

Hollywood United Neighborhood Council
Los Feliz Improvement Association
Oaks Homeowners Association
Hollywood Grove Historic District
P.O. Box 3272
Hollywood , California 90078
April 23, 2009

An open letter to the Director of Planning, City of Los Angeles

Ms. Gail Goldberg, AICP
City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, California
90012-2601

Dear Ms Goldberg,

It is with great sadness that we are writing to inform you of recent events in our community. We believe these events highlight a serious problem in our community and our city at large. The issue is zoning, specifically a local community's role in changing zoning and the issuance of Conditional Use Permits.

In the past year, grass roots efforts have been underway to create a Historic Protection Overlay Zone (HPOZ) in the area of north of Franklin Avenue and west of Western Avenue at the base of the Hollywood Hills. This area is best known for its remarkable assemblage of intact early 20th century residential architecture. It is a truly beautiful neighborhood complete with tree-lined streets.

After learning of the pending demolition of a historic 1919 California Bungalow at 1912 St. Andrews Place in this proposed HPOZ area, neighbors voiced their opposition to the home's owner, Immaculate Heart High School (IHHS). A petition, signed by all of the neighbors on St. Andrews Place, and by many on the neighboring streets was presented to the school, repeating the message from previous petitions of 1979 and 1999, that the neighbors did not want homes torn down, nor did they welcome the school's encroachment into the R-1 zoned residential area. Representatives from all of the major neighborhood organizations; the Los Feliz Improvement Association, the Oaks Homeowners Association, Hollywood United Neighborhood Council, and the Hollywood Grove Historic District met with the school's Board and offered to work with the school to accommodate its needs on its existing school campus, provided the school did not demolish the home, and continued to maintain it as a residence.

The neighborhood groups reasoned, that a recent independent inspection report did not indicate that the home was beyond repair, (as the school had claimed), and in fact, architects had verified that the structure alone (not including value of the land) was a substantial asset valued at over \$ 200,000. Tearing the home down and replacing it with a larger home also did not make sense due to home size limits of the Oaks Interim Control Ordinance, which apply to this property.

The school articulated that the home was purchased in 1999 for future expansion. The neighborhood groups countered that they continued to oppose any future Conditional Use Permits (CUP) or zoning changes for the property, as did the immediate neighbors on St. Andrews Place.

We should add, that over several decades, this is the second such home to be purchased on St. Andrews Place by the School, and ultimately it was the second to be torn down.

Putting the destruction of a beautiful historic home aside for the moment, we ask ourselves why would the school buy this residential property in the first place? It is only zoned for a single family home and they knew full well when they bought it that the neighbors were overwhelmingly opposed to any plans for the properties other than it's continued residential use?

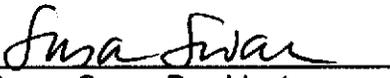
The obvious answer is, that like many in this city, the school still believes that in Los Angeles "zoning doesn't matter", that all zoning can all be changed, it can be changed contrary to the wishes of the community, and without their input. We understand that this view is deeply rooted in Los Angeles' history of private political maneuvering and we find this issue very troubling. Many in our community now believe that since the school has destroyed this home, the zoning has been changed by default and the extent of their involvement in the planning process will be left to simply choosing between a weed filled lot or a parking lot. We are looking for you to tell those residents that the zoning of 1912 St. Andrews has not been changed by default, that there is a process, and that process includes their input.

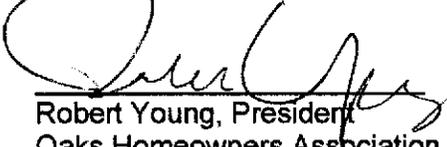
We understand that it is your goal to change the planning process in this city; to make it more transparent and community based, involving local residents. We commend you on that goal, and we ask for your assurances that in the future the goal specifically includes the participation of the residents of St. Andrews Place, and allows them to help decide the future of their street.

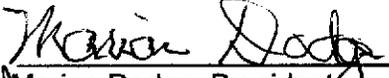
We are very sorry that the board of IHHS has chosen not to work with the community, but instead has decided to destroy its own property. However, we still firmly believe that maintaining the existing residential zoning of 1912 St. Andrews Place best preserves the character of the neighborhood.

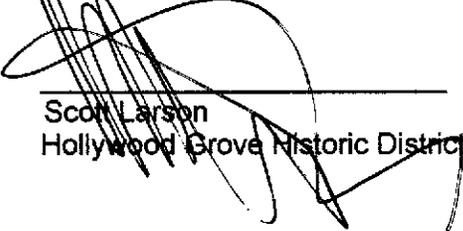
While we are saddened by the needless destruction of another historic California bungalow, we also hope something good can come out of it. We would like to offer you this opportunity to share your vision of community based planning, learn what has changed in the Planning Department, and hear more about how we can become involved.

We hope to be working with you and your staff on this and other issues. We invite you to visit our community again and look forward to your reply. Thank you for your time and attention in this matter.


Susan Swan, President,
Hollywood United Neighborhood Council


Robert Young, President,
Oaks Homeowners Association


Marian Dodge, President,
Los Feliz Improvement Association


Scott Larson
Hollywood Grove Historic District

Cc: City of Los Angeles, CD 4; Tom La Bonge, Rene Weitzer, Rory Fitzpatrick, Doug Mensman, Jullian Harris- Calvin
City of Los Angeles Planning; Mary Richardson, Blake Kendrick
Los Angeles Conservancy; Linda Dishman

Attachments:

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| Photo 1912 St Andrews Place before demolition | 2009 Petition |
| Photo 1912 St Andrews Place after demolition | 1999 Petition |
| 1912 St Andrews Home Inspection Report, February 7,2009 | 1979 Petition |
| Oaks Homeowners Association e-mail to IHHS, February 22, 2009 | |
| Los Feliz Improvement Association Letter to IHHS, February 25,2009 | |