



PRADO GROUP

February 16, 2010

Sophie Maxwell, David Chui, Eric Mar,  
San Francisco Planning Dept  
1650 Mission Street 4th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94103

*Sent Via Email*

**RE: Discretionary Review Reform**

Dear Sophie Maxwell, David Chui and Eric Mar,

Prado Group supports the proposed legislation to reform the Discretionary Review (DR) process. Prado Group has a number development projects in San Francisco and embraces the importance of community outreach and neighbor input on all our projects. It has been our experience that the Discretionary Review ("DR") process can be used rather frivolously resulting in costly delays for the city, the developer, and significant use of City staff time.

We have attended the City's outreach meetings related to this reform effort in order to educate ourselves on the proposed legislation changes. As the Prado Group understands it, DRs filed before the effective date of the legislation will be given a Planning Commission hearing, however DRs filed after the legislation's effective date would need to demonstrate that the project has exceptional and extraordinary impacts that were not addressed in order to be reviewed under the discretionary review process.

Prado Group has a small project that was threatened with a DR after the Department of Building Inspection (DBI) mailing of the demolition permit notification letters to surrounding occupants and owners. The basis for the potential DR was due to neighbor concerns about the loss of view and potential shading of their building's non-conforming rear yard. In conjunction with the District Supervisor's office, Prado Group had done extensive outreach prior to its unanimous approval of its Conditional Use permit at the Planning Commission in October 2008. The neighbors were aware of the project but said they were too busy with other things at the time to bring up their concerns. Prado Group does not believe that the neighbor's concerns qualify as either exceptional or extraordinary as mandated by the Discretionary Review requirements. Prado Group had not requested any variances in association with this project, conducted extensive outreach during the entitlement period and complied with all city notification regulations and planning standards. It is specifically these types of trivial DRs that slow the production of much needed housing in the city and, although neighbor input is important, it is essential they voice their concerns at the appropriate time in the process.

If you have any questions, please feel free to follow-up via email to [lcongdon@pradogroup.com](mailto:lcongdon@pradogroup.com) or call 415-395-0880 extension 303.

Regards,



Lisa Congdon  
Project Manager

cc: Elaine Forbes, Michael Smith, Jonas Ionin, Elizabeth Watty