



Sean Elsbernd

**A**t this week's meeting of the Board of Supervisors, 8 residents near the proposed single-family home addition to 15th Avenue, along the frontage of Ardenwood's property, appealed the Planning Department's issuance of a categorical exemption by the Planning Department. Translating that planning jargon, neighbors of the proposal expressed concern that the project would be authorized by the Planning Department to proceed without any in depth environmental review.

I am pleased to report that the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved my motion to send the project back to the Planning Department for further environmental review. Specifically, the Board asked that a complete traffic study be done to analyze what impact, if any, the homes will have on the street. My main concern, and the concern most often raised to me by neighbors in the area, is that as cars drive in and out of the proposed driveway of these homes, there may be an increased safety hazard for pedestrians and autos traveling along 15th Avenue. Based on the Board's actions yesterday, this issue and other traffic issues will be carefully analyzed and necessary mitigation measures will be imposed upon the project.

The proposed project neighbors raised some additional concerns about the historic nature of the site, the nesting capabilities of a hawk species seen in the area, and issues surrounding the sewer capacity in the area and the underground water table. The Board certainly acknowledged the importance of each one of these issues. However, we were confident that those issues will be properly addressed through the building permit phase of the project. Moreover, I expressed concern that if we accepted the argument that the entire neighbor-

hood should be deemed a historic district as presented by some of the neighbors, anyone who would want to do a remodel or addition to their home, who lived within the neighborhood, would have to do a complete Environmental Impact Report.

I would like to thank all of the neighbors who raised their concerns and participated in the process. Additionally, I would also like to thank the many neighbors who contacted me in support of the project. This robust public dialogue will continue as this project moves forward through the process.

Please keep in mind that this is a separate and distinct project from the proposal that is pending for the northwest corner of Ardenwood's property. At the time of the writing of this article, plans have still not even been submitted to the Planning Department for this proposal. Moreover, there will be no question that this significantly larger project will warrant a complete, accurate, and objective Environmental Impact Report. In other words, there will be no categorical exemption granted to this project by the Planning Department. As that project moves through the process, I will keep you informed of the opportunities you will have to participate in

the public process and to provide your input on what should or should not happen in that location.

Finally, as always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions about this issue or any other by calling me at (415) 554-6516 or by e-mailing me at [sean.elsbernd@sfgov.org](mailto:sean.elsbernd@sfgov.org).