From: [redacted]
To: Flores, Michelle; Tu, John; Le, Thai-Chau; Chang, Chu; Planning Commission 1; Planning Commission 6; Planning Commission 2; Planning Commission 4; Deborah Torrens; Planning Commission 3; Planning Commission 5; Burton, Chris
Cc: Arenas, Sylvia
Subject: Watt Kampuchea Krom Temple - Project File Nos. C20-012 & SP20-024
Date: Monday, June 21, 2021 1:27:55 PM

[External Email]

Dear San Jose City Planning Dept. and Planning Commissioners,

I'm writing to oppose the Proposed Watt Kampuchea Krom Temple project and rezoning.
I have lived in the same neighborhood as the proposed project for two decades. I have seen many developments planned or built, some projects were denied but most of them were approved. So far they are acceptable, built in accordance with the General Plan. However, this project is an anomaly from the get go. It's like trying to fit a square peg into a round hole. The lot is way too small for its proposed capacity and activities/uses. In addition, the design of buildings, particularly the main temple, are out of character with the surrounding residential neighborhood. As it is, without major revisions, this project will degrade my neighborhood and nearby communities. Approving applicant intent to rezone will be a carte blanche to intensify further problems down the road. It's not fair or just to nearby residents having their safety and living environment greatly compromised, meanwhile the billionaire applicant has abundant resources available to consider much better alternatives within only 2-3 miles away to build his dream temple.

Reasons why proposed project/rezoning should not be approved:
1. San Jose 2040 General Plan nonconformity.
Based on citations below, it is clear that the proposed project is not in line with San Jose 2040 General Plan :

-Chap. 5, Interconnected City, page 14, " The intent of this designation is to preserve the existing character of these neighborhoods and to strictly limit new development to infill projects which closely conform to the prevailing existing neighborhood character..".

-Chap.5, page 15, " Only in cases where new development is completely separated from existing neighborhoods by freeways, major expressways, or a riparian corridor or other similar barrier, will it be permissible for the new development to establish a unique character as defined by density, lot size and shape".

-Chap. 5, page 15, " Reinforcing the Envision General Plan’s Growth Area Strategy to direct

intensified development to areas with better access to services and transit, some areas currently developed with a mix of single-family and duplex uses are designated as Residential Neighborhood to discourage their further intensification".

-CD-4.4-- In non-growth areas, design new development and subdivisions to reflect the character of predominant existing development of the same type in the surrounding area through the regulation of lot size, street frontage, height, building scale, siting/setbacks, and building orientation.

- VN-1.10 -- Promote the preservation of positive character-defining elements in neighborhoods, such as architecture; design elements like setbacks, heights, number of stories, or attached/detached garages; landscape features; street design; etc.

- VN-1.11-- Protect residential neighborhoods from the encroachment of incompatible activities or land uses which may have a negative impact on the residential living environment.

- VN-1.12-- Design new public and private development to build upon the vital character and desirable qualities of existing neighborhoods.

- LU-9.8-- When changes in residential densities in established neighborhoods are proposed, the City shall consider such factors as neighborhood character and identity; historic preservation; compatibility of land uses and impacts on livability; impacts on services and facilities, including schools, to the extent permitted by law; accessibility to transit facilities; and impacts on traffic levels on both neighborhood streets and major thoroughfares.

- LU-10.8 -- Encourage the location of schools, private community gathering facilities, and other public/quasi public uses within or adjacent to Urban Villages and other growth areas and encourage these uses to be developed in an urban form and in a mixed-use configuration

- LU-11.7 -- Permit new development to establish a unique character as defined by density, lot size and shape only in cases where the new development is completely separated from existing neighborhoods by freeways, major expressways, or a riparian corridor or other similar barrier.

2. Parking is grossly inadequate.
According to their application, 71 parking spaces are provided, in which 15 spaces are double

parking/valet. The requirement is 98 spaces. This calculation is based on the main temple capacity only. However, the architect said in the previous community meeting that the Gathering/Community Hall is also used simultaneously with the main temple. It's customary that attendees pray then continue on with having a meal in the gathering hall.
In this case, the hall capacity (approx. 791) has to be counted/added when determining parking requirements.
- 791/4=198
- Required parking spaces : 98+198 = 296
The applicant is asking for a 76% reduction. This is surely not acceptable, it's grossly inadequate.

3. Since there are no fixed service times, attendees come and go at all operating hours from morning to early evening every day. There are, at a min., eight monks living on the premises, so it is a full service facility.
P*roposed operation of the temple to allow up to 300 people routinely and more than 3,000 people* for special events *(Total occupancy load of all three courtyards is 2,132) is too much activity for a R1-5 site on a two-lane street.* There are, at minimum, 12 major holidays/year: Jan 1st New Year, Magha Puja(Feb), Cambodian New Year (April, 3 days), Vassa (May, 2 days), Kathina (Oct, 2 days), Temple Anniversary, Pchum Ben (Sept,3 days). In addition to Uposatha days (4 days/month), it's a total of 61 special events/year.
Proposed multi uses of the project, i.e: a temple, a school, a monastery, and an event center during weekdays, weekends and holidays give nearby residents no respite from parking and traffic problems, crowd, and noise.

4. There is only one exit/entrance (on Ruby Ave.), so cars line up/stacking causing traffic jams, potentially blocking intersection of Ruby & Norwood Ave.. It's inevitable that temple attendees would look for shortcuts and parkings, thus traffic around my neighborhood & nearby communities will increase unsustainably, creating safety hazards for residents.

To be clear, I'm not against a temple being built on the lot. It is the scale, intensity of use, and its non conformity to existing neighborhood character and SJGP that my community and I have a problem with.

Thank you for your consideration of my concerns.

Sincerely,

Karina Liao

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