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Assembly California Legislature



LORI SALDAÑA
ASSISTANT MAJORITY WHIP
ASSEMBLY MEMBER, SEVENTY-SIXTH DISTRICT

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AND TECHNOLOGY

October 25, 2006

Ms. Jennifer LeSar
Chair, CCDC Board of Directors
222 Broadway, Ste. 1100
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Ms. LeSar,

As the board works toward its decision on the Master Plan for the Navy Broadway Complex, I wanted to express my concerns about the advisability of siting the headquarters of the Navy Region Southwest on this property. I believe a high-rise military facility in a highly populated urban setting could pose a risk to downtown residents, tourists and workers.

The development agreement signed by the City and the Navy predates the 1993 attacks on the World Trade Center, the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, and the attacks of September 11 - all acts of terrorism which targeted urban structures of symbolic value within the United States.

It bears repeating that San Diego has one of the largest complexes of military installations in the U.S. I believe that the value as a headquarters of this important military installation, its waterfront setting and its high-profile may make it and adjacent civilian structures vulnerable. While it may be true the Navy building itself can be adequately protected by traffic barriers and other security measures, these do not necessarily eliminate the possibility that it or the adjacent complex would be targeted.

To underscore the potential risk to domestic military installations, I refer to the testimony of then Captain Len Hering, Commander of Naval Base San Diego, at a Congressional hearing in June of 2001:

“Nobody wants to believe that something like the Khobar Towers or the U.S.S. Cole could possibly happen in America’s Finest City; and more importantly, not on a military facility. We all know that it is not true and . . . I have come to realize those risks can no longer be taken.”

Rear Admiral Hering clearly foresaw the necessity of reducing risks to domestic military installations, but I believe that placing the Navy building downtown poses an unnecessary risk to civilian residents. I do not believe that either the 1992 Agreement or the current Master Plan adequately addresses the security and safety concerns posed to downtown residents and visitors by siting a high-profile military building downtown.

I would submit that the CCDC Board should consider further refinements to the MFG Master Plan in an effort to relocate the Navy headquarters to a more secure site.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori Saldaña".

Assembly Member Lori Saldaña
76th District

cc: Fredric Maas, Robert A. McNeely, Wayne Rafflesberger, Kim John Kilkenny, Janice Brown, Teddy Cruz, Nancy Graham