

VANC Meeting 2/14/19

Sherman Oaks Hospital, Dr. Conference Room, 6:30-10:00PM.

Address: 4929 Van Nuys Blvd., Sherman Oaks, CA.

VANC Exec Board presiding: Jill Banks Barad, Judith Daniels.

GVGC board member attending: J. Barmettler, Govt. Relations Committee.

SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS:

ITEM 1: Bill Hopkins for Valley Preparedness Day.

ITEM 2: VANC Mixer March 14, 2019.

ITEM 3: Senate Bill 50 (SB50) VANC roundtable discussion/vote.

NOTES FROM VANC MEETING ON 2/14/19:**ITEM 1: Bill Hopkins for Valley Preparedness Day:**

VANC requests NCs to draft and send letters to LA City Council and Mayor.

Emergency Preparedness Day is to be held October 12, 2019. After July 1st, NC's can register to participate with outreach booth. They are asking \$850.00 sponsorship and they handed out pre-filled RPG form for NCs.

ITEM 2: VANC Mixer March 14, 2019:

VANC Mixer to be held on 3/14/19. NCs not required to donate. All are welcome to attend. Majority of monies pay for catering costs. VANC has posted GVGC as one of sponsors on flier.

Asking for nominations for "Best of Award's". Awards for City level employees and groups working above and beyond with the NCs and the "Razzie award" nomination. Send nominations to Vanc@empowerla.org.

ITEM 3: Senate Bill 50 (SB50) candid discussion:

A candid discussion about SB 50 with VANC roundtable and city/state reps.

Previous attempt with SB827 nullified local zoning laws to allow development within transit corridors and job centers. The bill was killed and never made it out of the working state legislative committees. SB50 is same thing with some amendments. VANC is of the opinion that the amendments are not worth saving the bill and should be rejected. Hertzberg and Henry Stern, no show to this meeting. Chair shared an Op Ed piece from Daily News that tells much about the bill, what it does and does not do, 3 pages (See attachment A below).

Cynthia Hernandez at the City Attorney Office chimed in for some brief information.

Under SB50 Developers can ask for waivers for parking.

Round table discussion, majority of discussions posed multiple issues and overall opinion was to reject SB 50 from majority of NC reps. Attempts to density and ignore homeowners will radically down grade residential property.

Preserve LA handout is very informative about SB50 (see attachment B below).

SB50 is a bad bill and VANC encourages NCs to research the bill and chime in with CIS. NCs need to rally city council to reject this bill.

VANC voted to opposed SB50 with 17 yes, 0 No and 1 Abstain.

Attachment A: Daily News article about SB50

2019

New zoning nullification plan has same old flaws – Daily News

OPINION

New zoning nullification plan has same old flaws



Democratic Sen. Scott Wiener on the state Senate floor. (AP Photo/Rich Pedroncelli, File)

By THOMAS D. ELIAS |

PUBLISHED: February 8, 2019 at 7:00 am | UPDATED: February 8, 2019 at 7:00 am

California's housing crisis was bad enough last year, when Gov. Gavin Newsom – then a mere candidate – called for building 350,000 new units every year for the next decade.

The crunch is worse this year, with some of those who lost their homes to last fall's disastrous wildfires now added to the tens of thousands already homeless and living on streets around the state and hundreds of thousands more who are housed, but overcrowded beyond the limits of many local codes.

This scene last year led San Francisco's Democratic state Sen. Scott Wiener to push a proposed law allowing builders to override local zoning ordinances and place high-rise apartment buildings with a plenitude of "affordable" units near light rail stations or heavily used bus routes.

This proposal didn't last long in the Legislature last year, shot down by a coalition of local governments, homeowner groups and lack of enthusiasm by former Gov. Jerry Brown, an advocate of local government controls since his years as mayor of Oakland.

But there is more pressure now to override local controls on development, and Wiener is back with a slightly redone version of his building plan, which would reverse a century of California urban sprawl by concentrating development in areas long believed to be built out.

Wiener has touted the changes he's made to his proposal for the last couple of months, stressing ways the newer version panders to the desires of left-wing "progressives" dissatisfied with the previous version.

Now known as SB 50, the measure would let cities delay building in areas where longstanding apartment tenants might be at risk of eviction to make way for newly-mandated high rises. If a tenant has been in a building more than seven years, for example, that building couldn't be demolished to make way for a new, far taller one.

This is meant to appease tenant groups that dominate politics in cities like Santa Monica, San Francisco and other currently dense places.

But the essence of Wiener's original plan remains: It allows new buildings of six to eight stories in all areas within half a mile of any light-rail station or within one-quarter mile of a frequently used bus route. Preferences of local voters, city or county governments and nearby homeowners or apartment dwellers wouldn't

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New zoning nullification plan has same old flaws – Daily News

As Wiener says, such development could probably never occur unless the state mandated it. Few local officials could survive politically if they okayed high-rises overlooking the yards of thousands of single-family homes or caused the teardowns of expensive condominiums.

