

Keri O'Brien

From: Maryann Matter <ma@a2zmatter.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 20, 2024 3:38 PM
To: Michael Browning; peterebatty@gmail.com; erusso7404@aol.com;
waynegarciacontr@bellsouth.net; fvarela@historictours.com; rwarrenusa@gmail.com;
City Clerk External E-Mail; Mayor E-Mail
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Planning Board Meeting 11-21-24

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Agenda item #4

For me, and for many KW residents, community is what sets us apart from other “resort” towns. We have families, incredible history, vibrant art and literature groups. We have so many places and events of interest that are unique to Key West; the museums, the cemetery, our fabulous parades, the ocean, the music and food. That’s why we’re all here, and the fact that many of these Key West characteristics (and characters) exist is the result of our exceptional cooperative spirit. Yet, there are so many external factors affecting our ability to maintain our close-knit, One Human Family, love thy neighbor way of life. We are ever more challenged with issues we have little control over, such as sea level rise, inflation, taxes and insurance, access to definitive medical care. These are the things that sadly, drive residents away, eroding our community. Although we try our best to mitigate these concerns, it is imperative that we act responsibly on the issues we *can* control, such as those proposed in agenda item #4. Any zone change from residential to commercial will most definitely have a negative impact on our quality of life. We already struggle with noise, an ever-expanding tourist industry, and traffic. Time after time we’ve watched the city grant variances to developers despite an outpouring of opposition. By citing the need for “affordable housing” a development project appears more favorable. We seem to be trapped in a compounding cycle of building more and then needing more. The Casa Marina wants dorms for their affordable housing component. These proposed dwellings will not house locals nor create community. It’s the same for the Southwinds Project. Land use guidelines, zoning, and variance requirements were established to maintain the integrity of our historic neighborhoods. These City codes are designed to protect our neighborhoods and the quality-of-life residents value. Please heed the City Planners’ recommendations and consider adopting the County’s Commercial Workforce Housing Ordinance. Again, these are things we CAN control, *with your guidance and your vote*. Please do not allow the developers to compound the problems we are already facing. We need our community healthy and intact!

Many thanks.