

Public Comments



JO Bennett <jbennett@keywestcity.com>

Public comment for Monday's HARC meeting

Ralph Enderby <rte1@bellsouth.net>

Sun, Mar 9, 2014 at 10:01 PM

Reply-To: rte1@bellsouth.net

To: etorregr@keywestcity.com

Please add this to the public record for the Peary Court meeting on March 10th and if possible have it read at that meeting.

Dear Commissioners,

Peary Court represents the last major piece of undeveloped land in Key West and we should try to get it right. I, as a concerned owner at the corner of Angela and Florida Streets, maintain that RIGHT is not what is being proposed.

- RIGHT is not cramming 208 to 270 units (depending on how many of the large lots opt to add the “guest cottages”) onto that beautiful parcel of land.
- RIGHT is not lining the houses that back up to Angela Street with 6 foot unit to unit separation and a 4 foot setback for the guest cottages to the fence on Angela. (The residents will be able to reach out their window and hold hands with their neighbors.) The effect will be to have a solid row of houses facing us on Angela changing forever the character of the Meadows. Also as been pointed out in the Staff Report the houses along Angela should face Angela and not have their backyards on Angela. As an alternative the houses along Angela should have enough green space behind them to disassociate them from being on Angela – like in the existing design. And what happened to the requirement that the minimum lot size under Sect. 122-615 be no less than 5000 sq. feet. None of the proposed lots are that big with the Cottage lots being only 1500 sq. feet.
- What is RIGHT is providing enough parking spaces to prevent the surrounding neighborhoods like ours from being overrun with their vehicles. It should be pointed out that the number of parking spaces they give as 305 is **WRONG** for it doesn’t subtract off the number of spaces lost to the trellised carports needing driveways. I estimate that will reduce the number of available parking spaces from 305 to less than 275. That would mean the ratio of housing units to parking spaces could be as low as one to one. Hundreds of additional cars could be forced onto Angela and the surrounding streets with the owners using the pedestrian openings in the Angela fence to get from their cars to their houses. *This will dramatically change the character of our quiet neighborhood!*
- Also what is RIGHT is providing enough green space. The only green space provided is a 75 to 100 foot wide pathway through the center two blocks of the project – complete with “TWO TRELLIS WITH ADULT SWINGS”! Sorry, but in my opinion that is a joke.
- And finally, RIGHT is **NOT** adding barracks style housing with a guard tower (sorry that is a water tower – it just looks like a guard tower) to the first view that someone gets as they approach the project on Palm Avenue. For the life of me I can’t see how a 30 unit barracks (with just 30 parking

spaces) enhances the property. To satisfy the requirement for affordable housing the units should be scattered throughout the project not lumped in the most prominent corner.

In conclusion, I ask you to reject the present proposal and have it re-submitted with something we can all be proud of.

Sincerely,

Ralph Enderby

702 Florida Street



Letter to HARC.doc

28K

JO Bennett <jbennett@keywestcity.com>

Peary Court Development

tharon dunn <tsdunn@comcast.net>

Mon, Mar 10, 2014 at 9:53 AM

To: Torregrosa Enid <etorregr@keywestcity.com>

To the Members of the Historic Architectural Review:

My husband and I live most of the year at 701 Florida St. in the Meadows. We value the work that HARC does to preserve and protect the architectural environment and unique character of Key West's neighborhoods. The existence of this kind of safeguard is certainly one of the reasons we made a home here. It is important to us that there is a board in Key West responsible for overseeing construction and alterations with the mandate that the nature of neighborhood streetscapes will be preserved, design integrity of old buildings protected.

In 2005, having owned our home for ten years, we undertook a major renovation of our house. As with other renovations in the Meadows and along White Street, you absolutely put us through the wringer. You would not allow us to move a window or a door, or change any details that could be seen from the street. We couldn't raise the roof an inch or even add a small dormer to gain the use of the attic in our one story house. We understood and we complied, as have our friends and neighbors, and we are happy with the authentic historic character of our neighborhoods.

