

**Jacob, Melinda**

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**Subject:** FW: 2211 Harold Way  
**Attachments:** EIR Response from Kelly.pages

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**From:** Kelly Hammargren [<mailto:kellyhammargren@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 09, 2015 11:50 AM  
**To:** Zarnowitz, Sally; Zarnowitz, Sally  
**Subject:** 2211 Harold Way

To the Landmarks Preservation Commission

The letter I have copied in and attached to this email while written in response to the DEIR, it addresses the importance of retaining the historical districts and historical buildings.

In the shadow of the terrible tragedy at Library Gardens the world asks what has happened to Berkeley, the center of democracy and I ask too. I want my confidence restored. I want to see you as commissioners to carefully consider your mission, your commitment to us to Berkeley citizens to preserve the history of our city. I ask you to weigh carefully each building, the importance, the impact, the fitness of the design to compliment our city. As described in my letter, historical preservation is important it is what makes people want to live here and want to visit. It is our history and vision of who we are, who is Berkeley, that makes this a special place.

While everyone else is glazed over with visions of development money, running for office and retaining their office and their personal bias, let this commission be the voice of reason. Let this commission, all of you be the voice of reason that respects our history that can see clearly how retaining our history actually feeds our local economy and nurtures our soul.

Kelly

**Mission:**

Designates structures and sites having special historical and architectural interest and value. Encourages preservation, maintains list of landmarks or historic sites, and reviews construction, alteration and demolition permit applications.

To: Land Use Planning Division  
Re: 2211 Harold Way

From: Kelly Hammargren  
Berkeley, CA 94703

Some fifty years ago, the leaders of the town where I grew up were afraid they were losing out on the growing economy. Developers convinced the mayor, city leaders and planners that their proposed development plan to make the city center a grand mall, would bring prosperity and security to the locally owned shops and businesses. My father tried desperately and unsuccessfully to convince the city leaders the development plan was a horrible mistake. They refused to listen, eyes glossed with promises and vision that the grand development plan would not only bring economic success, they would be recognized as leaders with great foresight.

My father was right. People stop visiting. The uniqueness of the downtown was gone and within a few years the locally owned anchor stores were gone too. The city center disintegrated and never recovered. All attempts to bring back the vibrant bustling city center failed. I was just there in October and it feels like a ghost town with a lonely hotel, a couple of bars and a few businesses. Nearly everything has moved out.

Now I stand in similar shoes with others asking, pleading that you stop the grand proposed 2211 Harold Way Development.

As a long time resident and homeowner in Berkeley, I attended the November 13, 2014 Zoning Adjustment Board Meeting. I had just learned of the proposed 2211 Harold Way Development the day before and spoke in objection even though I did not have time to prepare a thorough and concise response.

It was unknown to me at the time how important making any response at the Zoning Adjustment Board meeting would be as without that brief comment, I would not have received the mailed notices that arrived a few days later. And, that experience is critical as it demonstrates the detrimental impact of the disintegration of news and the lack of coverage of our Berkeley City Council and Commissions. It takes considerable time and effort to stay abreast of the happenings, proposals and actions.

What drew me to Berkeley are the unique qualities that differentiate Berkeley from every other city that has been overtaken by developers, high rise buildings and box stores. It is the diversity of our city, the eclectic mix of people on the street, the culture with theater, music, film, museums, history,

UC Berkeley with its many educational seminars open to the public, superb dining, locally owned business, the small town feel of a city with a population of over 100,000 with a downtown city center with buildings modest in height that makes Berkeley a special place to live and a destination to visit. A treasure.

The voters in Berkeley elect our representatives in good faith that they will take care to protect the fabric of our community and prohibit actions and developments that work to the detriment of our city and bring harm to our Berkeley residents and those who visit. We expect our representatives to make decisions in good faith and not to be swayed by investor money, investor promises and personal gain whether that gain be monetary or vision of legacy.

Just as I had no knowledge of the 2211 Harold Way Development prior to November 12 neither did most of my neighbors in our neighborhood communication group. On November 15, 2014, I shared the following summary. It should be noted that searching the Zoning Adjustment Board website, the contact information given is the [clerk@cityofberkeley.info](mailto:clerk@cityofberkeley.info). Through the mailers I learned that the response submission process by email is to Aaron Sage at [asage@cityofberkeley.info](mailto:asage@cityofberkeley.info).

Below is a summary from attending the Zoning Adjustment Board in Berkeley Thursday evening (Nov 13) on building use permit #13-1000010's an 18 story 302 apt/condo highrise plan that is moving through the Berkeley approval process.

Instead of walking down Shattuck to the Landmark Shattuck Theaters or possibly taking children to Habitot Children's Museum with this building all that is known will be replaced with an 18 story apt/condo complex filling out the block from Harold to Shattuck, Allston and Kittridge. To sign the online petition to extend public comment go to <http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/save-...> note you do not have to be a resident of Berkeley or registered voter to sign as Zoning Board members expressed concern of the impact of this proposed building on visitors to Berkeley.

