

REGULATORY IMPROVEMENT CODE AMENDMENT - RICAP 7

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NAME (print)	ADDRESS AND ZIP CODE	Email
Maryhelen Kincaid		

Testimony RICAP 7

“Good management is the art of making problems so interesting and their solutions so constructive that everyone wants to get to work and deal with them.” (Paul Hawken)

The City, through various projects and work responsibilities, entrusts skilled and experienced staff to provide us with a functional and livable City. Some may disagree and complain that whatever you do is wrong, and they have the appropriate solution to whatever problem is being addressed. Sometimes they do, and sometimes they don't. I've been here myself with opinions. It is important to remember the privilege we have to provide comment and the responsibility you have to decide. Today I am here to offer support and praise for the work of Morgan Tracy and his colleagues on the RICAP 7 package. It shouldn't be hard to agree with me.

As you know, I have spent a good deal of time in the last 15 months attending various neighborhood and land use meetings in regard to demolition and infill zoning. I listened on different occasions as Morgan presented to DRAC, CWLUG and neighborhood coalition land use meetings. I was sometimes jealous that he got such a positive response to his presentations. This package was not controversial and brought changes which benefit neighborhood land use groups.

Given the amount of development permitting and reviews the City conducts, it is imperative that development regulations are continuously evaluated and updated in order to be clear, consistent and achieve the desired result, in the most efficient manner. For everyone. Staff, neighborhoods and builders.

The RICAP process provides changes which benefit neighbors by reducing confusion and misinterpretation of the applicable requirements, and strengthening rules. Many issues identified were submitted by neighborhood land use activists. There are some folks who may complain that the RICAP 7 document was too long, and there wasn't enough time for review. There were 17 presentations and one open house for this package. I may be alone on this, but I trust experienced, trained staff to tell me what I might get excited about, or will cause me heartburn. “Tell me what I don't know”. I didn't hear any opposition to RICAP 7.

Some people don't trust the City will solve a problem, or find the “right” answer, but I operate from the standpoint of Ernest Hemingway “The only way to know if you can trust somebody is to trust them.” In most instances I have not been misled, or lost trust. In the case of RICAP 7 I trust and believe they have gotten it right.

RICAP 7 includes two specific items which I particularly support:

- The requirement that land use applications cannot be submitted before a required pre-application conference is held. This allows neighbors more opportunities to work with applicants to refine proposals before they are too far along in the process when changes are more difficult to make.
- Setting an expiration of one year for neighborhood contact meetings. This prevents applications from being submitted so long after the applicant has met with the neighborhood that no one remembers what the proposal was about. This happened in my neighborhood with a large (for us) apartment building. A neighborhood meeting was held in 2009 but construction didn't start until 2014. There were some design changes and some accommodations (like a promised community room) that were made previously and now left out, but since none required any land use review there was no need for another neighborhood meeting. We had a whole new board when the construction began. This will solve future occurrences like this one.

There are other changes that make clarify rules for builders, such as one regarding solar panels on roofs. Changes like this make it more predictable when applying for permits.

While I know your staff has reviewed this package and BPS has provided detailed information, I want to thank you for listening today and hope you will vote to accept this package.

Maryhelen Kincaid