

Ponte Vista is all political

Good for the city of Los Angeles. And bad, too.

Its planning staff recommended denying Ponte Vista's overbearing, crushing development, citing page-upon-page of strong policy reasons why it should not go forward. Kudos to them for their clarity and courage.

But, they also suggested that 800 to 1,200 units might be all right, pending a new application by the developer. This is more than in the downtown CRA project area, where units aren't selling. Apparently, the Planning Department cares little about what happens to San Pedro's attempts to renovate itself.

This reduction in number is obviously political. There is no other explanation. After all, it is almost twice as dense as the Gardens. Every policy reason the Planning Department cited to deny 1,950 units applies equally to 1,200 units - lack of mass transportation, out of step with the community plan and general plan, etc. In effect, without analysis, they implied that they would approve a development that would increase daily traffic on Western by 33 percent and add 480 students to the local schools, mostly Taper and Dodson.

For the last three years we have been subjected to salesmanship as a substitute for good planning. The developer probably wanted 1,200 units all along, but by asking for the moon and stars he could act wounded and unhappy by getting "only" the moon.

As has been its practice for many years, the city seems poised to hand a developer what it wants without accurately analyzing impacts on traffic, schools, and other municipal services.

Before the city and our representatives break their elbows patting themselves on the back and approving a still-too-large development, let's require an application for a reasonable project and subject it to real analysis.

- PAT NAVE

San Pedro