



State prioritizes density over single-family homes

The Sovietization of California housing is coming, and it's coming for your neighborhood. In the fallen communist empire, the government controlled housing and determined which individuals could — or could not — have a new apartment. We're not there yet in California, but we're on the road that goes there.

If Sacramento politicians and Los Angeles city officials have their way, we could be halfway there by the end of the year.

By "there," I mean an irreversible policy shift that marches us toward a future where single-family zoning no longer exists, having been abolished by the "woke" crowd as an unsavory and embarrassing relic of a time when racial segregation was formally enforced by law or informally enforced by the real estate industry.

But that's history. Today, the attack on single-family zoning is just a manipulative trick to benefit developers. Rather than protect anyone's rights, it deprives everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity or national origin, of the opportunity to buy and own a single-family home in a low-density neighborhood with reasonable confidence that the property will continue to be a single-family home in a low-density neighborhood.

Senate Bill 9, legislation that has cleared the state Senate and is now pending in the Assembly, would abolish single-family zoning. Every single-family lot in the state would be automatically rezoned for a duplex, and each duplex could have one or perhaps two "accessory dwelling units," also known as ADUs or granny flats. A small lot that currently is home to one household could quickly become home to four or six households. Cities would be powerless to require off-street parking or charge fees to cover the extra infrastructure costs that increased density would inevitably bring.

Senate Bill 10, which also has cleared the state Senate and is pending in the Assembly, would allow cities to abolish single-family zoning by passing an ordinance that allows apartment buildings with up to 10 units to be built on what are now single-family lots, if they are located in areas that are "transit-rich" or "urban infill." As defined, that's nearly everywhere.

If you're bothered by the prospect of homes on your street turning into construction sites and then into multifamily housing with few or no parking spaces, call your state representatives and let them know what you think. Go online to findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov to look up their names and contact information.

While you're writing down phone numbers, you may want to call the Los Angeles City Council and Mayor Eric Garcetti about the new "Housing Element" plan from the Los Angeles Department of City Planning and the Housing Department.

Click here to see this page in the eEdition:



(Login Required)



This plan is an attempt to comply with even more state laws that effectively force greater density into existing neighborhoods.

What makes it so "Soviet" is the utter dismissal of the use of zoning to protect private property. Apparently it's now an unspeakable capitalist crime to think it's important to protect the character of neighborhoods where families have invested their life's savings and their life's earnings to own a home in a low-density environment.

Under the new plan, the purpose of zoning is to make 219,732 new housing units fit into existing neighborhoods. To accomplish this, the city plans to rezone selected neighborhoods.

Which neighborhoods?

They're not telling us until after the plan is approved.

"Candidate Sites Identified to be Rezoned to Accommodate Shortfall Housing Need (Table B) — Coming Soon," says the plan's table of contents.

The 265-page report is filled to the margins with useless consultant-speak, and the one critical fact that Los Angeles residents need to know — which single-family neighborhoods will not be single-family neighborhoods much longer — is missing.

The plan will be submitted to the City Council for approval this fall, and then is likely unstoppable. All we know in advance is that by October 30, 2024, the "Rezoning Program" will be implemented somewhere in four areas of West L.A., six areas of the San Fernando Valley, two areas of Downtown and in parts of Boyle Heights, Hollywood, Harbor-Gateway and Wilmington.

If you were hoping to live or keep living in a single-family neighborhood in Los Angeles, good luck. It's Russian Roulette.

Susan Shelley is an editorial writer and columnist for the Southern California News Group. Susan@SusanShelley.com. Twitter: @Susan_Shelley.



Is the future of Los Angeles housing going to be like a visit to Moscow? Ask your legislator in Sacramento.

PAVEL GOLOVKIN – THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Susan Shelley

Columnist



Powered by TECNAVIA

Copyright © 2021 Torrance Daily Breeze. Please review new arbitration language here.
07/07/2021

###