

Item 3

*Exel: 2
10:55 AM*

February 15, 2012

City Plan commission (c/o Planning Division

In reference to case # PZRZ12-00002

We are some concerned citizens living in this area of El Paso, TX. Who are opposing any change in zoning that does not include opening Independence St. from Delfina to Elvin, because it is not in the Best interest of the people living in this area or of the City, we can not understand why instead of finishing a Street that was planed over 25 years ago, and for which a right of way was obtained and sewer and water mains were installed, and it is a Main artery in this neighborhood and all of a sudden, without any notice it was closed we do not know who it will benefit to close it, but not the City of El Paso or the people in this area. We are not opposed to progress, but this closure does not make any sense to close a seventy feet wide street instead of finishing it and dedicate it to the betterment of our community, we need to hear how this change in closing this street will benefit the community before our acceptance of this change in zoning.

We are enclosing signatures of opposed property owners within 300 ft. of the proposed change of zone.

Respectfully:

Gilberto G. Morales	255 Elvin Way	915 859 5061
<i>G Morales</i>		<i>525-4410</i>
<i>R. Santini</i>	<i>250 Elvin Way</i>	<i>859-4931</i>
<i>JR Lopez</i>	<i>254 Elvin Way</i>	<i>859-8585</i>

Wall to thwart vandals puts children at risk

By Aileen B. Flores
EL PASO TIMES

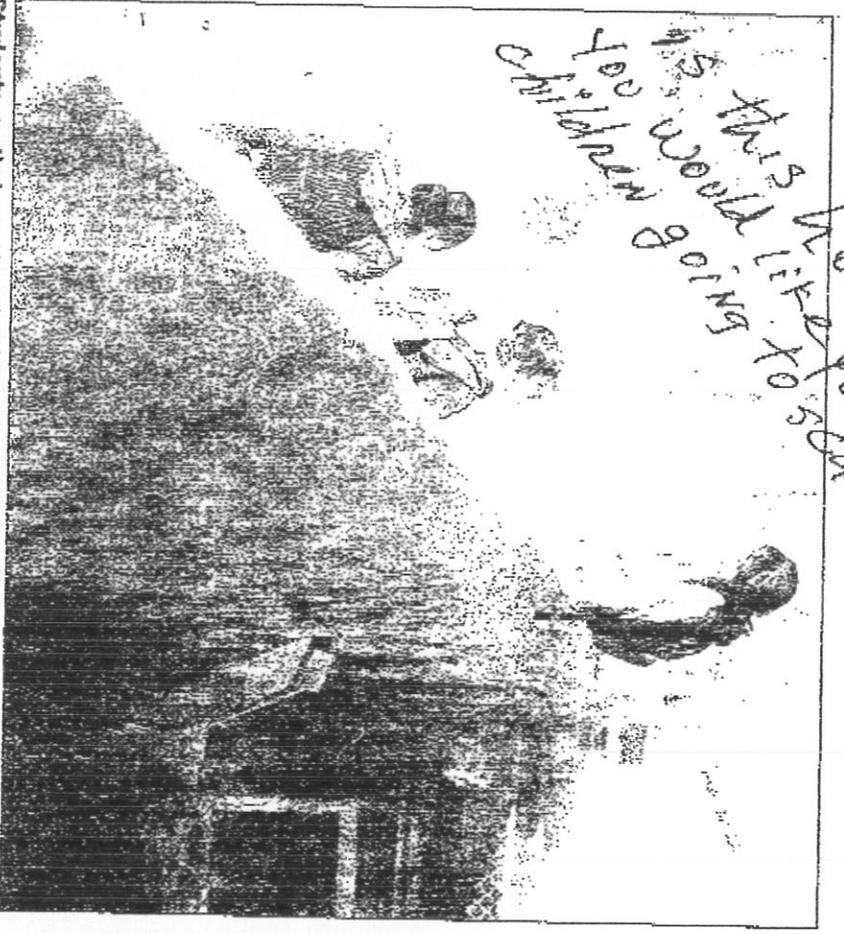
The city recently took action to stop vandals in one Lower Valley neighborhood, but residents there now worry that their children are in danger.

City officials in December constructed a six-foot-high rock wall and permanently closed Independence Drive between Delina Drive and Elvin Way. The wall blocked access to a vacant lot that often was used by children as a shortcut to walk to school and by vandals trying to evade police.

City Rep. Eddie Holguin, who represents the area and lives in the neighborhood, said the wall has helped decrease vandalism. He said graffiti is less of a problem and no-parking signs along Elvin Way are no longer torn down by vandals.

But neighbors are upset that the wall's unintended consequence is that it is a hazard for children accustomed to cutting through the vacant lot on their way to school. Alternate routes for neighborhood children attending Capistrano Elementary School and Ysleta Middle School are not as direct.

Now, it's common before and after each school day to



Students on their way to school jump the six-foot-high rock wall.

see children climbing and then jumping over the wall. Neighbors fear the children will get hurt if this continues. Gilberto Morales, who has lived in the 208 block of Elvin Way since 1976, said the closure puts children at risk of falling when they clamber

over the high wall, or of being struck by a car as they walk an extra half-mile to school along Lee Sterling Drive, a street without sidewalks.

"With no warning or hearings, (the city) closed the street with no credible explanation and serving no pur-

pose," he said.

Francisco Sotelo, whose backyard is adjacent to the wall, said students use his fence and a handy street sign to help boost themselves over the rock wall.

Sotelo, father of two 14-year-old boys and a 7-year-

old girl, said he has tried to help his children get over the wall by placing a small ladder in his backyard. But most of the time, he and his wife drive their children to school rather than risk them getting injured in a fall, he said.

Holguin, whose home is near the wall, said there is no problem with children climbing over the rock wall to use the vacant lot as a shortcut.

"Nobody jumps over the wall," Holguin said.

Seconds later, though, a child climbed over the wall. Morales said he is not asking the city to complete the street through the vacant lot but to tear down the wall and allow children to resume their accustomed safe route to school. The city spent \$3,900 on the wall's construction.

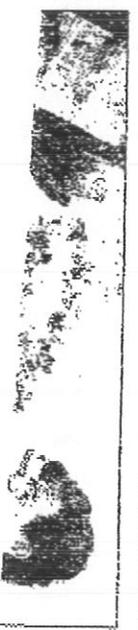
Holguin said about half of the empty lot is owned by the city and half is private property. He said it is illegal for people to step onto private land.

Edlguin said the city built the wall on city right of way.

He said people have long asked for neighborhood improvements and the rock wall is just one of them.

Julie Baldwin-Munoz, program administrator in the city's engineering department, said city officials will work with the Police Department to monitor the situation for public safety issues.

Owned chef returns to revamped,



Newspaper Article by Aileen B Flores
EL PASO Times Feb 22, 2011
Case # PZRZ 12-00002
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