

# **NB-26**

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

February 19, 2013

Re: Crematorium

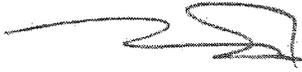
Dear Councilmembers

I am a new owner in Belmont Heights and the matter regarding the possible crematorium on 7<sup>th</sup> St has recently come to my attention. Having done a cursory bit of investigation online into the subject, it would seem there are some significant causes for concern regarding emissions of among other things, mercury. Needless to say this raises serious issues in my head regarding safety, property values etc as my home is only 2 blocks from this site.

I have read Councilmembers DeLong, Lowenthal and Neal's Memorandum to establish a one year moratorium against mortuaries and crematoriums to give the city sufficient time to study and analyze impacts and zoning regulations and **STRONGLY SUPPORT THIS MEASURE.**

This path seems quite reasonable and responsible and I ask that you please adopt this measure.

Regards



Michael Roddy  
3707 E 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Long Beach CA 90814

February 19, 2013

Councilman Gary DeLong  
Long Beach City Hall  
333 West Ocean Blvd.  
Long Beach, CA 90802

Re: Proposed Moratoria-Crematoria

Dear Councilman DeLong:

Zoning is basically a system of property regulations established to promote high property value by allowing and encouraging compatible land uses to locate in proximity to one another and to insulate (by distance) residential land uses from those land uses that produce noise, odor, dust, traffic or other adverse effects that would lower the value of property for its allowed residential use. Similarly, commercial land uses are often provided protection from the adverse impacts of industrial land uses by similar distance protections.

Parts of Belmont Heights were re-zoned from general residential (which allows apartments with more traffic impacts) to "Single Family Residential", and with further Historic overlay restrictions, about a decade ago. Unfortunately no similar restrictions on land use were considered at the time for the adjacent commercial zone along 7<sup>th</sup> Street which currently allows a wide variety of commercial land uses, some of which are not compatible with highly restricted single family residential property.

Please consider that the Belmont Heights single family zones should have the same degree of protection from intense land used that other low density residential areas enjoy. None of the city's single family zones should be exposed to intense traffic, odors, dust, toxic fumes, noise or potential hazards that can be mitigated effectively by separating such land uses by appropriate distances.

I suggest that the proposed moratorium is long overdue, and that it should be used as an opportunity to evaluate appropriateness of not only restricting the location of crematoria-which are incinerators by any other name, from proximity to single family homes; but to look comprehensively at the list of permitted land uses in all commercial zones that abut single family zones for similar adverse impact potential.

Thank you for considering this point of view.

Very truly yours,

  
John W. McKenna  
659 Euclid Ave.

Cc: Mayor Foster, City Council



Larry Herrera/CC/CLB

02/19/2013 10:23 AM

To Agenda Supporting Docs,

cc

bcc

Subject Fw: Support citywide moratorium against mortuaries & accessory crematoriums

A third letter.

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Larry Herrera  
City Clerk  
City of Long Beach  
333 W. Ocean Blvd.  
Long Beach, CA 90802  
Work. 562-570-6489  
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Skype Name: LarryHerrera82  
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----- Forwarded by Larry Herrera/CC/CLB on 02/19/2013 10:22 AM -----

From: "Dr. Frank M. Goodman" <drfrank70@verizon.net>  
To: <Larry.Herrera@longbeach.gov>  
Date: 02/18/2013 05:32 PM  
Subject: Support citywide moratorium against mortuaries & accessory crematoriums

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City Clerk  
Larry Herrera

I request that each City Council member receive a copy of my thoughts on the City Wide Moratorium against mortuaries & crematoriums.

Honorable City Council Members:

I support a citywide moratorium against mortuaries and accessory crematoriums. I have deep concerns about the environmental issues and risks to our children's health on the contaminates released into the air by crematoriums.

Thank you for your support of the citywide moratorium.

Frank Goodman  
3800 East Fifth Street  
Long Beach, CA 90814

## **Belmont Heights Community Association**

375 Redondo Avenue #332

Long Beach, CA 90814

[www.mybelmontheights.org](http://www.mybelmontheights.org)

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February 18, 2013

Councilman Gary DeLong  
City of Long Beach  
333 W Ocean Blvd., 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Long Beach, CA 90802

Dear Councilman DeLong:

Re: Moratorium on Crematories

We appreciate your support in placing this motion on the City Council agenda and giving us an opportunity to speak to the appropriate placement of crematories within the City of Long Beach.

First, I would like to say that the BHCA Board, as well as many residents, is not opposed to the Belmont Heights Funeral Center operating solely as a funeral center. Our concern lies with their stated interest in installing a crematorium at this site. I personally met with the owners of the Center when this issue was raised and found them to be pleasant and eager to be a good business neighbor.

Second, we understand that cremation is a fast-growing industry and serves a need in our community. In California, approximately 53% of bodies are disposed by cremation. Cremation is also generally less expensive than traditional burial. Our position is not to outlaw cremation within the City of Long Beach but to ask the City Council and Development Services staff to identify appropriate locations for such facilities. Placing a crematorium adjacent to a residential zone creates two incompatibilities with land usage. First, to some, the notion of residing near a cremation facility is an unpleasant one. Important as such facilities may be, they simply are distasteful to some homeowners. When one is constructed nearby, these homeowners experience a substantial impairment in the enjoyment of their property. It goes without saying that this reaction to crematories could make it more difficult for a homeowner to sell his or her home. Second, the proposed crematory would introduce an incompatible land use by inserting a long-term source of potentially dangerous toxins into a residential area. Homeowners in such an area maintain the reasonable expectation that their city government will establish and preserve zoning rules that keep the air as clean as possible.



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The major emissions from crematories include: nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide, mercury vapor, hydrogen fluoride, hydrogen chloride, and other heavy metals, including persistent organic pollutants. Although it is unclear how harmful many of these emissions are, widespread concern exists related to vaporized mercury emitted into the air when amalgam dental fillings are burned. Although studies of those emissions have not established the safety or danger of emissions for humans nearby, we believe that knowingly placing a source of vaporized mercury in a residential neighborhood is an inadvisable risk. Although the EPA does not regulate emissions from crematories, most industrialized countries have imposed strict limits on crematory mercury emissions precisely because they have concluded that the amounts are substantial from a human health perspective. To our knowledge, there are no known mercury control systems in use at crematories in the U.S.

We are also concerned about the location of crematories adjacent to residential zones because they require the installation of an incinerator that burns at temperatures between 700 and 1100 degrees C (1200 to 2000 degrees F). Although we don't doubt that strict fire control measures would be taken with the installation of such a system, we believe an industrial zone is a more appropriate location for such equipment. We have also found reference to fires from the incineration of bodies with excessive fatty tissue.

We respectfully urge the Mayor and City Council to support this moratorium and direct Development Services staff to do a comprehensive review of the science related to the operation of crematories. We also encourage the City to seek out the best community model for the placement of crematories. In our view, a crematorium on 7<sup>th</sup> Street, along a CCP or Community Commercial-Pedestrian oriented zone, is not a compatible fit. A recent decision by the Mississauga, Ontario Planning and Development Commission to place these businesses in industrial zones with at least a 985 foot separation between a crematorium and sensitive land use is reasonable and might serve as a model for Long Beach.

Sincerely,

Dianne Sundstrom, President  
Belmont Heights Community Association

cc: Mayor Foster and City Council Members



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