Of equal importance in HARC's guidelines is the importance of maintaining differentiation between new development and historic neighborhoods. Last year we were told that a new development can become an integral part of Old Town and that credible integration is possible. Maybe this is what is still being taught in New Urbanism 101. Clearly this is false and clearly it is contrary to HARC guidelines. It takes only a good look at Truman Annex or the Roosevelt Annex or at Celebration or Seaside or countless new Old Towns worldwide to see the fallacy of this premise. They may have their appeal but they are always something different from the existing historic fabric, no matter hard and sincerely the developers try to make it otherwise. A single owner/developer cannot create in ten years what thousands of individuals do in pursuing their own ends on their individual properties over hundreds of years. Your guidebook acknowledges that reality.

In looking over the plans proposed by the developer for this project it was immediately obvious even to my untrained eye, that the new "made to look old" buildings are pushed as close to the old neighborhoods as possible. There are several disproportionately large and frankly unattractive buildings clumped together on the corner of Eisenhower and Pearl, right at the entrance to the historic Meadows. There are ancillary cottages behind larger houses which are hard along the edge of Angela St. The density of the building structures has increased in the areas adjacent to the Meadows and to White St. The setback and the green vegetation buffer differentiating the property from the Meadows have practically disappeared. It seems obvious to me that this proposal is simply inappropriate for this location. The existing naval housing actually does a better job of answering the HARC mandate for new construction adjacent to an old neighborhood. Any penetration of the Angela St. fence, even walking or biking paths, will only encourage more parking along a very narrow crowded lane and will in every way serve to defeat the spirit of "maintaining the character" of our historic neighborhood.

I respectfully request that you send these plans back to the developers with a copy of the HARC Guidelines attached, underlining their clear defiance of your imperative.

Again, we appreciate your role in helping to make Key West the place we want to live, and we sincerely hope that you will use the valuable tools you have and enforce the rules in your own guidebook.

Sincerely,
Tharon S. Dunn
701 Florida St.



JO Bennett <jbennett@keywestcity.com>

Comments on Peary Court - HARC Meeting Monday 10th March

Bryan Green <greenusa@icloud.com>

Sun, Mar 9, 2014 at 2:43 PM

To: Enid Torregrossa <etorregr@keywestcity.com>

Cc: Jo Bennett <jbennett@keywestcity.com>, Michael Miller <michael@michaelmillerarchitects.com>

Dear Harc Board members

My apologies for writing rather than attending tonight's meeting. I have an urgent Wesley House meeting that I must attend

Some HARC Board members may remember that I made some very critical comments about the first presentation to this Board - specifically in relation to the creation of a quasi enclosed residential area with a road layout that failed to respect the adjacent layout of Eaton/Fleming and Southard Streets

Since then I have attended a presentation by the developers and have now had the opportunity to review the full set of drawings available via Dropbox

I do believe that these proposals are a significant improvement on the first concepts but remain concerned about 4 elements

1. The applicant has (either by direction from the City or by choice) chosen to eliminate a the existing direct connection from this site area onto Palm Avenue. This has unfortunate consequences. It, in effect, creates a cul-de-sac meaning that there is no reason for anyone other than residents, visitors and delivery drivers to enter into this area since it leads to nowhere. To all intents and purposes the elimination of connectivity through Peary and from Palm Avenue creates a quasi gated community

2. More importantly it means traffic to this site (from North Roosevelt or from say Horace O'Bryant area will be tempted to use utilize Angela and Newton Street as "rat runs" to Peary Court.

3. There is a clear fight going on between the aspirations of the Angela Street residents to retain the status quo and those of City Planners who appear to hold diametrically opposite views on how the new development should relate to the Meadows and specifically to Angela Street itself. In my view the compromise probably satisfies neither party and is an uncomfortable solution. Angela Street is too narrow for the sort of solution imposed on Virginia Street (sidewalk,parking, road, parking, sidewalk) and if that is what the City would like to achieve it can only really do so by utilizing some of the Peary Court site area. If that is not possible and Angela Street stays the width it is, then the fears of the existing residents about increased parking and a change from it's historic quiet backwater has considerable validity. I think post development applications to create direct access from the rear of those properties backing onto Angela Street will be difficult to resist.

4. Perhaps my biggest disappointment is the decision to create new replica Old Town house types which in many ways mimic 100 year old Old Town properties. In my opinion this is a wonderful opportunity to create a 21st Century eco development of modern architecture designed as an exemplar scheme using appropriate materials, overhangs, utilizing the latest energy conservation techniques. They clearly would still need to respect scale and massing but the usual concerns about fitting in with next door neighbors does not apply here.

