

Text from the testimony of Nadine Lewis to the Culver City Council in opposition to the proposed rock-climbing tenant set to take over the Culver Ice Arena:



Many people feel that the City Council's message since we were here two weeks ago is that little can be done to save the Culver Ice Arena. I would like to focus tonight on what CAN be done.

Pursuant to the City's Municipal Code, the City Council has appointed five residents of Culver City to the Planning Commission and Section 3.03.230 of the Municipal Code provides the Planning Commission shall have the power and be required to:

1. After a public hearing thereon, recommend to the City Council the adoption, amendment or repeal of the General Plan, or any part thereof, for the physical development of the City;
2. Exercise such control over zoning land subdivisions and building as is granted to it by the governing body of the City and by the laws of the State of California;
3. Make recommendations concerning proposed public works and for the clearance and rebuilding of blighted or substandard areas within the City and public improvement in general;
4. Exercise such functions with respect to zoning or building as may be prescribed by ordinance.
5. At the request of the City Council, to issue Orders to Show Cause why use permits, exceptions or variances granted should not be revoked for violation and to hold necessary hearings, transmitting findings and recommendations to City Council. The Planning Commission has the power to recommend strict adherence to building codes and enforce a zero tolerance for height variances.

These are the things you CAN do.

It is my understanding that the proposed new tenant has not even submitted the required preliminary documentation required to begin the process. They cannot build their proposed structure without a variance from the City Council. Since 4545 Sepulveda Boulevard is in a zero-tolerance zone for issuing height variances, the Council should have no choice but to enforce the height restrictions passed by referendum.

The Planning Commission also has a duty to protect the city from blight. The landlord, has not submitted a plan required by the City to shut down the rink, clean up the ammonia and test to see how deep the permafrost lies under the ice sheet. The proposed new tenant has refused to acknowledge the issue of permafrost (an iceberg under the rink).

The subsequent landowner of Polar Palace, another bygone rink in Southern California, also made this mistake. The permafrost under that ice sheet was over 40' deep, making the land unfit

for building a structure for years. The new owners, Raleigh Studios could only use the lot to store plants. Should this happen in Culver City, the land would become a blight on the community, an eye sore and a nuisance.

While the proposed new tenants have hired a political strategy group who is promoting private rights over the common good, We zealots, we who believe in miracles, we voters, we who voted you into office, we who voted for slow growth and height restrictions, we parents who know teens need a safe place to congregate on the weekends, we the community urge the City Council to adopt a zero tolerance policy for any variances required for the proposed new tenant.

To the new tenant, I say we skater moms, we hockey dads, we are the same parents who kept Occidental Petroleum in litigation for more than two decades to prevent oil drilling off of our beaches and we will do the same to you.

To the City Council, we do not believe your hands are tied, we believe there is much you can do within the bounds of the law, we believe in miracles, and we expect you to do the right thing.