

Greg Rehmer

From: Robert Pease
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 5:12 PM
To: Hilary Bracken
Cc: David Brantley; Greg Rehmer
Subject: Re: Yorba Linda Temple - Failure in Public Review Process

Hi Hilary,

Thank you for sharing your concerns. I am asking that your comments be included as part of the public record on this project.

My understanding is that the project will be before the Planning Commission on May 11. If there is anything else that you would like to add or discuss, please let me know.

Robert Pease

From: Hilary Bracken <brackenhilary@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 10:25 AM
To: Robert Pease <rpease@yorbalindaca.gov>
Subject: Yorba Linda Temple - Failure in Public Review Process

Hi Robert,

Our house backs up to the LDS property; despite proximity, we did not know about the plans to demolish the existing LDS building and build a temple *until 2 months ago*, when we came across a Facebook group made up of neighbors of the project site. This is unacceptable.

Both the City of Yorba Linda's Planning Department and the LDS Church failed to notify the community and foster a real public review period:

1. There is no mention of the project on the Planning Department's website. While the entire Planning Department website is seriously lacking and arguably archaic, there is an excel sheet that is posted with current projects. The list was last updated February 2022 (<https://www.yorbalindaca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2938/Community-Development-Major-Project-List-2022?bidId=>), but there is no mention of the Temple. Citizens depend on up to date planning department websites to learn about plans for their neighborhood. I am not sure if there are multiple projects missing from this list, or if the Planning Department deliberately excluded this single project; either way, this is unacceptable.
2. The Church of LDS did not notify all neighbors within 300' of the project about their plans. Our last name is on page after page of the submitted Construction Documents for the Temple. We are within inches of the project boundary, yet we were not informed of plans for the site. It seems the Owner wanted to deliberately limit the extent of community input on this project. According to the dates on the submitted drawing set at City Hall, the Owner had over 2 years to notify us of their plans, but deliberately neglected to.

Public review and commentary are an important part of the development process: this type of discourse often leads to compromise and concessions on both sides; it is a process that must be upheld. Unfortunately, this project has failed to meet even the minimum standards of public review - it has been tilted in favor of the Owner.

Several areas of serious concern:

- **Spire:** Did you know that the average height of a 2 story house is 20 feet? Did you know that a 99'-4" spire will place this temple among the tallest buildings in ALL OF ORANGE COUNTY (among the likes of Disneyland, Knotts Berry Farm and the Crystal Cathedral). It will be as if 3 of the Yorba Linda Town Center Parking Structures are stacked on top of one another, right in the middle of a residential area and illuminated for people to

see for miles. This is absolutely ridiculous. Neighbors have repeatedly voiced their concern over this issue and the Owner responded with a meager reduction. This is a residential area, not a beacon for pilgrims traveling from afar. The temple will be moving into the neighborhood, it should not be taking over.

▪ **Turning Off Bastanchury to Enter Site:** The throat currently shown is concerning. There are parking spaces within 50' of turning off Bastanchury into the site. This will create delays as entering cars encounter cars turning into spaces, backing out of spaces, and pedestrians crossing to their vehicles; a maximum of 4 cars will be able to queue on the property before coming into contact with the first potential delay – this means that a majority of cars will queue on Bastanchury. Especially with as many as 250 people inside the temple at a peak time (50 temple staff and 200 patrons), this is seriously concerning.

▪ **Traffic Study Unacceptable Intersections:** The traffic study states that once the Temple opens, Osmond/Bastanchury will not operate within acceptable levels of delay during the AM peak hour. Instead of offering a solution to remedy this deficiency, the Traffic Study states that this intersection currently performs below acceptable levels. Instead of shoehorning a development that will exacerbate an already sub-par condition, we should be striving to improve or remedy sub-par conditions. A solution to improve Osmond/Bastanchury should be developed; if the Temple will only make a bad condition worse, it is not the right fit for this site.

▪ **Traffic Collisions:** Yorba Linda publishes traffic incidents; Bastanchury/Imperial, Imperial/Rose and Prospect/Bastanchury are intersections that see frequent collisions. By introducing a temple with a potential peak hour of 250 arriving/departing patrons, congestion at these intersections will increase, as will the possibility of more traffic collisions.

- The Traffic Study states that vehicles exiting the temple will experience increased delays; delays cause frustration and increase speeding as soon as drivers exit their bottleneck – this will put them at two areas where collisions are common, as soon as they exit the temple.

▪ **Church Parking on Osmond Street:** The Traffic Study states that the Owner will make a concerted effort to notify the patrons that there is to be no temple-related parking on Osmond Street. There is no information as to what this concerted effort will be – the temple is for special events, not daily users. How will they disseminate information prior to arrival and how will compliance be enforced?

- When a development is under parked, the impact is potentially extremely dangerous (jay walking, walking in the dark to vehicles parked off site, speeding through unknown residential streets to find available parking and make up for lost time circling the parking lot looking for a space).

▪ **Owls:** There are several owls that nest, perch and/or take flight from the trees at the back of the project site; each nesting season they return (sometimes one, sometimes multiple). We even had an owl box for a few years that opened to the field.

There is extensive research that open spaces are critical for birds and wildlife in Orange County. Owls live near open areas where they can hunt, roost and nest. Human encroachment on owl territories has statistically led to the decline of owl populations; many species of owls cannot adapt to changes in the ecosystem caused by humans, including the barn owl.

We need to respect the presence of these owls and not infringe on their home/hunting ground. The height of the development and the complete different use proposed for the field will have numerous negative impacts:

- The additional light required by the parking lot & architectural features will make it difficult for the owls to hunt effectively, as their eyes have adapted to low light conditions
- Eliminating the field and changing its use will eliminate their hunting ground
- The spire and additional architectural elements will disrupt the open area that they currently depend on
- The setbacks may impede maintaining the trees because the equipment required is robust and requires trail-side access; if the trees are neglected and compromised because this equipment can no longer fit, the owls and a litany of other birds will be at risk

As is, the project must be denied. There has not been an adequate public review period. The concerns outlined above must be discussed and not overlooked with a generalized answer.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions.

Best,
Hilary