



SAN FRANCISCO
PLANNING + URBAN RESEARCH
ASSOCIATION

654 Mission Street
San Francisco, California
94105

415.781.8726 t
415.781.7291 f

www.spur.org

Co-Chairs

Linda Jo Fitz
Lee Blitch

Executive Director
Gabriel Metcalf

Vice Chairs

Emilio Cruz
David Friedman
Mary McCue
Wade Rose
V. Fei Tsen

Secretary

Bill Rosetti

Treasurer

Bob Gamble

Immediate Past Chair
Andy Barnes

Advisory Council

Co-Chairs

Michael Alexander
Paul Sedway

Board Members

Carl Anthony
Alexa Arena
Chris Block
Larry Burnett
Michaela Cassidy
Michael Cohen
Madeline Chun
Charmaine Curtis
Gia Daniller-Katz
Kelly Dearman
Shelley Doran
Oz Erickson
Manny Flores
Gillian Gillett
Chris Gruwell
Anne Halsted
Dave Hartley
Mary Huss
Chris Iglesias
Laurie Johnson
Ken Kirkey
Dick Loneragan
Ellen Lou
Janis MacKenzie
John Madden
Gordon Mar
Jacinta McCann
Chris Meany
Ezra Mersey
Terry Micheau
Jeanne Myerson
Mary Murphy
Brad Paul
Chris Poland
Teresa Rea
Byron Rhett
Victor Seeto
Elizabeth Seifel
Chi-Hsin Shao
Ontario Smith
Bill Stotler
Stuart Sunshine
Michael Teitz
James Tracy
Will Travis
Steve Vettel
Debra Walker
Cynthia Wilusz-Lovell
Cindy Wu

February 8th, 2012

President Ron Miguel
San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

Re: Parking, Awning, Signs, Exposure, Open Space, and Limited Conforming Uses
Legislation

Dear Commissioners,

SPUR wishes to offer its support for the Parking, Awning, Signs, Exposure, Open Space and Limited Conforming Uses Legislation sponsored by Supervisor Chiu. SPUR is in agreement with the aims of this legislation including 1. reducing off-street parking requirements in dense, mixed-use neighborhoods located near transit, 2. encouraging the preservation and reuse of existing buildings, 3. allowing flexibility in accessory uses to encourage small business retention, 4. encouraging the creation of housing by decontrolling density within the C-3 District and 5. supporting the construction of affordable housing, inclusionary housing and bicycle parking by exempting these uses from the FAR calculation.

Supervisor Chiu is proposing a very large and complex set of changes in this legislation. However, it is important to note that several of the changes proposed here were actually first developed and vetted through neighborhood planning processes, such as the Eastern Neighborhoods and Better Neighborhoods Plans. These include 1. the removal of parking minimums and replacement with parking maximums (as is proposed for non-residential uses in the Broadway and North Beach Neighborhood Commercial Districts and the Chinatown Mixed Used Districts) and 2. The elimination of density controls and replacement with more “form-based” controls.

We are also pleased that Supervisor Chiu is working with the various affected parties, and are encouraged that these discussions will continue towards resolution.

Finally, we wish to offer our general support for adding density in San Francisco’s transit-rich downtown. As we have long noted, San Francisco’s downtown benefits from the best regional transit infrastructure west of the Mississippi. The changes proposed in this legislation encourages the addition of beneficial uses such as housing (including on-site Below Market Rate housing) and bicycle parking, while disincentivizing the creation of excess parking uses. Eliminating affordable housing from Floor-Area Ratio limits is a particularly exciting idea because it has the potential to encourage developers of taller concrete buildings to fulfill their inclusionary housing requirement on-site.

We urge you to support this legislation and move it forward.

Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 415-644-4292.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'S' followed by a 'K' and a 'D'.

Sarah Karlinsky
Deputy Director