

From the Altadena White Paper Coalition:

RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE DRAFT ORDINANCE AMENDING TITLE 22 – PLANNING AND ZONING – OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY CODE RELATED TO THE ALTADENA COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT.

Background:

Last fall, a group of Altadena community organizations (the “White Paper Coalition”) rallied around an analysis of how a new commercial project at Lake and Calaveras failed to meet Altadena’s development standards. Community pressure led to a revised project, on which construction slowly continues as the County works to hold the developer to the approved plans.

At the same time, a comprehensive, community-driven update to Altadena’s zoning code, the Community Standards District (the “CSD”), continued to move forward. In 2013, the County had initiated a revision to the existing CSD, and the Altadena Town Council appointed a volunteer committee of residents to work with the Department of Regional Planning on the update. After three and a half years of hard work by the CSD committee, the draft update is now under consideration for adoption, a process which includes public hearings and feedback. This document reflects feedback from the White Paper Coalition.

The proposed revisions to the CSD are, on the whole, very strong and generally reflective of our diverse community. Since the draft was presented to the community, the Altadena CSD Committee has received comments from the public and recommended additional revisions. The County “staff memo” presented to the Regional Planning Commission rejects each of the Committee’s more recent recommendations.¹

The revised CSD’s “Pedestrian Character” section is promising² and could have provided a much better project at Lake and Calaveras. However, the White Paper Coalition strongly believes that there remains one glaring omission:

New commercial buildings should be required to have public entrances where they face a commercial corridor.

These entrances need not be primary entrances, but should allow pedestrians to enter the business whenever it is open for business.

In neighboring Pasadena, the thriving South Lake Avenue district buildings feature public entrances facing Lake Avenue *and* behind, providing pedestrian access in the front, as well as in the rear where most parking is situated.

¹ See pages 18-21 of the 7/14/16 County staff memo:
http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/data/altadena_staff_memo.pdf

² See pages 27-29 of the revised strike-through version of the CSD draft:
http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/data/altadena_attachement_08.pdf

THE WHITE PAPER COALITION RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION REGARDING THE ALTADENA CSD:

- We express our appreciation for the hard work of the Altadena CSD Committee and the Department of Regional Planning in bringing forward the draft CSD revisions. In general the CSD committee has our full support for the thoughtful inclusion of changes and improvements in the revised CSD.
- We also support the inclusion of the five additional revisions, recommended by Altadena's CSD committee following public input, referenced in the 7/14/16 County staff memo (pages 18-21).
- We support the addition of a requirement that new commercial buildings have public entrances where they face a commercial corridor.

If these changes require more time to vet, the Coalition encourages the Regional Planning Commission to continue this item, so that the Committee may work with Regional Planning to incorporate the community's desired changes before the document is finally adopted. This process need not take much longer, as the requested changes are few but meaningful to our community. Because this document will likely stand for years to come, the Coalition believes additional time would be time well spent.

The Coalition thanks the Commission for considering this request, and for helping bring about a shared vision of healthy neighborhoods and vibrant, walkable commercial corridors.

July 28, 2016

Signing Members of the White Paper Coalition:

- **Altadena Chamber of Commerce**
- **Altadena Children's Center Director, Toni Boucher**
- **Altadena Heritage**
- **The Altadena Historical Society**
- **Eliot Arts Magnet Academy, Principal, Lori Touloumian**
- **Eliot Arts Magnet Academy PTA and School Site Council**
- **Neighbors Building a Better Altadena**