



PRESERVE LA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Asst. US Attorney Brandon Fox and AG Kamala Harris Must Probe Spot Zoning Corruption in L.A.

With all due respect to L.A. District Attorney Jackie Lacey for launching a corruption probe, the Coalition to Preserve LA is calling on Asst. US Attorney Brandon Fox (Public Corruption Section) and California Attorney General (Special Investigations Team), to investigate whether City Hall leaders, in ex parte meetings, sell their votes to developers seeking “spot zoning” that enriches the developers.

In the wake of an L.A. Times probe this week into “Sea Breeze” — a stinking wind that the Times editorial board calls “an indictment of a corrupt City Hall culture in City Hall” — the Coalition urges an investigation well beyond the Sea Breeze fiasco, led by prosecutors well outside of the Los Angeles political system.

The Coalition, sponsor of the Neighborhood Integrity Initiative on the ballot next March, is now delivering official requests to Harris, Brandon and Lacey. They seek a broad probe of “spot zoning,” the backroom, money-greased City Hall system that placed the Sea Breeze apartments in a manufacturing area, which zoning prohibits.

Sea Breeze sailed past L.A. city planners and appointees who tried to stop the wildly inappropriate “zone change.” Meanwhile, \$600,000 appeared in the coffers of the City Hall elected leaders who pushed it through.

The Coalition request, being delivered to Brandon Fox, Asst. U.S. Attorney; Attorney General Kamala Harris's Special Investigations Team; and Lacey, says in part:

“We request you investigate evidence, in the Times piece, of money-laundering to benefit politicians, a criminal act. ...

“In addition to the appearance, and possible reality, of vote-selling and money laundering involving Los Angeles city officials in the Sea Breeze and other controversial “spot zoning” changes, we believe there is strong evidence that elected officials are illegally disregarding the Los Angeles City Charter in order to pursue “spot zoning” that financially advantages the very elected officials and other officials who give these approvals. ...

“We believe an investigation into L.A.'s spot zoning is justified and request it be done. California Government Code section 1222, Willful Omission to Perform Duty, states: ‘Every willful omission to perform any duty enjoined by law upon any public officer, or person holding any public trust or employment, where no special provision is made for the punishment of such delinquency, is punishable as a misdemeanor.’”

L.A. leaders who fight “spot zoning” that gridlock our streets, ruins neighborhood character and is displacing thousands of families and businesses, are demanding this broad, outside, fully independent investigation.

Damien Goodman, executive director of the nonprofit Crenshaw Subway Coalition, said, “Bring in the independent special prosecutor.”

Cindy Chvatal, president of the Hancock Park Homeowners Association, said, “An outside investigation of spot zoning and campaign donation practices at City Hall is desperately needed. The city cannot investigate itself, we need a complete, independent investigation.”

Richard Close, president of the Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association, said, “Residents of the San Fernando Valley have long suspected that votes were for sale at City Hall. The Los Angeles Times article proves that developers can purchase votes with campaign contributions.”

PRESS CONTACT: Jill Stewart, Coalition to Preserve LA Campaign Director, (916) 595 9033