



September 20, 2015

Honorable Mayor and City Council members,

Thank you for the work you and the Planning Department have done getting a new Civic Center this far. We are closer than we have been in 20 years! Your collaboration with the residents via the community workshops, survey and open forums have provided opportunities for the residents to let you know what they want - and are willing to pay for.

Thus my alarm when I read the draft EIR report.

There are some serious flaws in the Draft EIR report. There are inaccurate statements within the Project Overview and the Project Objectives that have led to unacceptable conclusions. From the report, section

S1.2 PROJECT OVERVIEW

Paragraph 5: "A future expansion area for an additional 20,000 square feet of public facility uses consistent with the Public Facilities designation of the City's Zoning Ordinance as part of the project."

No, the project programming is for additional space for commercial uses. Uses such as a restaurant or café that could enliven the Plaza for all to enjoy. Not to repeat the previously failed attempts to approve massive government buildings!

From section

S1.3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Bullet #7: "Provide for future expansion areas within the project site consistent with the existing land use and zoning regulations."

Again, it was always understood, by the voters at least, that there would be required modifications to the existing land use and zoning regulations. It was by that agreement that the residents approved the government building design phase to get underway. That way there would be no further delay in providing safe and necessary accommodations for our city staff members. The residents are expecting zoning modifications to follow.

The unacceptable conclusion:

From section

S5.2.1 REDUCED PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

Paragraph 1: "This alternative would omit expansion area A in the northeastern portion of the site in the plaza.

Paragraph 2: "Additionally, the parking located in the surface lot, facing westward (~28 spaces) would be removed from the proposed project.


LEEGER ARCHITECTURE

This conclusion will doom the City's chances for getting voter approval, if they feel they are being cheated out of the project they agreed to!

The environmental issue stated as the grounds for deeming the expansion as "significant and unmitigable" (Table 7-1, page 7-3) is "scenic vistas". And yet, by the reports own admission,

"...this view blockage would be similar to the existing condition due to the existing structures at the north east corner of the site..." (Table S-1, Aesthetics: Threshold AES-1: Views)

I would argue that compared to what is there, pretty much anything will improve the view! It is unreasonable to argue, that during the interim between demolition and construction, that there will be new views to lose. In that case the decision for "No Project" makes just as much sense, tear the whole thing down and move into an already built office building.

State mandates have long been overreaching their voter-given authority. CEQA is a perfect example. Del Mar residents have spent \$300,000 for a 231 pages, repetitive report, to tell you not to do what the voters asked you to do. Be reminded that the CEQA report is a "guideline". It is still the City Council decision. CEQA Guidelines Section 15021(d) states:

"...a public agency has an obligation to balance a variety of public objectives, including economic, environmental and social factors..." The project as a whole has significant economic and social benefits. Take a stand for the residents of Del Mar and reject this divisive conclusion.

I will reiterate what I said at the last City Council meeting. The sitting City Council should finish the job they started. Having carried it this far, make the Resolution to fulfill the residents vision for Del Mar's new Civic Center.

Sincerely,



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