

To
The Director (Plg) MPR,
6th Floor, Vikas Minar, I.P. Estate,
New Delhi-110002.

OFFICE OF THE DIR (Plg.)
MPRTC, D.D.A. N. DELHI-2
By No. 2456
Dated 2/5/12

02/05/2012

Sub: Reference your advertisement in TOI/HT dated 02-05-2012 inviting Suggestions for 'Review of Master Plan for Delhi 2021'.

Dear Sir,

We the citizens of Delhi would like to bring to your notice that quality of life in India's Capital has deteriorated to a very large extent, it requires a time bound action plan to stem the slide or else our city would soon be counted amongst most unlivable places in the world.

MPD 2021 as introduced in Feb. 2007 tried to bring in a semblance of Planned Development and proper demarcation of Commercial, Mixed Land Use and Residential Areas. Over time the lines got blurred as various amendments and easing of Norms making the MPD 2021 a confused Plan, benefiting vested interests at the cost of hapless law abiding citizens.

ONE SIZE FITS ALL approach while framing rules will be counter-productive The needs and reality of Sangam Vihar and Greater Kailash are not and cannot be the same. Rules should be Sensible and Implementable, failing which, the corrupt will grease their way through and make undue gains, leaving the Law abiding Citizen feeling Cheated.

Following is the point wise list of various aspects that GK-I RWA wishes to be addressed in MPD 2021:

- 1) Mushrooming of Guest Houses (GHs):** It was after an ugly struggle that GK-I got Hansraj Gupta Marg declared Residential. All the shops that were shut slowly converted into Guest Houses. Gradually Norms for running GHs were relaxed through amendments, these Guest Houses are not for the use of GK-I Residents, the ploy of CWG also did not work as not many Tourists came. These GHs now are unable to sustain, therefore indulging in wrong activities to sustain and also subletting part of their premises for ATM, Parlour, Fitness Center etc. At last count there were 28 GHs on this 2Km Stretch.

SUGGESTION : Zonal Norms should freeze the maximum number of such facilities that can be allowed to operate from a colony according to the population density. Strict parameters should be enforced and should not be allowed to operate on Approval Pending basis from the various departments. **Any self respecting Planner will understand that a Residential colony will not need more than a specific number of GHs and that these are not desirable both on account of security, parking and healthy social environment for Children, Women and Seniors.** GHs also deprive residents' peaceful sleep, a fundamental right most tourists arrive after mid night. **Mixed Land Use and Commercial premises should have enhanced ECS Parking norms than Residential plots and the Setbacks should also be double than in case of Residences to provide for parking, stacking,**

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offloading etc. The Setbacks should be surrendered to the Land owning agency. A mandatory 10 feet Setback at the rear for ACs, Exhausts, utilities etc should be provided for in the Bye-Laws in all such cases.

- 2) **Hoodwinking the MPD 20 Sqm. Shops:** Here again the MPD was amended many times allowing more and more categories of shops, increasing the number of shops per plot etc. The rule of residing in the same building is blatantly flouted as are other aspects. Sample this, an Ice Cream Parlour passing off as a Dairy Product Shop The permissible categories are for items of daily use for household purposes like a shop selling milk, paneer, ghee etc. Fancy wrapping paper and packaging shop passing off as stationary shop etc
- 3) **SUGGESTION:** No one should be allowed to run a shop if they are not residing in the premises. The setback should be surrendered to the land owning agency for Public Parking and not for private parking. The entry should be from the side only and not the front for smooth flow of traffic and zero encroachment ... not even a canopy for shade or a bench for sitting. Surrogate Business should be strictly discouraged.
- 4) **Parking for Residential Areas: (A)** MPD 2021 talks of parking as a composite entity whereas the ground reality is that Parking in Commercial Areas and Residential Areas ought to be treated and addressed separately. While collecting Conversion Charges on account of additional floor and FAR in a residential plot parking has to be provided for the needs of the area residents Whereas the only Parking Lots being planned are in Colony Markets and not for residents. **(B)** While framing ECS parking norms, **Sangam Vihar and Greater Kailash ground realities will have to be kept in mind**, one has more smaller cars while upscale colonies will have SUVs and big cars can ECS norms be framed on same benchmarks.

SUGGESTION: (A) Areas should be identified with the help of RWAs underground parking in large Colony Parks, Community Centers or Religious Places should be developed for Residential Parking. Parking lots should not be allowed on B.O.T. basis by allowing space for commercial activities. The expensive fully automated parking lots should be avoided to make the projects more viable Instead residents should be encouraged to form Co-operatives and allotted parking spaces on payment as is prevalent in Housing Societies. **(B) Different ECS norms are needed for Sangam Vihar and Greater Kailash** as bigger cars need more parking space as also larger maneuvering area.

