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Comm. Dev. Dept. Brisbane

December 11, 2015

Dear Members of the Brisbane Planning Commission,

Please accept these comments on the matter of the Brisbane Baylands Final Environmental Impact Report and related Planning Applications (Baylands Concept Plans, Brisbane Baylands Specific Plan, General Plan Amendment Case GP-01-06).

I am most grateful to the City's Planning Division staff, led by Director Swiecki, for their support of this important process and their expertise. Also, I thank Mr. Lloyd Zola for his presentations at these hearings, which have been balanced, nuanced, and informative.

The Commissioners deserve genuine gratitude from Brisbane's citizens – my attempts to keep up with just the recordings of the hearings have amounted to a substantial commitment of time and energy; this is but a fraction of the commitment of our Commissioners, who have attended the weekly hearings consistently, with an intensity of attention and with the thoughtfulness that the process requires.

Last but not least, I cannot adequately describe the importance of the contributions of a small number of fellow Brisbane residents who have attended many, if not all, of the hearings. They have studied and deconstructed the final EIR, and prepared valuable analyses and comments to assist the Commission with this momentous deliberation, and to educate us all. We owe a debt of gratitude to Anja Miller, Barbara Ebel, Clara Johnson, Coleen Mackin, Tony Verrios, Joel Diaz, Linda Dettmer, and others (such as the young man who reminded us that two wrongs do not make a right!). Without their time, effort and devotion to the process, and their collective memory, the residents would be even more under-informed than they likely are. I leave town at 7 am and return at 6 pm each weekday for my job, and this doesn't leave a lot of time for me to dig into the documents to a helpful degree. So, these citizens' comments, along with the presentations of the various community groups, have been all the more precious.

I submit my strong support for the following next step:

**I urge the Commission to recommend to the Brisbane City Council that the final EIR does not adequately address multiple areas of impact that will be brought about by the two DSPs, or how these impacts will be adequately mitigated.** This was noted in great detail by numerous presenters over the course of the hearings, and is a matter of public record. I defer to the Commission's judgment regarding whether time should be allotted to the applicant (UPC) for further research and development that might result in an acceptable final EIR.

With respect, the two submitted DSPs – or any concept that would include housing in the Baylands – ignore an essential reality: as a community, we should not promote the suggestion that residing in the Baylands would be safe or represents a desirable existence. I am more sanguine about R&D or light industrial in the Baylands. Why? Workspaces are subject to additional regulations that insure the safety of the people who work there. It's a different story for people in private spaces. Our activities in our homes are usually unmanageable; enforcing safety regulations is usually a futile exercise due our need to manage our private spaces privately, regardless of our lack of common sense. Both homeowners and tenants spend hours crawling around on their hands and knees to develop

landscaping because they love it, or they pay someone else to do it. Either way, contact with the soil happens. Families relish their enclosed, safe spaces because children can play, dig, build and make a ruckus. Interference with happiness in our society is not happily accepted.

Too many residents know and understand the depths of the contamination of the former San Francisco dump. Several testified to this at the hearings. Would we live there ourselves? If not, how would we feel about extending a smiling welcome to those who would move there without knowing the history – to those who have been given documentation of “green and clean” based on a process that really cannot be guaranteed to ensure long-term health and safety – because doing so would be financially infeasible? What about the families who move there eventually -- over time, replacing the first, then second occupiers, etc.? This is a familiar story in our country. Developers will meet the minimum requirements, and in the U.S., those who determine the minimum requirements are prone to short-term thinking for a variety of reasons. We don’t have to look too far south on our very own peninsula to see this. It doesn’t mean we can’t do better – but it’s unlikely that we will do better if we concede to the goals of a housing developer.

Even though UPC is an entity that operates within a legal and acceptable economic context in our society, we must take the time and exert the necessary wisdom required for carefully examining the values of this community in order to make a decision that accommodates these values.

**This is why I hope the Commission will recommend further study of the Renewable Alternative Energy Plan for eventual development as the target specific plan for the Baylands. This represents the direction that makes the most sense for Brisbane. This alternative**

- Is compatible with our General Plan;
- Presents the potential to implement a cutting-edge use of brownlands for a positive purpose – generation of energy for Brisbane and beyond;
- Can provide sustainable financial benefit to the City. The key is serious and savvy work with potential tenants who understand the importance and potential of such a partnership;
- Drastically reduces the threats to health and safety;
- Reduces the impact on the quality of life of Brisbane residents and of all our regional neighbors who flow through our City.

Thank you for your consideration of my perspective.

Yours truly,

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