Overall, however, I do feel this is a considerable improvement but as staff report notes - there remain many unresolved issues.

Bryan Green
910 Watson Street

From: Bryan Green

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WHITE STREET PARTNERS SNEAKING IN UNDER THE RADAR, PEARY COURT DEVELOPMENT ROUND TWO

White Street Partners is sneaking in under the radar...again...with a new plan to develop Peary Court. With the exception of two 8 inch by 10 inch placards affixed obscurely to the existing Peary Court fence, there has been NO notice given to the public regarding their highly evolved plans to create an unprecedented 24 acre "Olde Towne" development at Peary Court. There has been NO official notice in anything of record, NO articles in the local newspapers, NO mention on radio or TV or the internet, NO meetings with the general public as promised last year when their original plans were shut down. And yet, on this coming Monday evening at 5:30 PM at the Old City Hall on Greene Street, HARC will review this massive proposal and make a decision to give it the green light. I'm not kidding. This whole proposal, one shot by HARC, this Monday night.

How can this be? How can a project of of this scale in the middle of and at the gateway to Old Town get so far with so little oversight?

In a last minute meeting this Sunday arranged at great effort by Meadows residents with WSP representatives (Donna Bosold, formerly of HARC, and Jim Hendricks, formerly face man for Pritam Singh at Truman Annex), we were shown only small scale plot plans of their new proposal. They felt the architectural drawings were too complicated for them, and certainly for us, to understand, and were therefore deliberately withheld.

It appears that everything existing, including all roads and infrastructure will be ripped out. It will be replaced with an all new road and a perimeter fortress type layout of maximum density and minimum setback and screening. There will be 160 new "high end dwellings", plus 20 additional "cottages", tight to White and Angela Street, both of which will become walls of houses and swimming pools. The developers are refusing to reveal the total number of bedrooms proposed, but it is clearly far more than currently existing. At the Eisenhower end, between Palm and Angela up to Pearl Street, there will be an immense 48 unit building complex (possibly a low income housing gulag--not integrated into the rest of the development) and large parking lot, pool, and gigantic water tower. Renderings of these structures, which we were finally able to view at City Hall, are particularly shocking in both size and scale. It looks like a prison camp. All this to become the first face of Old Town to travelers headed into town on Palm Ave.

Openings will be made in the existing Angela Street fence, allowing the new Peary Court residents to access and park on an already overburdened Angela

Street, Florida, Georgia, and Newton Streets. A new traffic entrance will be created at Fleming Street, and in a particularly bizarre development, the existing entrance from Palm Ave will be closed off, forcing all residents to use White Street, either traveling further on Palm or cutting through the Meadows.

Perversely, the interior of the development will be relatively open and free, almost park like. The density of the housing, and the noise of the common areas, is being foisted on those of us on the perimeter, not screened inside or even along the more indifferent Palm Ave. corridor.

Not to mention the fact that the construction phase of this project will be TEN YEARS. That's right, ten years of noise, debris, dirt and dust on the scale of the Roosevelt Blvd project for everyone in the vicinity to endure.

HARC has never adjudicated a project of anywhere near this scale. Their mission, and their ability, is to review one building at a time, not 24 acres worth. They cannot green light this project on Monday night. This requires much more attention and due scrutiny, as this is the largest buildable parcel left to developed in Old Town Key West.

If you care about Old Town, or about any of the issues such a massive project like this entails, talk to your fellow citizens, city commissioners, and town planners. Above all, attend the HARC meeting this Monday at 5:30 and let your thoughts be known.