- 5) **Professional Use of Residential Premises:** Today not just Advocates, CAs, Architects and Doctors come under the category of Professionals many more Professional categories like Artists, Astrologers, Software Engineers, Photographers etc. have now come up, due weightage should be given to them and other similar categories should be identified and included in the list so that MPD 2021 is not discriminatory.

SUGGESTION: MPD must differentiate between a self employed Professional and a Firm. There should be a freeze on the total area of premises to be used for office and the total number of staff employed, say no more than three or four. There should be a restriction on working hours

during day time only, at least for visiting costumers. **People using more space and/or staff should be treated as Firms** and made to move to a Commercial Area. A person should only be allowed to operate from own premises and should be residing on the same floor to be considered for professional usage. **There should be no easing of norms to help influential Advocate Firms to circumvent Staff, Working Hours, Residence restrictions.**

- 6) **Nursing Homes in Residential Colonies:** Strict enforcement of Norms for Nursing Homes in Residential Colonies In A & B Category colonies 30 feet roads were clearly stated not suitable for Nursing Homes and got a relief from this menace in the MPD but it is not strictly enforced.

SUGGESTION: Approval of RWAs to be made mandatory and strictly ban all Nursing Homes on narrow 30 feet roads. Zonal Norms should freeze the maximum number of such facilities that can be allowed to operate from a colony according to the population density, that too only on 100 feet roads. Compounding hardship penalties on yearly basis should be imposed on defaulters. Those Nursing Homes that fall in the conforming parameters should have waiting areas @ two persons per bed and parking space @ one ECS per bed within the premises.

- 7) **Basements in Residential Plots:** In a kneejerk reaction MCD dug out an ancient rule of leaving two meters on each side to construct a basement Darya Gang, East Delhi areas saw building collapses so all over Delhi Basements were banned instead of going into the cause of the collapse MCD chose the easy way out, paving the way for greater corruption In today's time when space is at a premium and most hoses have 20 feet to 25 feet Frontage, how can one leave 13.2 feet. This will force people to bribe their way through.

SUGGESTION: It is appreciated that some areas are not suitable for basements, scientific methodology should be used to determine where the soil conditions, design and quality of neighbouring structures etc are not conducive for Basements. However, basements should be allowed after proper guidelines are framed for modern foolproof technique of digging in areas where soil conditions and neighbouring house designs are stable. In areas like GK-I no incidents of building collapse on account of basement digging has ever been reported. By all means proper guidelines must be made but at the same time expensive real estate cannot be ignored. **Safety of Life is important Safe Solutions are equally important. One size fits all approach cannot work when the cost of land is so high.**

- 8) **Sanction and Regularisation of Additional Floor and FAR:** Delhites got a huge windfall appreciation in property prices with this enhanced FAR and additional floor. A sensible guideline of buildings to be constructed on stilts was a very good/practical concept belatedly enforced. Under Supreme Court directions owners are made to give Affidavits stating in case of adverse Ruling the owner will demolish the additional floor. The concerns of SC were justified, as Govt. is notorious for not keeping its promise of augmenting the civic infrastructure, like Sewage, Parking, Water, Electricity etc. Some progress has been made in that direction but SC has all but forgotten about this case that at one point was taken up on a daily basis. **It has been noticed that people have constructed offices under stilts and additional Dwelling Unit using up parking space.**

SUGGESTION: All such floors should be regularized a dynamic city cannot be left with the sword hanging to their neck and made to wait for SC to decide, without a single hearing in five years. It will be unfair on the citizens as they expected the case in SC in those days hearing on a daily basis suddenly lose interest. Builders should not only apply for Sanction of Plans but obtaining **Completion (Occupancy) Certificate should be made Mandatory. Additional floor should be allowed only after ascertaining ECS parking Space in case of old structures.** Redevelopment on stilts should be encouraged. Four servant rooms should be allowed to be built on terrace within height restriction ie Mouny Level so that builders do not usurp precious Parking Space under stilts.

- 9) **Play Grounds for Children:** Colony parks should be divided into three parts i) Ornamental for recreation, ii) Playground for children, iii) Play Pen for toddlers. This is to avoid conflict between the various stakeholders, also upkeep and maintenance will be easier. Jogging track should be made around the three sections for morning walkers and fitness enthusiasts.

SUGGESTIONS: With changing times Tennis and Basket Ball courts should be allowed to be made. The SC court should be approached and obtain relaxation for Concrete surface for Courts and Tiles for Jogging Tracks to be built. Environment concerns and depleting water table issues can be addressed by installing Rain Water Harvesting units. Playgrounds are a must to over all development of children. First we deprive our children of play areas and then complain that children these days are stuck to the computers champions like Dhoni come from small towns have we given our children an enabling environment.

