

January 2, 2014

Pleasanton Planning Commission

Re: P13-2468

Dear Commissioners:

If one believes as Livermore does, that the downtown revitalization process is a partnership between downtown business and property owners and the City, then I'm having a hard time understanding the fairness to the other two partners in the partnership, or the long term benefits to the Downtown Revitalization Process itself, by a subjective parking rule that in real effect gives one partner (the City) the authority to pick winners and losers for the other two partners. To explain what I mean by that statement lets look at what we know and what we don't know.

We know that in a tiny confined and revitalizing downtown like ours where the majority arrive by automobile, that parking is the lifeblood of its businesses. We know because its been proven, that in such an environment those property owners who cover their property (indoor and outdoor) with an income producing business(s) while using public parking, or another partner's private parking for their parking shortages are the winners. We know that unlike the Livermore partnership our partnership has no plan that would increase downtown's existing public parking supply within acceptable walking distances to Main Street for the vast majority of Main Street customers. Therefore, we know that every public or private parking space eliminated, and every new project that does not provide its fair share of parking simply dilutes the available parking for all other business and property owners in the partnership.

And we know that soon the new owner of the Pool Hall on Main Street will be standing in council chambers asking for permission to tear the old historical building down, build it bigger, eliminate the private parking that now exists on site, cover the entire lot with an income producing business(s) and pay nothing for the privilege. What we don't know is where the makeup parking will come from.

We know, because it has also been proven, that most anyone with a pencil, paper, and the power can pretty much cherry pick their way through downtown's thousands of pages of subjective rules and recommendations and come up with darn near predetermined outcome one might choose. And we know that "on average" public servants are "no more" or "no less" creditable then the rest of us out here in the real world. What we don't know is what's to prevent "average" or "below average" leaders in the future from "misunderstanding" or worse yet "misusing the intent of yet another subjective rule."

So, knowing what we know, we know what the benefits are to these individual property owners by this new rule. But, knowing what we don't know, we don't know what the "on balance" benefits are to the rest of us in the partnership as well as to the downtown revitalization itself. Therefore, as one partner in this so-called partnership I respectfully request that this Planning Commission reject this subjective parking rule before it leads to yet another unfair and misguided solution to our failures of the past.

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