

Katherine Rhee

From: Brandon Smith <thatbrandonsmith@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 8, 2023 6:15 PM
To: Public Comment
Subject: Public comment

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Honorable Mayor and members of the City Council,

I was disappointed to see the unanimous council vote on December 7, 2023 on purchasing the two vacant lots at 1112 West Gardena Boulevard, with very little discussion beyond Councilmember Francis' questions on the appraised value, especially after hearing the skeptical discussion previously held at the council meeting at which this purchase was first publicly suggested. It isn't at least publicly clear what the city plans to use the lot for that isn't already covered by local parks, such as holiday events, etc. At a cost of almost two million dollars, I would hope there is some better laid-out idea of what is expected to be held in or done with this area.

As an alternative, I would like to know from the current landowner why they have not developed the land. Is it simply finding a buyer for it in the current market? Fear of increased value and increased property taxes? Inability to profitably build something pursuant to current zoning codes? These are critical questions to ask that could potentially inform other actions the council could take that could lead to a more optimal use of this land.

If used for parking, will it be free as the rest of the parking is in the area? And if it is closed to hold city events or festivals, have we not then reverted back to the current condition where there is no parking nearby for high-demand times? If people can't get to the area, they can't spend their money at these crucial local businesses or take part in the community building we're all looking for.

>From my public view at this moment, I don't believe there has been enough thought put in to specific, net-positive outcomes of spending two million dollars on these two plots of land, beyond vague suggestions of future "events". I do look forward with continuing interest to ways the city plans to make Gardena Boulevard into more of the crown jewel of our city that its name should imply.

Respectfully,
Brandon Smith