- 10) **Markets in Colonies:** The market corridors should be at a uniform level, evenly laid with non slippery tiles for the safety of customers. Zero tolerance to subletting of corridor space to small vendors.

SUGGESTIONS: Colony Markets were made for the use of residents first guidelines should be issued that parking will be free for the first 30 minutes to allow for small purchases. Restaurants should not be allowed to use up space outside to set up Chaat Stalls etc. Restaurants should also install High Chimneys for exhausts. Corridors should be made pedestrian friendly.

- 11) **Footpaths free of Encroachments:** Pedestrian walk ways have been encroached upon in the absence of clear cut Tehbazari guidelines.

Suggestions: Frame a policy on Tehbazari and identify areas away from residences for setting up temporary stalls for vendors. There is a limit to the number of vendors a colony can absorb. **This is desirable for Aesthetics, Safety and Security of the residents.**

- 12) **Cell Phone towers in Residential Areas:** Studies have shown that exposure to Radiation from Cell Towers is harmful for humans and even more so for infants. The clause of taking permission from RWAs is being flouted and in many cases RWAs themselves are not aware of the Harm these towers cause to the residents. The people who rent out their premises get money and are equally at risk but the neighbours get free radiation.

SUGGESTIONS: Since it is a matter of Public Health there should be complete ban on Towers in Residential Areas and not be left to the RWAs to put residents to risk. Cell Towers can be installed in Commercial centers or forest areas where there is floating footfall, therefore exposure to radiation is in small doses. Cell operators should invest in safe technologies rather than expose residents to risk for profits. **Please be aware that the common SPARROWS have all but vanished from our city ACT BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE to protect the citizens.**

- 13) **Community Center/Club for colony:** The planners for all colonies must provide a Recreation area with indoor facilities to hold functions such as marriages and other social functions. Earlier these functions were held in colony parks and later Supreme Court banned commercial use of Parks while SC meant Commercial use, the over Zealous MCD Babus notified that most parks be converted to ornamental parks. This deprived the children of Playgrounds and the Residents of a space for holding small functions. MCD is in contempt of SC as they failed to follow part two the same order stating that Community Centers must be made so that residents do not have to go far for social functions.

SUGGESTIONS: Supreme Court order must be implemented and Community Center built, of large enough capacity and of a quality that befits the status of the colony with rooms for overnight stays as also space for RWAs offices. There should be sufficient Parking and large open lawns for outdoor functions the facility should be large enough to hold at least two functions to cater to the busy Indian Marriage calendar.

- 14) **Realistic Norms for Houses near ASI protected Monuments:** While appreciating the need to protect our Heritage, care should be taken the no ASI Babu be allowed to frame Bye Laws that while protecting the Monument puts constraints on peaceful use of the properties full potential by the owner. Residents are facing hardships in dealing with various departments Unauthorised encroachments should be dealt with differently and cleared.

SUGGESTIONS: Clear cut single window systems should be put in place and there should be no discrimination between two properties duly sold by the Land Owning Agencies and registered. Where ever DDA/ DLF etc. have developed planned colonies and sold plots with Monuments in Parks, norms should be relaxed. Most of these monuments are not of such important significance as the ASI is making them out to be. The living inhabitants are as important as Heritage these plots were planned and developed and if ASI was sleeping the Residents cannot be made to suffer for no fault of theirs. If ASI feels that the significance of the Monument warrants such stringent norms then they should buy the properties at MARKET RATES in the vicinity and compensate the hapless owners so that overtime the area can be cleared of all buildings. Let ASI put its money where their mouth is right now they have thrown all logic to the winds and are post facto creating impractical Heritage Norms.

- 15) **Schools in Colonies should be kept in Check on Expansion:** Like a freeze on the number of dwelling units in Residential Plots, Schools too should not be allowed to expand the number of sections per class. The expansion should be based on the population density of the area as also on the Civic infrastructure, like Roads, Parking, Water, Sewage etc. available in the colony. Unbridled expansion puts immense pressure on the neighbourhood and brings the colony to a halt.

SUGGESTIONS: Put a Freeze on expansion beyond the carrying capacity of the civic infrastructure. Bye laws of school buildings should be made available to RWAS so that unbridled expansion can be checked. Schools should be asked to inform RWAs before expanding further. All parking of vehicles like buses, staff cars, students vehicles must be made to park within the school premises there should be no traffic jams due to haphazard parking and offloading.

These are preliminary submissions, I request you to give me an opportunity to elaborate before a final decision is taken.

Warm Regards,

s/d

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