To submit comment to the Berkeley Zoning Board email: [clerk@CityofBerkeley.info](mailto:clerk@CityofBerkeley.info)

#### Meeting Summary - Nov 13 Berkeley Zoning Board

The LA owners called HSR Berkeley Investments LLC of the building at 2211 Harold Way which includes the Landmark Shattuck Theater and Habitot Children's Museum are moving their plan forward for building an 18 story 194 foot 302 apt/condo unit complex in Berkeley City Center. Whether there will be a mix of 2 and 3 bedroom condos and apartments, just condos or just apartments is unknown. There is no affordable housing included in this building (builders/developers can pay an additional fee to exclude affordable housing in the building)

The planned 302 condo/apt unit highrise is at the location of 2211 Harold Way - (goes thru to Shattuck, Kittridge, Allston). If built the Shattuck Landmark Theater will be torn down along with Habitot Children's Museum <http://www.habitot.org/> Members of the zoning board described the building plan as schizophrenic (Igor) lacking an inspired and integrated design (Sophie Hahn) unsatisfying design (Denise Pinkston), interrupting the downtown family triangle of Y, main library and Habitot Children's Museum (John Selawsky), potential sacrifice of city center attractions for thousands of residents and visitors for a 302 apt/condo complex (Michael A. Cohen), obstructing view of Bay from UC Berkeley Campanile (clock tower plaza) (Sophie Hahn and others) negatively changing skyline view from Shattuck (Prakash Pinto).

Donald Goldmacher film maker of the documentary Heist spoke on impact on film. Another speaker noted there is only a promise for theaters in new building and is not guaranteed plus loss of the Landmark Shattuck theaters for the 4 years of construction and the doubling of the lease cost in new building (per EIR document) would make reopening theaters unlikely. Representatives from Habitot Children's Museum spoke that in the EIR there is no plan for where and/or how to rebuild Habitot Children's Museum a widely used community resource for local and visiting families. There is also no reimbursement/starter cost for relocating and rebuilding the Habitot Children's Museum. Other community members spoke on the impact to Berkeley on the loss of these community resources and cultural activities.

One would think that with these comments from the Zoning Board and public comments on the detrimental impact there would be a cry for no, but instead this looks to move ahead - money ruling over common sense. If you are concerned please sign the petition, send public comment and share. Care and thought needs to go into where higher density buildings are located and the long term impact of those buildings in balancing increased density while preserving the fabric of our community and the activities and cultural programs that draw visitors to Berkeley and give reason for us to live here.

Public comment period to Nov 19 (request for extension to Dec 1 is not guaranteed) Public response matters.

As a voter, resident and homeowner, I ask the Zoning Adjustment Board to proceed with care and caution in their response to the 2211 Harold Way proposed development. If approved, this development will be with us for decades. The decision made here will forever change the fabric of our community. We all recognize this is not a simple decision. Please give thoughtful consideration to my response and those of everyone expressing objection to the 2211 Harold Way Development.

Through gathering petition signatures, canvassing Berkeley neighborhoods for weeks for the November 4 election and just talking to people, I have learned much about how residents and visitors feel about Berkeley and their concerns.

Much was made at the November 13 Zoning Adjustment Board meeting of the overwhelming defeat of Proposition R. The defeat of the ballot initiative is complex and outside investor money pouring into the defeat of R with talking points of preserve green Berkeley left voters confused and buried with misinformation. Even as I try to stay informed and voted yes on R, I did not know that the 2211 Harold Way proposed development lurked in the background along with the buying up of other city center property by outside investors for development. And, a \$90,000 contribution for No on R came from Chicago.

A general rule of thumb to voters to a ballot initiative is if you don't understand it vote no or don't vote on that initiative. During the weeks of canvassing, Berkeley voters conveyed to me wanting to be good citizens and by that encouraging use of mass transit and creating a thriving livable

city of independent locally owned businesses and an art, cultural and educational center. Berkeley voters also conveyed they worry that too tight a reign on development will leave the city with empty store fronts. It is the balance between thoughtful controlled growth and development that we are seeking and it is development to the extent that it destroys the local economy, health and fabric of the Berkeley community that we abhor. Berkeley is a special place to live and visit.

Obstruction of the current view of the San Francisco Bay and Golden Gate Bridge from Campanile Way was dismissed in the EIR as being unimportant, of no consequence. Let it be known that Campanile Way is a destination. It is a rare occasion (one I have not experienced) to be at Campanile Way without being surrounded by visitors and residents and their guests from across the globe snapping pictures of themselves and the view from Campanile Way. The view from Campanile Way is a treasure to be preserved, not dismissed. This treasure, Sather Tower was designed and landscaped for us in 1914 and opened to the public in 1917. It is on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places and Berkeley Landmark #158.

The Landmark Shattuck Cinemas are a destination for residents and visitors from across the bay area. While gathering petition signatures in front of the Shattuck Cinemas, I was amazed by the number of people who come from around the bay just for movies.

The cultural heritage of Berkeley brings visitors who while here attend movies, theater, museums, walk the city center, frequent our restaurants and contribute to the local economy. The variety of activities of which the Landmark Shattuck Cinemas and Campanile Way are a part in a city setting that still holds the unique small town feel with its modest height building.

Diversity and affordable housing is central to Berkeley values. The proposed 2211 Harold Way development plan is to pay a few in lieu of affordable housing. This may make the city budget look robust, but causes great harm to the residents who seek affordable housing.

If there are any doubts regarding the detrimental impact on the health and economy of Berkeley with the proposed 2211 Harold Way development, one only needs to look across the bay and to cities around the nation to the cascade of problems that follow development. And, this does not even include the future impact on Berkeley infrastructure and stress to available water, systems, government, climate, waste and the list goes on. Every part of Berkeley is impacted.

Please proceed cautiously, read your own words in my summary to my neighbors and gather the strength to say no.

Thank you