Lee Dunn
701 Florida St, Key West
3/08/14



JO Bennett <jbennett@keywestcity.com>

Peary Court: to be read at the March 10th HARC meeting

shmofel@aol.com <shmofel@aol.com>

Fri, Mar 7, 2014 at 12:02 PM

To: etorregr@keywestcity.com, sgibson@keywestcity.com, wm@keywestcity.com, "beabella99 <beabella99@gmail.com>", "ccates <'ccates'@keywestcity.com>", "jweekley <'jweekley'@keywestcity.com>", "mrossi <'mrossi'@keywestcity.com>", "bwardlow <'bwardlow'@keywestcity.com>", "tjohnston <'tjohnston'@keywestcity.com>", "clopez <'clopez'@keywestcity.com>", "rklitenick <'rklitenick'@keywestcity.com>", "mbrowning <'mbrowning'@keywestcity.com>", "jgilleran <'jgilleran'@keywestcity.com>", "shollandjr <'shollandjr'@keywestcity.com>", "ppike <'ppike'@keywestcity.com>", "cspottswood <'cspottswood'@keywestcity.com>", "ltennyson <'ltennyson'@keywestcity.com>", "gfilosa <'gfilosa'@keynews.com>", "tyaniz <'tyaniz'@keywestcity.com>

Please enter this into the record at the March 10th HARC meeting
from: Donna Feldman - 1420 Angela St.

After viewing the newest set of plans for the Peary Court Development I am very concerned. As one crosses the Garrison Bight bridge into Old Town, the first thing seen are 3 massive buildings and a water tower. Aside from being totally out of scale with the neighborhood they are eerily reminiscent of concentration camp photos. I am not sure that is the way we want our city introduced to visitors. I know that is an image I never want to see.

By far, the densest portion of this development is along Angela St. The homes are very close together and many have a small cottage in the back. They are backed up as close to the fence as allowed. At present we have houses that are set back from the fence with plenty of green space between them. The new look will be very claustrophobic and change the entire character of our street. In addition, there are the 2 multistory buildings at the Eisenhower end of the street. The developers seem very proud of their green space; however to achieve that they crammed a lot of units along Angela and took away ours.

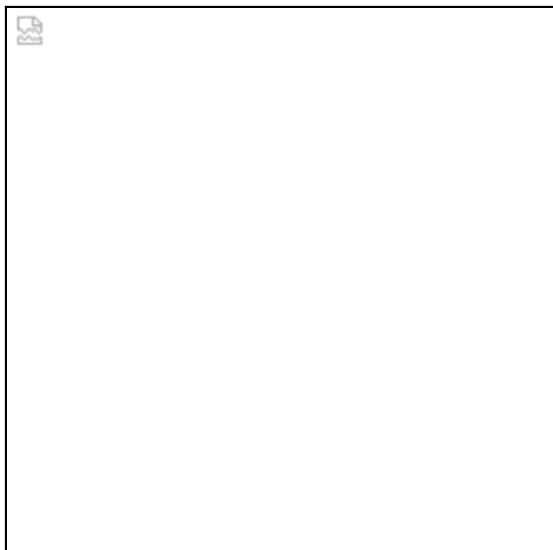
The plans before you show 2 openings in the fence along Angela that grant access to Peary Court - one at Pearl and one at Florida. Because of the density of homes on this side of the development there will be a parking shortage. I understand there is parking provided, but realistically speaking a 2 or 3 bedroom home with a cottage in the back will very possibly have 3 cars. What would be easier than to park on Angela behind your house and walk in. What would be easier than driving your scooter through the pedestrian only openings. The multi-story buildings have a parking lot with less than one space allotted per unit. That lot is much farther away than simply parking on Angela and walking in. There is also a pool planned at this end. Easy access into Peary Court might make this pool a liability nightmare.

Our street is simply too small and narrow to accommodate any additional cars or traffic. To illustrate this point, I have provided a picture of a Waste Management truck a few feet from one of these proposed openings. Keeping the fence intact along the length of our street would discourage parking on Angela rather than making it a convenience.

I would strongly suggest keeping the Palm Ave entrance open to vehicular traffic. It makes no sense to me to have an entrance already there with a light and not use it. Better to get the residents of Peary Court into the complex before they get backed up at the White St light.

Finally, the density, scale and proportion of this project are out of whack. The densest and largest portions are along Angela St and the carefully thought out green areas are invisible until you are inside the development. After seeing how many homes are planned for our street I have come to the conclusion that there must be NO openings in the fence along Angela St. Had some of the areas incorporated in the center of the development been on our street my opinion might have been different. But as it stands, the impact will be too great. Please consider the opinion of the neighbors. Thank you.

1 Attached Images



get-attachment.jpg
69K