

From: Connie Weiss [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, October 2, 2023 11:23 AM
To: City Council (San Mateo) <CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>; City Mgr <citymgr@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: General Plan and Historic Districts

Hello City Council Members and City Manager Khojikian,

I would like to add my support to the comments made by the San Mateo Heritage Alliance already submitted, and in particular, call out these recommendations for the Community Design and Historic Preservation section of the General Plan:

1. Do not remove the word "eligible" from the historic policies.
2. Add "contributors to eligible historic districts" to the definition of historic resources in Policy CD 5.3, to be consistent with how Downtown historic resources are treated and to protect historic neighborhood appearance.
3. Add the requirement to identify demolition alternatives for contributors to a historic district.
4. Protecting historic resources is an important value in San Mateo and is compatible with adding affordable housing.

I would also like to call out a growing concern I have for those on the Planning Commission who are pushing their agendas without respect and regard for San Mateo residents and voters. I witnessed Seema Patel (once again) insulting a resident on Nextdoor. She will claim she is speaking as a "private citizen" but she is putting forth opinions and misinformation that are clearly on topics before the Planning Commission. When I pointed out this repeated bad behavior in a response on Nextdoor, my comment was removed. I am sure Patel's role as a reviewer helped here, as nothing I posted in the comment violated Nextdoor etiquette.

Why is this important? Patel has been trying to weaken the historic preservation language in the General Plan (she joined a YIMBY Action advisory board in 2021). She wants to redefine historic resources to exclude resources that are eligible for listing on the National or State Register of Historical Resources. Her definition is not consistent with state or federal definitions. The California Environmental Quality Act requires agencies (including cities) to consider a project's effects on listed or eligible historic resources. Why would a City Commissioner advocate for going against state and federal law?

And please note that she is not the only Commissioner who is worrisome - YIMBY Action and Planning Commissioner John Ebnetter has been a vocal advocate for eliminating single-family zoning, against the will of the majority of San Mateo residents, and Adam Nugent is on the record for going around Council to undermine the work Staff and Council approved for the Housing Element.

Please do not take any recommendation from the Planning Commission without a careful look at where their recommendations are coming from, including cherry-picked comments that support their activist agendas. It seems that the majority of the Commission is fully aligned with special interests and not with the residents of this beautiful city. We all deserve better.

Thank you,

Connie Weiss
San Mateo Resident