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August 12, 2004

Berkeley City Council

Dear Councilmembers:

We object to the Zoning Board's favorable decision on a proposed project at 1406-1410 San Pablo Avenue. My neighbors and I are asking that you overrule their decision. The reasons for our objection are the same ones given the applicant when he first contacted us about his project: A three-story box of a building is grossly out of scale to with the surrounding single story bungalows, the project would have a negative impact on neighborhood parking; and the use of the dirt alley adjacent to our home as the projects driveway is completely unsuitable. The applicant's response to our objections was to add another unit to the project and offer to "plant some trees."

Along San Pablo Avenue, from Gilman to University, I do not believe there is a single building greater than two stories. Nearly every home within the project block is but one story. Somehow, though the Board states that this project is in scale with the area. This project does not use "tools such as increased building setback or upper story setbacks" to reduce its impact on our neighborhood. In fact, the Zoning board granted reduced yard requirements on all four sides of the project. It would appear that yard requirements are not applied when they interfere with a developers desired density— the proposed project covers the entire lot with building and parking. The height of this project will overwhelm all the surrounding home and reduce our light and privacy.

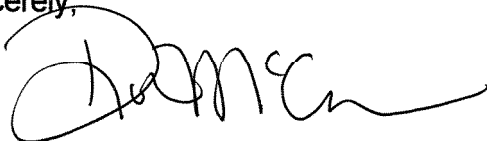
The Board's rational for a reduction in the required parking spots is ridiculous. Maybe in planner reality, based on ignorance, the available parking on San Pablo is "considerably greater than demand". I know that the people already working at businesses on San Pablo park everyday on both Camelia and 10th St. Minimal observation would confirm that during the day parking in the area is difficult. This decision will increase the neighborhood's parking shortfall. The board then states that the availability of public transit will mean employees of the live/work units will not drive to work. So if they do drive, will more parking spaces then be added? Again, I observe that employees of the existing San Pablo Avenue businesses are driving to work—they do not seem to be following the plan.

Our greatest objection is the plan to use the city alley as a driveway. This affects our neighbor at 1040 Camelia and us most severely. This alley is an anomaly, existing but for two blocks of San Pablo, that the applicant claims must be used. In fact, using this alley, along with the granted yard reductions, is what allows the applicant so dense a project. We do not believe that this twelve-foot- wide dirt alley, three feet

from our homes, is suitable for the intensity of use this project will bring. If this project uses this alley in such a manner, than there is precedence for similar use by future projects along the block. In time we may have a hundred cars a day passing three feet from our homes. Presently one or two cars occasionally use the alley. This was the usage when we reached an agreement with the city's architect to erect a gate aligned roughly with the rear of our lots. In its Notice of Decision the Board declares that the gate be moved to the front line of our property. This offers our homes a nice fortress look and the music of the gate opening and closing some eight feet from our bedroom window. Placement of the gate was not indicated in any of applicant's documents nor did the Board think it necessary to solicit the opinions of the people whose homes flank this gate. In addition, if the gate remains where it is now, both of our tiny yards become a place to enjoy the exhaust of idling cars awaiting the gate to open. The noise, the dust and the exhaust that will arise from this project will greatly diminish the use of our property. We intend to pursue all available means to prevent this from happening.

On the July 22nd night of this project's hearing we heard the Board listen and debate at length the merits of a single family home- a project not seeking any variances and located in a neighborhood of similar single family homes. The opposition to this project was principally based upon lost views of the neighbors. Another project sought to add a small addition to a home on a 9000 sq. ft. lot. The board also debated this project at some length trying to accommodate the neighbors concerns. The reaction to our concerns was different. Ours are modest homes. We do not have views, our lots are small and our homes are almost all smaller in size than any of the eight units being proposed. The Board viewed our complaints to have similar stature. For none of our concerns were addressed even in passing. We were told that this is a "good project". It is beyond my comprehension how, with straight face, this Zoning Board can say that this project will "not be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, . . . comfort, or general welfare of persons residing or working in the area or neighborhood". We disagree and ask that you consider our objections. This project offers nothing positive to our neighborhood and reduces the use and enjoyment of our homes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robin McCrane". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "M".

Robin McCrane

We the undersign ask that the Berkeley City Council overrule the zoning boards approval of the project at 1406-1410 San Pablo Ave. As presently approved, this project will greatly affect our neighborhood in a negative way. We ask that all proscribed setbacks be applied, that the height of the project be reduced to two stories, that the proscribed parking be the minimum required and that the alley way not be used as a driveway.

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Signature</u>
1	Steve Coglietto	10341 Camelia	Steve Coglietto
2	KEM SHAPIRO	1346 SAN PABLO	Kem Shapiro
3	M. Sher. Slope	1048 Camelia St	
4	Maninetti	1036 Camelia St.	
5	George Buford	1030 Camelia St	
6	Laurie Banks	1411 10th - St.	
7	Randal DeLuchi	1406 Tenth St.	Randal DeLuchi
8	Joe	1406 Tenth St	Alvin Jackson
9	Sam Maly	1046 CAMELIA	
10	Paul Buzza	1040 CAMELIA ST	Paul Buzza
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