But Wiener claims many elected officials tell him they want dense development, but can't publicly admit it. He told the New York Times that "City councils, mayors, county supervisors have (told) me 'We can't say this, but we need help. We need to be able to tell our constituents 'We have to approve this project because the state requires it.'"

But just as the state's high-speed rail project has seen years of delay and opposition over attempts to take land by eminent domain, forced new development could also run into legal buzz saws. Especially new development with virtually no new parking spaces required.

For example, Wiener's plan is founded on the notion that denser housing won't worsen gridlocked traffic because new residents will ride nearby trains and buses. Figures from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority in Southern California suggest that's pie in the sky.

The bus and light rail agency reported last year that bus ridership shrank in the region by 15 percent in 2017 from levels of five years earlier, while rail ridership was up 4 million – less than the drop in bus ridership. Translation: there's been some switching from buses to trains, but little net increase in mass transit riders despite creation of several new lines costing billions of dollars.

So the logic behind Wiener's plan remains false and would worsen existing gridlock in cities he wants to densify. It ignores many thousands of homeowners who invested their life savings in residences Wiener's plan could radically downgrade.

The bottom line: Some other solution must be sought, because it accomplishes little to begin solving one serious problem while making other problems far worse.

Email Thomas Elias at tdelias@aol.com.

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Attachment B: Preserve LA information handout on SB50.

Coalition to Preserve LA Analysis: SB 50 Rewards Unchecked Speculation.

SB 50 Will Kill Cherished Neighborhoods, Gentrify Working-Class Areas and Significantly Worsen Housing Affordability. SB 50 Will Displace Tens of Thousands of People.

SB 50 wipes out all single-family zoning in the below “transit” areas.

1) SB 50 bans cities from rejecting big residential luxury developments containing a small number of affordable units if they are proposed within a ¼ mile radius of a busy bus stop, or ½-mile radius of any rail or train stop.

SB 50 wipes out single-family zones in 1000s of loved neighborhoods

2) SB 50 overturns single-family zoning in areas “above median income, jobs-rich, with good public schools” that lack major transit (*i.e., it allows tall apartments next to houses in areas that have good schools and jobs.*)

Rewards construction of 85-foot towers next to single-family homes.

3) SB 50 encourages 75-foot and 85-foot luxury towers in single-family areas that are either too close to transit or too close to jobs and good schools. The limit is *NOT 45 and 55 feet, as Wiener falsely says in SB 50.*

Cities can’t stop a luxury tower unless the project hurts public safety.

4) *SB 50 is weaponized by the Housing Accountability Act of 1982, quietly amended by Skinner/Wiener in 2017. It bans cities from rejecting any “density bonus” project unless the developer “puts public safety at risk.”*

Cities can’t reject developer demolitions in the SB 50 targeted areas.

5) Weaponized by the Housing Accountability Act, SB 50 **prevents cities from fighting demolitions** in “jobs-rich, good schools areas” and “transit” areas for housing towers. Developers can sue if challenged by a city.

SB 50 forces “sensitive communities” to upzone themselves by 2025

6) SB 50 openly threatens “sensitive communities” -- low-income and diverse areas -- requiring them to upzone their Community Plans in 5 years to conform to SB 50 — or SB 50 will do it for them.

Turns developers into the fox guarding the rental hen-house

7) SB 50 utterly fails to protect renters. Only cities who registered their renters and vacancies can stop developers from lying about rental history.

SB 50 puts developers in charge of their own planning.

8) SB 50 turns 1000s of streets into density-bonus-on-steroids, where cities have NO planning say. Developers choose their own incentives from a menu no longer controlled by cities, below.

Below is a sample of existing local development standards & planning tools. SB 50 lets developers toss out up to 3 of them, including height limit:

- **Setbacks:** Areas for trees, green belts, side yards, can be cut.
- **Floor area ratio:** Building size/density can grow 47% to 297%.
- **Parking:** Developers can build apartment towers with NO PARKING.
- **Environmental sustainability:** Any development standard adopted by a city that isn't state law can be ignored by developers.
- **Onsite open-space:** Courtyards and balconies can be killed.
- **Historic buildings/zones:** Developers can demolish buildings not on the CA Registry of Historic Resources. MANY including HPOZs aren't

Reality Check on Senate Bill 50: Nobody wants to be *The Next San Francisco, Wiener's hometown.*

- San Francisco's nexus study shows that for every 100 new luxury units, 30-40 affordable units are needed *to stay even*. SB 50 turns our gentrification **gap** into a **chasm**. It WON'T offer 30-40% affordable.
- Metro can add a “high-frequency bus stop,” turning any protected area into a “transit” zone allowing 65-foot-tall buildings.
- SB 50 is strongly anti-family, heavily rewarding 1-bedroom luxury units without a space for children to play, or room for a tree.

END OF VANC 2/14/19 MEETING NOTES.