



April 6, 2021

Re: Special Meeting on April 13, 2021

I want to apologize for the technical problems with EBCC's virtual meeting on March 17, 2021. The host of the meeting didn't start it, so we quickly found another host (thank you Rep. Dugan!) and tried to get the word out about the new meeting address by email, texting, on NextDoor and on our website. I know we missed some potential attendees and this trouble made our meeting go very late. Additionally, I believed that the owner would attend that meeting, but he did not, so answers to some questions were elusive that evening.

I've called this Special Meeting in order to continue the discussion about the Planned Development application for 860 Donner Way. I've asked the Senior Planner over this project, Kelsey Lindquist, to explain the process for the planning division, and I've written this letter to outline the role of the Community Council in this process.

East Bench Community Council is the Recognized Organization for the geographic area bounded by Sunnyside to the north, Foothill Dr to the west, I-80 to the South, and the city limits to the east. (But not including the neighborhoods to the west of Wasatch Drive from Sunnyside to 1300 South – that's in Sunnyside East Community Council.)

We receive notice of projects in our geography that come before the Planning Commission as applications for variances, zoning changes, Accessory Dwelling Units, and Planned Developments. We are asked to gather public feedback about these projects from our members (anyone who lives or owns property in our boundaries) and relay that to the planner for consideration at the Planning Commission hearing. We also have an opportunity to speak about a project at the public hearing first, and for five minutes, compared to two minutes given to any member of the public who wants to speak.

I have included a link to the notice letter I received about the Emigration Overlook project here, so you can see that we are given guidance about how to collect feedback and how to share it with the Planning Commission. One option is that we can ask for a vote of membership about support for the project. You'll remember that the Executive Board decided to ask for a vote from the membership during the March 17 meeting. Since then, the Executive Board has had more discussion and decided not to ask for a vote of support or opposition during the Special Meeting. We have sometimes called a vote on these projects, and sometimes not, and we aren't convinced that polling makes a great difference to the process either way. We have decided to focus our comments another way that we think is more effective.

We have reached out to the leadership of Sunnyside East Community Council, and we are inviting the leadership and their membership to attend the Special Meeting.

**Our Community Council has a role in the process, but we do not “approve” or “deny” any application.** It is required that we are given the opportunity to comment, but we don’t have a vote on the application.

**That said, I think our role is important.** In our experience, the Planning Commission listens to our comments and treats us with respect. We have tried to make our comments with a tone and timing respectful to their processes and I think it matters. So we HAVE to make comments in the most effective way we can.

I want to particularly bring your attention to the section of the referenced letter titled: Approval Criteria for the Planned Development Request. These are the specific items that the Planning Commission must consider when they vote for or against the application. EBCC intends to submit comments to the Planning Commission as specific items on this list, for example: If there is a concern that the construction of this project would block ambulance or firetruck access to these homes or neighboring buildings, we would note that it doesn’t meet Item E.4. of the approval criteria. We would like it if you would help us recognize which list items you are commenting on, and if you have a proposal for how to address that shortcoming, please let us know that too.

Kelsey has agreed to extend the Community Council comment deadline to accommodate our special meeting. The EBCC will write a letter conveying the comments as requested in the attached letter. We also intend to attend the public hearing (Schedule TBA) to share the comments we have been hearing in emails, during our March 17 meeting and in the Special Meeting. The public comments can be made up to the date of the public hearing or at the public hearing (Schedule TBA).

I feel like I can speak for the Executive Board when I say that we love this neighborhood, and we want all of the residents to feel safe and stable in our homes. We work hard to listen to you and do our best to help amplify your voices. We also want to be good neighbors to each other (and new neighbors too!) and we’re committed to treating each other respectfully. We appreciate your time and attention to our neighborhood and encourage you to stay involved through this process.

Thank you,



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REFERENCED:

Recognized Organization Input Notification <https://eastbenchslc.files.wordpress.com/2021/04/formal-community-council-letter-.pdf>

East Bench Master Plan <https://eastbenchslc.files.wordpress.com/2021/01/ebmp-document.pdf>