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Sent: Tuesday, August 30, 2022 1:35 PM

To: Joe Vinatieri <jvcc@bewleylaw.com>; Octavio Cesar Martinez <omartinez@cityofwhittier.org>; Fernando Dutra <fdutra@cityofwhittier.org>; jmartinez@cityofwhittier.org; Cathy Warner <cathywarner@earthlink.net>

Cc: Rigo Garcia <rgarcia@cityofwhittier.org>

Subject:

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Council Members,

As current Chair of the Historic Resources Commission I am writing to you with grave concerns about the proposed amendments to the Uptown Specific Plan (USP). Your vote tonight with regards to the proposed amendments might well have implications that could affect historic resources in Uptown.

My main concerns/questions are:

- Uptown has the oldest and largest concentration of historic resources in the City. It is the historic cornerstone of Whittier and its preservation is the critical component driving the creation of the USP. Has there been any assessment in the environmental documents to address the impacts of these amendments on those historic resources?
- The amendments propose changes in height, usage, parking requirements, placement of buildings, and aesthetics that could affect historic structures throughout the USP designated area. Allowing visible surface parking instead of discreet, covered parking for residential is unacceptable. (This is a textbook opportunity for electric recharge stations, solar panels on car ports, water detention and retention of surface run-off) Where is evidence of our commitment to Best Management Practices (BMP)? A "green" future is compatible with historicity.
- Ground level Commercial in the center of town is a mandatory catalyst that, if eliminated, will have a profound effect on the synergy the plan intended to generate. Have these changes been thoroughly vetted in the environmental documents associated with the project? Again, sound economies and commerce are entirely compatible with preservation and veneration of Uptowns' history.
- As chair of the HRC, I am concerned that these amendments to the USP---which is the blueprint for development in the historic core of Whittier--- should be more thoroughly vetted before a broad amendment to the plan is adopted. Could they be brought to the full commission for discussion so that their input, as an advisory body, can be considered by the council? This seems only cautious and prudent in the interest of complete transparency as we move forward to preserve and protect the historic qualities of Uptown. These historic qualities and general historicity are assets that an enlightened developer can leverage. Let's not begin to erode our historic fabric by weakening the language and requirements in our well developed, well reasoned Uptown Specific Plan.

Thank you for your time and I appreciate your going the 'extra mile' this evening.

Siincerely,

James Becerra
Chair, Historic Resources Commission