IV. Public Comment

- Public written correspondence received after distribution of agenda packet
  - Barbara Epstein
Dear Members of the Planning Department and General Plan Action Committee,

If we could join you this Thursday, February 22, we would have many thoughts to share with you concerning the future of Redondo Beach. We need to be at the California Democratic State Convention this week, or we would be with you.

One thought would be to use great caution, going forward, to remember some of the devastating mistakes of the past.
The destruction of Redondo’s historic town center is just one example. We have been seeing the old photos of Old Redondo, and one thing that is missing is the old town center. Another is the old hotel. And so it goes.
Every charming city in the country and around the world has preserved its history, but not Redondo. We love to visit Saratoga Springs, New York, for example, the site of the oldest horse racing track in the United States, dating back to August 3, 1863, during the Civil War because of its charm, along with enjoying their well-preserved beautiful homes of the period.

Another hideous mistake we made here was the overbuilding of giant condo complexes on the ocean side of Catalina and the ocean side of The Esplanade.
When we brought our Iowa cousins from the airport some years ago we purposely drove as near the ocean as we could to show them the Pacific. The views along the entire coastal route through the Beach Cities was blocked by giant buildings. The best we could show them were tiny glimpses between buildings.
Very disappointing and happens daily.

Yet another horrible decision in the past was to increase the zoning density in other parts of Redondo, especially in Districts 3, 4, and 5.
When visiting some of these areas it is next to impossible to find a place to park on the streets. The shoulder-to-shoulder two-story buildings give some of the neighborhoods an awful, claustrophobic feel and appearance that is deeply oppressive and difficult to navigate.

Some of the best minds among us have determined that residential housing is not needed as much as job-generating facilities to keep residents here in Redondo, to work, and hotels for revenue generating assets to the city.

It will be important, going forward, to avoid any more density. We are pretty much built out already.

To us, it is time to finally consider the quality of life aspects of city planning, concentrating on creating and restoring many more charming and unique community parks, community gardens, nature preserves and habitats, urban trails and bike paths, following the idea of a skateboard park like the beauty we visited in Burlington, Vermont, last Fall, and especially your supporting the idea of a glorious new Redondo Wetlands Park where the AES Plant is now. This park will include the restoration of the ancient salt lake that is trying to come back up under the AES Plant right now, as we write.
The power line corridor will eventually be freed up to continue as our future Great Park from the Redondo Beach Waterfront to the AES Redondo Wetlands Historic Park, up the hill to Dominguez Park, and continuing
on to extend our Great Park Urban Trail and Bike Path, to meet up with Torrance, and to continue as far as we can from there.
We already mentioned this idea to Torrance Councilman, Tim Goodrich, and he was very receptive to us connecting our Parklands.
Creating a beautiful, healthy life for our citizens needs to be our main focus right now, even as major changes loom in transportation, Artesia, and Galleria re-purposing. All are important, but 'quality of life' has been too long neglected. We must look there right now.

Also,
Please consider:
Sponsor or advocate city laws against giving away public land to private commercial enterprises. In the short time we’ve lived in Redondo Beach we have witnessed the gifting away of our city’s public waterfront land, the pier, the harbor, and Parkland, even California State Park land to a private commercial developer against the citizen’s wishes.
We witnessed the gifting away of a Redondo Beach Unified School District school site at Pacific Coast Highway and Knob Hill to a private corporation for their own commercial use and benefit, with a few dollars going back to the city that will never directly serve the children in Redondo Beach.
Had the Public been more informed about Measure ‘K’ they might have been able to make a better choice, one that would have served the entire community, especially the children, through perpetuity, not just a private business.
Other cities protect their public lands and school property with iron clad laws. We would like our city to do the same, if we have any public land left to preserve.

Thank you so very much for your service to the city.
Please consider these thoughts very carefully as they also reflect the wishes of the majority of Redondo Beach and Beach Cities residents that we have met since moving here in 2012.

Barbara Epstein

Great Grandma
Delegate, CADEM 66th
Vice President SBPC
Founding Member, Former Docent, PVPLC
Founder, PVPHA
Retired Public School Educator
Madrona Marsh, Former Docent, member
Audubon member
Sierra Club member

Sent from my iPad