

NAME

KFI 640 Interview with Eric Eisenberg Transcribed

DATE

December 15, 2023

DURATION

3m 16s

2 SPEAKERS

KFI 640 Host

Eric Eisenberg

START OF TRANSCRIPT

[00:00:00] KFI 640 Host

On Pico, right, the homeless housing?

[00:00:02] Eric Eisenberg

On Pico. That property needed to have a CEQA exemption in order to move forward as a homeless housing village.

[00:00:11] KFI 640 Host

We should explain to people who aren't familiar. We've covered it some, but corner of Midvale and Pico, Yaroslavsky district, right? And it's right near where the Westside Pavilion used to be, and it's a residential area, and they're setting up a homeless housing project that the neighborhood is crazy angry against. It's about 30 some odd people are being put in there and the neighborhood has raised concerns, including the audio we played a few weeks ago where they booed and yelled recall at Mayor Bass and Katy Yaroslavsky. Okay, so that brings us up to date.

[00:00:43] Eric Eisenberg

So what you have is a lot, an LADOT lot, that's surrounded on three sides by homes, and then Pico Boulevard on the front of it. It needed a CEQA exemption, which is an environmental exemption in order to move forward. So this had to come to the Department of Transportation to approve that exemption. And, myself, I didn't feel comfortable approving it. You're talking about 30 little homes with sewage lines, with all sorts of things going on, and you're asking Department of Transportation Commissioners to make a decision on that or weigh in one way or the other. So all I simply did I said, "look, we're not qualified for this. We need the Department of Engineering to come here and make a presentation to us and explain why this project qualifies for an exemption." And we were in the process of scheduling another meeting to get the Department of Engineering there to come and explain it to us, because as I said, at face value, to me I don't see the exemption, but I'm not involved in the nuances of the law as far as what does qualify with the emergency order and what doesn't. So we were going to get this presentation, and the next thing I know by kicking the can down the road, I received a letter this morning releasing me of my duties.

[00:02:03] KFI 640 Host

Now, was there somebody from Karen Bass' staff who was telling you that you shouldn't speak this way or something like that?

[00:02:12] Eric Eisenberg

No, no, there's nobody telling us how we should speak. I mean, somebody from the mayor's staff did come to the meeting and mentioned that the mayor is strongly in favor of this project, and urged us to vote in favor of it. Now realize I'm not just king of the kingdom. We have other commissioners there. They could have overridden me and said, "hey, we want to we want to hear this now, and we want to vote for it." No, it was unanimous. The commission that voted on my cue to get a presentation from the Department of Engineering.

[00:02:43] KFI 640 Host

This hardly sounds controversial, but you were president of the commission?

[00:02:49] Eric Eisenberg

Yes. I've been president of the commission for most of about eight out of ten years.

[00:02:54] KFI 640 Host

Sounds like they chopped your head off then, I guess.

[00:02:56] Eric Eisenberg

Yeah.

[00:02:56] KFI 640 Host

Okay. But what I don't understand is all you're doing is asking for a presentation, because you want to make sure that, that's going to delay it, though, John. And this is an emergency.

[00:03:09] Eric Eisenberg

Well, not only delays it, but it means that I'm not willing to rubber-stamp it. You know, we have a community.

END OF TRANSCRIPT



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