

From: Aaron Eckhouse [<mailto:aaron.eckhouse@gmail.com>]
Sent: Saturday, September 01, 2018 9:30 AM
To: Pearson, Alene <apearson@cityofberkeley.info>
Subject: Student Housing in the Southside

Hello,

I am writing the Commission to urge passage of the strongest possible plan for more student housing on the Southside.

With Berkeley enrollment growing, it is critical that the city plan for much more student housing to ensure that the university can continue to be an engine of opportunity for Californians of all backgrounds without putting undue pressure on the rest of Berkeley housing stock.

For this reason, I urge the commission to adopt a plan covering the greatest area of the Southside and allowing more height for more students. Restricting the zoning changes on the Southside will result in fewer viable projects and fewer new homes, pushing students out to other parts of the city where they bid up costs of our unfortunately limited housing stock and push out other residents. Adopting a strong plan for the Southside will help ensure that all students can find a safe place to live without displacing other vulnerable Berkeley residents.

The Planning Commissions should also adopt the broadest possible scope for the Southside car-free zone. Berkeley is committed to bold action in the face of our climate emergency, and parking mandates run counter to that goal. Students living next to campus need homes, not parking spots, and parking requirements can drive up the cost of construction by as much as 15%.

Lastly, I urge the Commission to relax ground floor retail requirements. Many storefronts are already sitting vacant, failing to serve any social purpose. There is an opportunity to instead put ground floor space to use as additional, badly needed homes – with potential further advantage for accessibility to disabled students.

Berkeley's housing needs are deep, and demand bold action from our leaders. Please adopt the broadest, strongest version of the More Student Housing Now plan.

thank you for your consideration,

Aaron

From: Derek Sagehorn [<mailto:sagehoe@gmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, September 04, 2018 9:07 AM
To: Pearson, Alene <apearson@cityofberkeley.info>
Cc: David Ying <davyingx@gmail.com>
Subject: Planning Commission September 4, 2018; Item 9: Student Housing in the Southside

Hello,

Attached please find a letter addressed to the Planning Commission on the above-captioned topic.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

--

Derek Sagehorn
(925) 783-1963
sagehoe@gmail.com

EAST BAY FOR EVERYONE

Planning Commissioners,

East Bay For Everyone writes to register its strong support for the Student Housing in the Southside plan. It is a bold step that recognizes Southside must grow intelligently in order to accommodate its traditional student population.

Student housing is a chronic issue for Berkeley but the housing crisis of the past decade has driven many students to the margins. The dearth of affordable, safe housing has driven students to commute from long distances, live in makeshift illegal units and sleep in cars. Housing precarity overwhelmingly affects low-income students; immiserating them and reducing their academic achievement. Housing scarcity in Berkeley threatens the ability of the University of California to transform the lives of disadvantaged, but brilliant and hard-working leaders of tomorrow.

The Student Housing in the Southside plan recognizes that without more density in Southside, students will outbid low-income Berkeley workers in other neighborhoods. Allowing more density south of campus can help reduce displacement of low-income communities of color in South and West Berkeley.

Raising the height limits and increasing the Floor Area Ratio in the RMU, R-S and R-3 zones allows more students to live close to campus. Given the overwhelming student character of the sdistrict and presence of mid-rise student housing, the impacts of increasing height in these zones would be minimal.

The Student Housing in the Southside plan also expands the car free zone and potentially imposes parking maximums for new developments. Reducing and capping parking in new development is important for three reasons: 1) many students do not require a car; 2) constructing parking is expensive and those costs are recouped in the form of rent charged to students; 3) Berkeley's climate action goals necessitate a mode shift to alternative forms transportation.

Finally, the Student Housing in the Southside plan allows the conversion of commercial space to residential uses. Southside has no shortage of retail. It does, however, have a shortage of

homes for people. Allowing residential uses in ground floor spaces gives property owners the option to convert vacant spaces to homes for students.

In conclusion, please support the Student Housing in the Southside plan as written and ensure that students have a chance to thrive in Berkeley.

Sincerely,

The 558 members and supporters of East Bay for Everyone, including:

Libby Lee-Egan, Berkeley Kieryn Darkwater, Oakland
Chris Lee-Egan, Berkeley Duncan MacRae, Berkeley
Justin Horner, North Oakland Anirvan Chatterjee, Berkeley
Ian Monroe, Oakland Adriana Valencia, North Oakland
Diego Aguilar Canabal, Berkeley Angela Hockabout, Alameda
Greg Magofña, Berkeley Luke Iseman, West Oakland
Victoria Fierce, Oakland Jessee Lovegood, Oakland
Ernest Brown, Oakland Aaron Eckhouse, Berkeley
Tommaso Sciortino, Oakland Watson Ladd, Berkeley
Joshua Davis, Oakland Derek Sagehorn, Oakland