

June 25, 2024

Re: City Council 6/25/24 Meeting Agenda Item 8.c(2) *Resolution Establishing Certain Fees, and Increasing, Decreasing, Modifying Certain Fees for Various Services Provided by the City and Adopting Changes to the Citywide Fee Schedule for FY 24-25*

Dear Mayor Asatryan and City Councilmembers Brotman, Gharpetian, Kassakhian, and Najarian:

On behalf of the Adams Hill Neighborhood Association, we urge you to reject staff's proposal to increase the fees on appeals to City Council and Planning Commission, as well as the fees to appeal Administrative Design Review Decisions.

While serving on the Planning Process Streamlining Taskforce in 2013, I, along with other concerned homeowners, objected when **the public was stripped of its right to a public hearing as part of the expedited Administrative Design Review process**. Our taskforce was assured that we would be able to appeal Administrative Design decisions to DRB for a reduced fee. Appeals are the only recourse for having lost our right to a public hearing.

The proposed fee schedule increase is obviously intended to discourage the public from exercising their right to appeal. Regardless of the basis for calculating the fees, this is essentially a tax on citizens who want to voice their concerns. **The exorbitant fees would also result in only the wealthy having a voice in the planning process.**

We urge you to **reject this undemocratic and underhanded attempt to silence the public.**

Sincerely,

Rondi Werner, CSI, CCS, CCCA, CDT, LEED GA, AIA Allied  
Vice President, Adams Hill Neighborhood Association

cc:  
AHNA Board of Directors  
GHCC Members

**From:** [Abajian, Suzie](#)  
**To:** [Golanian, Roubik](#)  
**Cc:** [Garcia, Michael](#); [Calvert, Bradley](#); [Cortes, Karen](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Increase on DRB appeal fee, agenda item 8C  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 26, 2024 11:04:21 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)

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Suzie Abajian, Ph.D. | City Clerk | City of Glendale  
613 East Broadway, Suite 110 | Glendale, CA | 818-548-2090  
[sabajian@glendaleca.gov](mailto:sabajian@glendaleca.gov) | [www.glendaleca.gov](http://www.glendaleca.gov) | [Follow us!](#)

---

**From:** Holly Keenan <[holly.keenan@att.net](mailto:holly.keenan@att.net)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 3:22 PM  
**To:** Najarian, Ara <[ANajarian@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:ANajarian@Glendaleca.gov)>; Gharpetian, Vartan <[VGharpetian@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:VGharpetian@Glendaleca.gov)>; Brotman, Daniel <[dbrotman@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:dbrotman@Glendaleca.gov)>; Asatryan, Elen <[EAsatryan@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:EAsatryan@Glendaleca.gov)>; Kassakhian, Ardashes <[AKassakhian@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:AKassakhian@Glendaleca.gov)>  
**Cc:** Abajian, Suzie <[SAbajian@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:SAbajian@Glendaleca.gov)>  
**Subject:** Increase on DRB appeal fee, agenda item 8C

You don't often get email from [holly.keenan@att.net](mailto:holly.keenan@att.net). [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email was delivered from the Internet. Do not click links, open attachments, or reply if you are unsure as to the sender.**

Dear Council Members,

In 2007 my neighbor and I filed an appeal to the DRB to ask the DRB to reconsider their decision on the construction of a two story home that would forever block my neighbor's beautiful view of the valley. At that time an appeal was \$500. I still have the receipt. My neighbor and I shared the cost of the appeal and at the appeal hearing the DRB added some conditions to the project that at least helped my neighbor not have windows looking directly into their yard and also set back the home a little to help decrease the massing. My neighbor still lost their view but at least the appeal achieved some additional conditions that helped my neighbor. We paid the \$500 fee, we had another look at our concerns and we accepted the decision.

Jumping to the present, **to more than double** the current \$2,000 fee to \$4,562 (!) seems as if the city is trying to discourage the appeal process by over inflating the price and making it a deterrent, especially to residents who may not have funds for such a costly fee. I urge you to consider residents who may be older or on fixed incomes who would not be able to afford a \$4,562 appeal fee. I see no need to increase from the current \$2,000 given the fact that so few appeals are filed.

**Please vote no** tonight on raising the DRB appeal fee.

Respectfully,

Holly Keenan

Suzie Ahijian, Ph.D. City Clerk City of Glendale  
613 East Broadway, Suite 110 | Glendale, CA 91201-3808  
[suzie@glendajobs.gov](mailto:suzie@glendajobs.gov) or <https://info.glendajobs.com/contact-us/>  
<http://info.glendajobs.com> or [www.glendajobs.com](http://www.glendajobs.com)

From: ingy@mindspring.com <ingy@mindspring.com>  
Sent: Tuesday, June 25, 2024 4:17 PM  
To: Najarian, Ari <ANajarian@Glendaleca.gov>; Brotman, Daniel <dbrotman@Glendaleca.gov>; Kasakjian, Andush <AKasakjian@Glendaleca.gov>; Asatryan, Elen <EAsatryan@Glendaleca.gov>  
Cc: Ahajian, Surie <SAhajian@Glendaleca.gov>  
Subject: Proposed Increase of DREB Appeal Fees

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

The current \$2000.00 fee is already cost prohibitive to most residents and the proposed increase to \$4,562, an increase of 125 % is outrageous.

The current appeal process is there to allow the public to engage in disputing the DRB process. Having participated in one during which many discrepancies were revealed, I can assure you that this process assures transparency and is in the public interest.

Increasing the Appeal fee by this egregious amount will completely prevent participation and eliminate the appeal process from being pursued entirely.

Developers have that kind of money to further their interests built into their budgets. Private citizens trying to protect their neighborhoods do not.

I would also encourage further investigation as to how such numbers were obtained to begin with. It is indicated by the packet that it has to do with costs to the Planning Department and City Council. If the original staff reports and documentation are researched and prepared properly there should be little or no additional cost incurred.

Further documentation of how these figures/costs are incurred should be required.

Appellants are looking for compliance with the City's Community Plans and Design Guidelines, as well as the California Environmental Quality Act. Not profits.

To more than double the fee makes no sense unless the final goal is to completely prevent due process in these matters.

Increases in fees, if necessary, should be passed onto the builder/developers that stand to profit.

Please do not approve these increases.

Sincerely,  
Ingrid Wilcox  
Treasurer  
Adams Hill Neighborhood Association

**From:** [Abajian, Suzie](#)  
**To:** [Golanian, Roubik](#)  
**Cc:** [Garcia, Michael](#); [Calvert, Bradley](#); [Cortes, Karen](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Report on Cost of Services (User Fee) Study  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 26, 2024 11:16:52 AM  
**Attachments:** [Report on Cost of Services Appeal Fee.pdf](#)  
[image001.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)

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Suzie Abajian, Ph.D. | City Clerk | City of Glendale  
613 East Broadway, Suite 110 | Glendale, CA | 818-548-2090  
[sabajian@glendaleca.gov](mailto:sabajian@glendaleca.gov) | [www.glendaleca.gov](http://www.glendaleca.gov) | [Follow us!](#)

---

**From:** Grant Michals <[grant@michals.com](mailto:grant@michals.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 2:16 PM  
**To:** Asatryan, Elen <[EAsatryan@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:EAsatryan@Glendaleca.gov)>; Brotman, Daniel <[dbrotman@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:dbrotman@Glendaleca.gov)>; Gharpetian, Vartan <[VGharpetian@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:VGharpetian@Glendaleca.gov)>; Kassakhian, Ardashes <[AKassakhian@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:AKassakhian@Glendaleca.gov)>; Najarian, Ara <[ANajarian@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:ANajarian@Glendaleca.gov)>  
**Cc:** Abajian, Suzie <[SAbajian@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:SAbajian@Glendaleca.gov)>  
**Subject:** Report on Cost of Services (User Fee) Study

You don't often get email from [grant@michals.com](mailto:grant@michals.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email was delivered from the Internet. Do not click links, open attachments, or reply if you are unsure as to the sender.**

June 25, 2024

Mayor Asatryan and Members of the City Council  
City of Glendale  
613 East Broadway  
Glendale, CA 91206

RE: Report on Cost of Services (User Fee) Study

Mayor and Council Members,

The change to the Appeal to Planning Commission fee was deeply buried in the Report on Cost Services. Previously, any increase in the fee for appeals to the Planning Commission and Council, and of Administrative Design Review decisions to the DRB was discussed as a future consideration. Currently, that fee is proposed to increase from \$2,000 to \$4,562.

In reviewing the reports and documentation to find the calculations to justify the increase, the report does not provide any data or analysis to support the conclusion. Additionally, the fee for Preliminary Design Review, on the next page of the report, is proposed to have a \$1,092 decrease to \$2,356. The amount of staff time and

expense for these two items is similar, yet neither has any data to support the conclusions. Greater transparency in the calculation of the fees is required. The increase of the Appeal Fee is not justified by the information provided in the report.

#### Report on Cost of Services (User Fee) Study

<https://glendaleca.primegov.com/Portal/viewer?id=0&type=7&uid=9ef55dbc-d688-42d6-947e-440852dd0f11>

#### 10 Appeal to Planning Commission

Currently, the Planning Division charges a fee of \$2,000 for appeals to the planning commission. Through this study, the project team calculated the full cost of this service to be \$4,562. The following graph shows how the division's current fee and full cost compare to the surveyed jurisdictions. Glendale's current fee falls below the jurisdictional average (\$3,025) while the full cost calculated is higher than the average. The full cost falls in line with fees charged by Santa Ana. Pasadena charges 50% of the application fee.

Page 119

#### 12 Preliminary Design Review

Currently, the Planning Division charges a fee of \$3,448 for preliminary design reviews. Through this study, the project team calculated the full cost of this service to be \$2,356. The following graph shows how the division's current fee and full cost compare to the surveyed jurisdictions. Glendale's current fee and full cost calculated are above the jurisdictional average of \$2,151. With the exception of Santa Ana which charges \$4,544 for this service, Glendale's current fee is higher than all other jurisdictions.

Page 120

The rationale for increasing the fee is listed in the March 24, 2024 Staff Report on page 15 as "Increase appeal fee (currently \$2,000) to discourage land use planning through stakeholder opposition via DRB". The GHCC objects to this rationale and has a consistent record of submitting valid and successful appeals.

We request that Council require the appropriate transparency for the reassessment of the Appeal Fee, and others, rejecting any changes that are not supported by data and analysis. Additionally, the listed rationale is unsupported by any data identifying frivolous appeals. Council is strongly encouraged to reject this unsupported fee increase.

Sincerely,

Grant Michals, President



June 25, 2024

Mayor Asatryan and Members of the City Council  
City of Glendale  
613 East Broadway  
Glendale, CA 91206

RE: Report on Cost of Services (User Fee) Study

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Report on Cost of Services (User Fee) Study

<https://glendaleca.primegov.com/Portal/viewer?id=0&type=7&uid=9ef55dbc-d688-42d6-947e-440852dd0f11>

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Grant Michals", written in a cursive style.

Grant Michals, President



## Cortes, Karen

---

**From:** Abajian, Suzie  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 12:18 PM  
**To:** Golanian, Roubik  
**Cc:** Garcia, Michael; Calvert, Bradley; Cortes, Karen  
**Subject:** FW: Agenda Item 8

Suzie Abajian, Ph.D. | City Clerk | City of Glendale  
613 East Broadway, Suite 110 | Glendale, CA | 818-548-2090  
[sabajian@glendaleca.gov](mailto:sabajian@glendaleca.gov) | [www.glendaleca.gov](http://www.glendaleca.gov) | [Follow us!](#)

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**From:** Loretta De Lange <loretta.delange@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 9:53 AM  
**To:** Najarian, Ara <ANajarian@Glendaleca.gov>; Brotman, Daniel <dbrotman@Glendaleca.gov>; Gharpetian, Vartan <VGharpetian@Glendaleca.gov>; Kassakhian, Ardashes <AKassakhian@Glendaleca.gov>; Asatryan, Elen <EAsatryan@Glendaleca.gov>  
**Cc:** Abajian, Suzie <SAbajian@Glendaleca.gov>  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 8

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Thanks! Cathy

Dear Glendale City Council:

We ask that you resist the impulse to raise a few thousand dollars by more than doubling the current appeal fee (in a City with a budget of over \$325 million!).

The rationale for increasing the fee is to

"Increase appeal fee (currently \$2,000) to discourage land use planning through stakeholder opposition via DRB" (Staff Report, March 24, 2024, p. 15).

Interestingly, the DRB is nowhere mentioned in the appeal line items in the 2024 - 2025 Fee Schedule. What exactly is the evidence that residents are using the appeals process in this way? Appealing a decision to ensure compliance with design guidelines, development standards, and community plans is not "land use planning." Appealing a decision to ensure compliance with local and state environmental and other laws is not "land use planning."

It appears that exactly one appeal has been heard thus far in 2024. Clearly the current appeal fee is not having a devastating impact on city resources.

The City provides many services for which the full cost is not recovered. It can fairly be argued that business owners in Glendale do not come close to paying their fair share. Residents have a right to petition their elected decision-makers on all manner of issues. This radical increase in the appeal fee will discourage people from legitimate appeals and is bad public policy and anti-resident.

Sincerely,  
Loretta De Lange, Secretary  
Verdugo Woodlands West Neighborhood Association

## Cortes, Karen

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**From:** Abajian, Suzie  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 12:16 PM  
**To:** Golanian, Roubik  
**Cc:** Garcia, Michael; Calvert, Bradley; Cortes, Karen  
**Subject:** FW: City Budget includes large fee increases

Suzie Abajian, Ph.D. | City Clerk | City of Glendale  
613 East Broadway, Suite 110 | Glendale, CA | 818-548-2090  
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**From:** Annet <rxannet@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 11:31 AM  
**To:** Najarian, Ara <ANajarian@Glendaleca.gov>; Brotman, Daniel <dbrotman@Glendaleca.gov>; Gharpetian, Vartan <VGharpetian@Glendaleca.gov>; Kassakhian, Ardashes <AKassakhian@Glendaleca.gov>; Asatryan, Elen <EAsatryan@Glendaleca.gov>  
**Cc:** Abajian, Suzie <SAbajian@Glendaleca.gov>  
**Subject:** Fwd: City Budget includes large fee increases

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Hello,  
I just learned of the fee increase for appeals. I would ask that you keep the fee as it is currently. I'm especially concerned about creating barriers to challenging DRB decisions. It undermines the voice of the public and community. I understand the need to have a balanced budget, to cut unnecessary expenses and have a revenue stream that meets expenses. I'm not sure that this one fee and especially historic volume address a broader fiduciary duty that you have. Sadly, it does signal more questions than answers. And, in this climate today, all questions include second guessing the intent of the City staff and a council that approves it.  
This has prompted me to review the budget more closely and so you may hear from me again.

In the meantime, thank you for your consideration to vote no for this line item fee schedule change. And, thank you for your service. You carry a huge burden of approving a thoughtful balanced City budget and I (along with many residents of this great City of ours), greatly appreciate your dedication.

Best regards,  
Annet Arakelian  
Longtime Glendale Resident

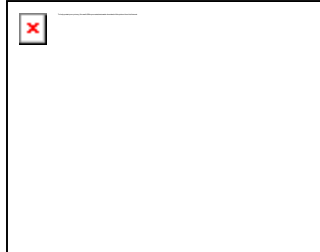
----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Verdugo Woodlands West Neighborhood Association <[vwwhoa@4852794.mailchimpapp.com](mailto:vwwhoa@4852794.mailchimpapp.com)>  
**Date:** Mon, Jun 24, 2024 at 10:13 PM

Subject: City Budget includes large fee increases

To: <[rxannet@gmail.com](mailto:rxannet@gmail.com)>

[View this email in your browser](#)



Dear Neighbors,

On June 25, City Council is scheduled to approve the 2024-2025 budget. In the fine print, the fee to appeal decisions involving projects to the City Council or Planning Commission is increased by more than 100%. The current fee of \$2000 would be \$4562.

This increase would not only be a deterrent for future appeals, but the necessity is puzzling. There is no evidence that the process has been abused. Only one appeal has been heard by Council in 2024.

Appeals are a mechanism by which residents ensure the City follows its design guidelines, development standards, and community plans. Last year, an appeal filed by neighborhood associations revealed evidence of unlawful, behind-the-scenes dealings between staff, including the City Attorney's office, and the developer. Perhaps Council wants to dissuade the public from uncovering more civic malfeasance.

This concern may be speculative, but given the immediacy of the budget vote, we encourage you to communicate your thoughts to the City Council, with a copy to the City Clerk. The vote will take place at the **6:00 pm meeting on TUESDAY, JUNE 25.**

[anajarian@glendaleca.gov](mailto:anajarian@glendaleca.gov)

[dbrotman@glendaleca.gov](mailto:dbrotman@glendaleca.gov)

[vgharpetian@glendaleca.gov](mailto:vgharpetian@glendaleca.gov)

[akassakhian@glendaleca.gov](mailto:akassakhian@glendaleca.gov)

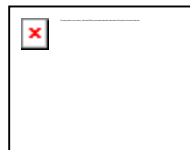
[easatryan@glendaleca.gov](mailto:easatryan@glendaleca.gov)

[sabajian@glendaleca.gov](mailto:sabajian@glendaleca.gov) (city clerk)

Regards,

The Verdugo Woodlands West Neighborhood Association Board

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You are receiving this e-mail because you are a member of VWWNA.

Our mailing address is:

Verdugo Woodlands West Neighborhood Association  
P.O. Box 343  
Verdugo City, CA 91046

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--

Annet

Note often sent from iPhone

**From:** [Abajian, Suzie](#)  
**To:** [Golanian, Roubik](#)  
**Cc:** [Garcia, Michael](#); [Calvert, Bradley](#); [Cortes, Karen](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Northwest Glendale Homeowners Comment Letter Opposing Fee Increases for Appeals at Agenda Item 8c3 (6-25-2024)  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 1:58:19 PM  
**Attachments:** [NWGHA Comment Letter Opposing Appeal Fees Increases- 6-25-2024 - Agenda Item 8c3---.pdf](#)

---

---

**From:** Peter Fuad <peterfuad1@gmail.com> **On Behalf Of** nwglendale@gmail.com

**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 1:30 PM

**To:** Najarian, Ara <ANajarian@Glendaleca.gov>; Kassakhian, Ardashes <AKassakhian@Glendaleca.gov>; Brotman, Daniel <dbrotman@Glendaleca.gov>; Asatryan, Elen <EAsatryan@Glendaleca.gov>; Gharpetian, Vartan <VGharpetian@Glendaleca.gov>; Abajian, Suzie <SAbajian@Glendaleca.gov>

**Cc:** Allan Durham <glenguy1@gmail.com>; 'Carol Brusha' <cgbrusha@yahoo.com>; 'Holly Keenan' <holly.keenan@att.net>; Lawrence Kalfayan <lawrencekalfayan@sbcglobal.net>; Margi Simpkins <margisimpkins@gmail.com>; Pam Ellis <pamellis.net@gmail.com>; peter <fuads@pacbell.net>; 'Philip Keller' <philipkeller@mac.com>; Sam Engel <samengeljr@charter.net>

**Subject:** Northwest Glendale Homeowners Comment Letter Opposing Fee Increases for Appeals at Agenda Item 8c3 (6-25-2024)

**CAUTION: This email was delivered from the Internet. Do not click links, open attachments, or reply if you are unsure as to the sender.**

Honorable Mayor Asatryan and Members of the Glendale City Council, please see the attached letter for the comments of the Northwest Glendale Homeowners Association opposing the proposed appeal fee increases to be considered at Agenda Item 8c3 on tonight's council agenda.

For your convenience, the contents of the letter are also set forth below.

Peter Fuad

President

Northwest Glendale Homeowners Association

June 25, 2024

To the Glendale City Council:

The Northwest Glendale Homeowners Association strongly opposes the proposal at Item 8c3 on tonight's agenda to greatly increase the fees for an appeal to the Planning Commission or City Council fees and an appeal of Administrative Use Permits or Administrative Design Review. We oppose these fee increases for two principal reasons:

**Residents have not had an adequate opportunity to comment on these fee increases.**

Although these fee increases were proposed in a Staff report presented at a Special Council meeting on March 26, there were no specific numbers given in that report.

Budget Study Session #2, which was held in a Special City Council Meeting on May 7, included a presentation of the fee study, but there was no specific mention of the increases in appeal fees.

**Real purpose of fee increases.** The stated purpose of the general fee increases now being considered is to cover the City's cost of providing a service. However, Page 15 of the March 26 Staff report openly states that **the appeal fee increases are needed "to discourage land use planning through stakeholder opposition via DRB."**

Contrast that with the presentation at the May 7, 2024 Special City Council Meeting, by Khushboo Ingle, VP of Matrix Consulting Group, who stated the following:

"Typical considerations for why certain fees could be set at lower than full cost recovery is (*sic*) you want to make sure that it's accessible to everyone so it's not creating a barrier to entry. A really common fee for that is appeals. You want to make sure that everyone has their right to appeal projects, has the ability to appeal those projects. **So a lot of times Councils choose to set those fees at lower rates.**"

Rather than following the recommendation of its own consultant, the City is considering fee increases that are expressly designed to be punitive and *discourage* citizens ("stakeholders") from exercising their lawful and legitimate right to question a government's decision, a hallmark of a democratic society

Very truly yours,

Peter Fuad

President

Northwest Glendale Homeowners Association





# Northwest Glendale Homeowners Association

Largest Homeowner Association in Glendale

June 25, 2024

To the Glendale City Council:

**Northwest Glendale  
Homeowners Association**  
1436 W. Glenoaks Bl. #190  
Glendale, CA 91201  
(818) 754-8274  
nwglendaleha.org  
nwglendale@gmail.com

## Officers and Directors

Peter Fuad, President,  
Editor of The Guardian

Lawrence Kalfayan,  
Vice President

Sam Engel, Treasurer

Holly Keenan, Webmaster,  
Membership Chair

Philip Keller,  
DRB Representative

Carol Brusha, Recording  
Secretary, Publicity Chair,  
Associate Editor of  
The Guardian

Allan Durham,  
Glendale Homeowners  
Coordinating Council  
Representative

Pam Ellis, Director

Margi Simpkins, Director

The Northwest Glendale Homeowners Association strongly opposes the proposal at Item 8c3 on tonight's agenda to greatly increase the fees for an appeal to the Planning Commission or City Council fees and an appeal of Administrative Use Permits or Administrative Design Review. We oppose these fee increases for two principal reasons:

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Very truly yours,

Peter Fuad  
President  
Northwest Glendale Homeowners Association

## Cortes, Karen

---

**From:** Abajian, Suzie  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 12:31 PM  
**To:** DL City Council  
**Cc:** Golanian, Roubik; Garcia, Michael; Calvert, Bradley; Cortes, Karen  
**Subject:** FW: Oppose appeal fee increase

Dear Mayor Asatryan and Councilmembers,  
Please see the email below from Victoria Shabanian.  
Best,

Suzie Abajian, Ph.D. | City Clerk | City of Glendale  
613 East Broadway, Suite 110 | Glendale, CA | 818-548-2090  
[sabajian@glendaleca.gov](mailto:sabajian@glendaleca.gov) | [www.glendaleca.gov](http://www.glendaleca.gov) | [Follow us!](#)

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**From:** Victoria Shabanian <[vshabanian1@gmail.com](mailto:vshabanian1@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 4:32 AM  
**To:** Abajian, Suzie <[SAbajian@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:SAbajian@Glendaleca.gov)>  
**Subject:** Oppose appeal fee increase

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Dear City Clerk Abajian,

I oppose the increase of more than 100% in the fee to appeal decisions of the City Council or Planning Commission that is included in the 2024-25 budget.

This exorbitant fee increase seems unnecessary and is a deterrent to appeals of city decisions that impact residents. A much more modest increase may be warranted, but raising the fee from \$2000 to well over \$4000 suggests an attempt to make appeals more difficult.

Best regards,

Victoria Shabanian

## Cortes, Karen

---

**From:** Abajian, Suzie  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 12:57 PM  
**To:** Golanian, Roubik  
**Cc:** Garcia, Michael; Calvert, Bradley; Cortes, Karen  
**Subject:** FW: Please Oppose Egregious Increase of Appeal Fee for City Residents (Agenda Item 8)

Suzie Abajian, Ph.D. | City Clerk | City of Glendale  
613 East Broadway, Suite 110 | Glendale, CA | 818-548-2090  
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**From:** Catherine Jurca <cathjurca@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2024 3:45 PM  
**To:** Najarian, Ara <ANajarian@Glendaleca.gov>; Brotman, Daniel <dbrotman@Glendaleca.gov>; Gharpetian, Vartan <VGharpetian@Glendaleca.gov>; Kassakhian, Ardashes <AKassakhian@Glendaleca.gov>; Asatryan, Elen <EAsatryan@Glendaleca.gov>  
**Cc:** Abajian, Suzie <SAbajian@Glendaleca.gov>  
**Subject:** Please Oppose Egregious Increase of Appeal Fee for City Residents (Agenda Item 8)



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Dear Council Members:

I note the proposal to increase the fee for appeals to the Planning Commission and Council, and of Administrative Design Review decisions to the DRB, from \$2,000 to \$4,562.

This represents a 125 percent increase to a fee that is already burdensome for many residents. A quick look at the Council calendar for 2024 reveals that there has been exactly **one** appeal to Council, of a DRB decision, this year. If the goal is to stop abuse of the system, you seem to have identified the wrong system.

Unlike project applicants, appellants do not seek permits or entitlements. Usually they seek compliance with the City's Community Plans and Design Guidelines, as well as the California Environmental Quality Act. These actions are in the public interest. An appeal last year of a Planning Commission approval of a project at 246 N. Jackson revealed unlawful, behind-the-scenes, special dealings between staff, including the City Attorney's office, and a DRB member/developer who has long since termed out of that position but continues to serve. Council promised to address the behaviors revealed in the public record, but nothing to my knowledge has been done. It seems, however, that Council wants to make it more difficult for your constituents to invite you to address such malfeasance in public.

When the Administrative Design Review process was created, it was done with the promise that appeal fees would be kept low because there would be no public hearing. And yet the proposal is to treat a process where the Director of Community Development approves the finding of his staff the same as one that involves a full public process. The

Planning Hearing Officer process is similarly unbalanced. One staff member approves the findings of another staff member, who works for the same boss. How objective is that?

There is no pressing financial need to raise the fee of a process that is so little used. By doing so, you will be depriving many residents of the right to petition their elected officials for redress and oversight of those making decisions in their name.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Catherine Jurca

## Cortes, Karen

---

**From:** Abajian, Suzie  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 12:41 PM  
**To:** Golanian, Roubik  
**Cc:** Garcia, Michael; Calvert, Bradley; Cortes, Karen  
**Subject:** FW: Please Oppose Egregious Increase of Appeal Fee for City Residents (Agenda Item 8)

Suzie Abajian, Ph.D. | City Clerk | City of Glendale  
613 East Broadway, Suite 110 | Glendale, CA | 818-548-2090  
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**From:** Richard and Carol <rc.lee@charter.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2024 9:53 PM  
**To:** Asatryan, Elen <EAsatryan@Glendaleca.gov>; Brotman, Daniel <dbrotman@Glendaleca.gov>; Najarian, Ara <ANajarian@Glendaleca.gov>; Kassakhian, Ardashes <AKassakhian@Glendaleca.gov>; Gharpetian, Vartan <VGharpetian@Glendaleca.gov>  
**Cc:** Abajian, Suzie <SAbajian@Glendaleca.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Please Oppose Egregious Increase of Appeal Fee for City Residents (Agenda Item 8)

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Dear Council Members:

Regarding the proposed increase in the fee for appeals to the Planning Commission and Council, and of Administrative Design Review decisions to the DRB, from \$2,000 to \$4,562.

This represents a 125% increase of a fee that is already unaffordable to many residents.

Appellants do not seek permits or entitlements, they merely seek compliance with the City's Community Plans and Design Guidelines, as well as the California Environmental Quality Act. These actions are in the public interest. It appears that Council would like to make it more difficult for Glendale residents to request that Council address malfeasance in public.

When the Administrative Design Review process was created, it was done with the promise that appeal fees would be kept low because there would be no public hearing. And yet the proposal is to treat a process where the Director of Community Development approves the finding of his staff the same as one that involves a full public process. The Planning Hearing Officer process is similarly unbalanced. One staff member approves the findings of another staff member, who works for the same boss.

There is no pressing financial need to raise the fee of a process that is so little used. By doing so, you will be depriving many residents of the right to petition their elected officials for redress and oversight of those making decisions in their name.

Thank you very much.

Very Best Regards,  
Richard & Carol Lee

# 52+ Year Glendale Residents

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## Cortes, Karen

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**From:** Abajian, Suzie  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 12:27 PM  
**To:** Golanian, Roubik  
**Cc:** Garcia, Michael; Calvert, Bradley; Cortes, Karen  
**Subject:** FW: STOP the 100% Increase Fee to Appeal decisions involving projects to the City Council or Planning Commission

Suzie Abajian, Ph.D. | City Clerk | City of Glendale  
613 East Broadway, Suite 110 | Glendale, CA | 818-548-2090  
[sabajian@glendaleca.gov](mailto:sabajian@glendaleca.gov) | [www.glendaleca.gov](http://www.glendaleca.gov) | [Follow us!](#)

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**From:** Joe Neary <[joeneary2012@gmail.com](mailto:joeneary2012@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 7:53 AM  
**To:** Najarian, Ara <[ANajarian@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:ANajarian@Glendaleca.gov)>; Brotman, Daniel <[dbrotman@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:dbrotman@Glendaleca.gov)>; Gharpetian, Vartan <[VGharpetian@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:VGharpetian@Glendaleca.gov)>; Kassakhian, Ardashes <[AKassakhian@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:AKassakhian@Glendaleca.gov)>; Asatryan, Elen <[EAsatryan@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:EAsatryan@Glendaleca.gov)>; Abajian, Suzie <[SAbajian@Glendaleca.gov](mailto:SAbajian@Glendaleca.gov)>  
**Cc:** Joe Neary <[joeneary2012@gmail.com](mailto:joeneary2012@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** STOP the 100% Increase Fee to Appeal decisions involving projects to the City Council or Planning Commission

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [joeneary2012@gmail.com](mailto:joeneary2012@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)



**CAUTION:** This email was delivered from the Internet. Do not click links, open attachments, or reply if you are unsure as to the sender.

Dear City Council,

This is my Email to say **STOP the 100% Increase Fee** to Appeal decisions involving projects to the City Council or Planning Commission.

In 2016, my neighbors in the Sombra Dr, Glendale area fought a outside developer who was trying to build a Mansion on our "dead end" street of tiny houses. We fought him for months but the Design board was gonna let him do it so we HAD to APPEAL the City Council.

They charged us \$2,000 to get 15 minutes of their time....which they (last minute) put at the end of the City council meeting when everyone wanted to go home.... Council seem to want to sent it back to Design review, but one member convinced the rest to make a ruling.

He still got to build it, just a little bit smaller.....



This fine print CHANGE is pretty sneaky! This increase would ***not only be a deterrent*** for future appeals, but the necessity is puzzling.

There is no evidence that the process has been abused. Only one appeal has been heard by Council in 2024.

**Do The Right Thing.....strike this increase completely OUT.**

Joe Neary  
1711 Sombra Dr  
Glendale, CA  
[joeneary2012@gmail.com](mailto:joeneary2012@gmail.com)  
818.209.3939 m