



March 12, 2007

Members of the City Council
City of Berkeley

Appeal of Use Permit #06-10000067 to demolish 651 Addison Street, the Drayage Building and Appeal of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Certification

Dear Council Members:

This appeal of the Zoning Adjustments Board decision of December 14, 2006 to certify a categorical exemption as adequate CEQA review and to permit demolition of the Drayage Building at 651 Addison Street, is based on the following:

Issue 1 – Is the project eligible for a CEQA exemption?

The Discussion of Section 15301 of the CEQA Guidelines states, "Accordingly, a project with significant cumulative impacts or which otherwise has a reasonable possibility of resulting in a significant effect does not qualify for a Class 1 exemption". The cumulative impacts of the multiple projects planned for this area have never been studied.

Issue 2 – Is the existing building an historic resource?

The commissioned "historical assessment" failed to note that the Drayage Building was identified in the West Berkeley Field Survey as a potential City of Berkeley Structure of Merit Landmark property (attachments were included in my original appeal). The demolition of a viable resource is in conflict with the adopted West Berkeley Area Plan.

Issue 3 – Will demolition result in a loss of property tax revenue?

It isn't business taxes which will be lost; it is City Special Assessments that will be lost. According to the Alameda County Tax Assessor's office, this structure generates a total of approximately \$15,804 per year in city special assessments, of which approximately \$8,084 is for Berkeley schools. This revenue source will be lost as soon the structures are demolished and will not likely be replaced in near future (Where's the "Seagate Building", for which city special assessment, business license, and sales taxes were lost?).

Issue 4 – 651 Addison is not a dangerous blight and nuisance

It is widely known that the "code violations" inflicted on this building were entirely bogus and that the property was gone after for the sake of a favored developer.

Sincerely,

Gale Garcia