



March 6, 2009

Honorable Commissioners
San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: Discretionary Review Reforms

Dear Commissioners:

After careful review of Planning Director John Rahaim's recommendations regarding reforming the current discretionary review process, our organization of commercial and residential real estate property owners, managers and related industry professionals welcomes his proposals for reform, and supports them.

Specifically, BOMA is concerned with the amount of staff time that is spent on relatively minor issues, usually related to complaints from residents about a neighbor's remodel project. Especially in tough economic times such as we are experiencing, now is the time to review and change our policies that, while still providing residents with an appeal process through the design review committee/hearing officer format, will reduce the number of cases that may not have sufficient merit to warrant full Departmental review. Our organization is also sensitive to the amount of time Planning Commissioners have been spending hearing Discretionary Review cases and supports efforts to reduce that problem thus allowing you to devote yourself to larger policy issues that have greater long-term impacts on our City.

Lastly, the recommendations for reform actually will enhance the internal review process for Discretionary Reviews and more aptly standardize the way in which they are handled. The public will gain greater transparency regarding planned projects and how the Planning Department evaluates them.

Therefore, BOMA supports the Director's proposed recommended reforms of the Discretionary Review Process, and request they be adopted.

Respectfully,

Ken Cleaveland
Director, Govt. and Public Affairs

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