics of the Arts District. Despite the many hours we devoted to a process designed to promote thoughtful development to further enhance the creative and productive nature of the Arts District, we were frustrated by events following the publication of the Draft Ordinance. As soon as the Draft published, there was a concerted attempt by various outside interests to rush the Draft Ordinance through the Planning Commission. Our comments submitted jointly and separately by the HCNC and LARABA were seemingly ignored.

As the new Land Use Ordinance is a matter of the utmost importance to the future of the Arts District, we have taken the initiative to craft a proposed ordinance we believe will achieve these goals and certainly should be the starting point of an open and transparent community discussion. Our goal is to create an environment that encourages quality and sustainable development, ensures buildings are constructed to last a century or more, and adapts as dictated by a changing community. Our proposed ordinance emphasizes the need to attract the creative class of Los Angeles to the Arts District with a more balanced offering of space throughout the area for new industrial and commercial uses as well as live/work use.

We are local residents and business owners united in caring deeply about the Arts District. Our gravest concern is that a small group of well-capitalized residential developers who have no understanding of our neighborhood are determined to impose a plan that will allow them to reap short-term profits at the expense of the Arts District's long-term best interests. You have played a vital role in overseeing the rejuvenation of our neighborhood. We call on you to ensure that any new Land Use Ordinance will provide a framework for thoughtful, sustainable policies that reflect the history and promote the future of the Arts District.

Sincerely,

Brian Kito
HCNC President

cc: Tanner Blackman, planning deputy
Sara Hernandez, downtown field deputy