

Item 2017-307

August 9, 2017

To: The Cathedral City Council and City Clerk

From: Melinda Shapiro

I strongly protest any decision on the 7 maps provided to residents regarding the establishment of the 5 voting districts. I am not against the concept, just the implementation as put forth by the City Council. Criteria changed for submission of maps – first we were told 1 District area only could be submitted. That was later changed. After the June 9, 2017 deadline for map submission, we were advised that Districts should not have a large minority population as this might disenfranchise other voters in the specific district. We were not given another opportunity to resubmit maps to meet the new criterion. As stated previously, I think we must not rush into this implementation. I think it could leave the City exposed to charges of Unfair Political Practices. The 7 maps submitted for resident's review and input might not provide the best division of Districts as currently offered.

In looking at the 22 maps submitted 17 wanted the Cove as a unified District (north to Dinah Shore) – 16 from residents and 1 from National Demographics Corporation (NDC). The other 5 maps divided the Cove into 2 or 3 Districts (2 into 2 Districts and 3 into 3 Districts).

The City Council provided 7 maps for the resident's review. I do not believe that 5 of these 7 maps represents the majority of the 22 maps initially submitted as these 5 maps break the Cove into 2 Districts or 3 Districts.

Of the 7 maps provided by the City Council for our review and input only 2 show the Cove as 1 District – Mhagedorn1 and Orange (NDC). The other 5 break the Cove into 2 or 3 Districts.

Also the selection of the Districts by grouping for election date purposes needs to be looked at as to its impact on the composition of the City Council members and how many current City Council members will retain a specific district.

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It seems to me that NDC could have tweaked some of the submitted maps that were not population balanced (by gross numbers or ethnicity) to make them more selectable as choices for our input. I am specifically thinking of AOlsen1, AOlsen2, DCross1, KDeRosa1, Johnston (Johnson)1b, T Mares 1to 3, D Rodriquez1, and JShapiro 1 to 3. Some of these aforementioned maps appear to meet the criteria for the first cut for review as submitted.

The majority, 5 of the 7 maps, favors the incumbents in any election. When viewing the website of the California Fair Political Practices Commission, "Proposition 9 (The Political Reform Act passed in June 1974 [The Act], enacted laws to curtail incumbent advantage.

As the ratio of the 5 of the selected 7 maps favors the incumbents. I do not know if this violates the Art, but it has the appearance of doing so.

Therefore I strongly suggest that this issue be tabled temporarily, that NDC tweak the maps to offer a true opportunity for the citizens of the City to offer input on the establishment of the 5 Districts.

If nothing else, the Cove should be treated as one cohesive District.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak