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Redevelopment Authority amendment of Century City redevelopment plan to allow slaughter houses is terribly misguided

**Statement of Alderman Robert J. Bauman
October 21, 2019**

In 2005 the Barrett administration proposed and the Council unanimously approved a redevelopment plan for Century City. Among others, that plan prohibited several types of land uses and businesses from locating at Century City. Among those prohibited uses were those businesses defined by the city zoning code as “manufacturing intensive.” Several specific businesses were defined as manufacturing intensive. They are:

- Animal or poultry slaughter or auction facility
- Leather tannery
- Distillery of products for finishes
- Explosive manufacturer
- Sawmill
- Paper or pulp mill
- Steel mill
- Petroleum refinery
- Petrochemical plant
- Ore smelting facility

Last week the Redevelopment Authority (“RACM”) changed that redevelopment plan to allow a slaughter house at Century City proposed by Strauss Brands. This is a terribly misguided decision.

The original redevelopment plan was correct in prohibiting slaughter houses at a site surrounded by dense residential neighborhoods. The plan was also correct in prohibiting businesses that have a history of locating in low-income African American neighborhoods because such neighborhoods have historically lacked the political clout to keep them out. The plan correctly observed that no one wants to live near a slaughter house -- or chemical plant or oil refinery or pulp mill or tannery.

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The RACM amendment now allows slaughter houses, chemical plants, oil refineries, and steel mills (among others) to locate at Century City.

Moreover, the error of this decision is magnified by the fact that the final decision on any specific business relocation is left up to the Board of Zoning Appeals (“BOZA”) under the zoning code -- an unelected body of seven citizens appointed by the Mayor -- rather than the elected Common Council. This is blatantly anti-democratic and effectively disenfranchises the 40,000 citizens we each represent from being heard on such important decisions.

I urge my Council colleagues to reject this amendment of the redevelopment plan for Century City.

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