

## Remarks by Grobstein on Town Center Hearing

**May 6, 1975**

NEWS EDITORS:

The attached remarks were prepared by Dr. Clifford Grobstein, Vice Chancellor for University Relations at the University of California, San Diego, for delivery to the San Diego City Council, Thursday, May 8, 1975.

Release time for the remarks is upon delivery by Dr. Grobstein at the City Council hearing. The remarks concern the University's position in the matter of the proposed Town Center which is planned for an area adjacent to the UCSD campus.

Paul W. West

Public Information

Remarks to San Diego City Council

Town Center Hearing, May 8

Mr. Mayor and members of the Council:

My name is Clifford Grobstein and I am Vice Chancellor for University Relations at the University of California, San Diego. I speak on behalf of the Regents of the University of California and Chancellor McElroy of the San Diego campus.

You have received a letter, dated April 14, 1975, in which I have outlined in some detail the views of the University on the matter now before you. You know that we believe that affirmative action on the pending application is in the best interest of the community and the University. Without repeating the details of our letter let me make several points that I hope will be helpful in your deliberations.

First, let me emphasize that the position taken by the University is based on extensive consultation among many people on and off campus, centering in the Chancellor's Committee on University Community Planning of which I am chairman. The Committee includes some 15 students, faculty and non-academic members of the university staff.

Through the committee and its task forces every effort has been made to hear all elements of university opinion. In so complex a matter and with so diverse a community, it is not possible to achieve unanimity. However, the task force which gave many hours of study and discussion to the Town Center was able to establish a clear consensus in its recommendations to the whole committee and to the Chancellor. The views I express for the Chancellor are substantially those recommended by the committee. I know of no evidence that any large sector of campus opinion strongly dissents from these views, though individuals and particular groups may do so.

Second, let me explain that the university position necessarily gives precedence to long rather than short-range considerations. To put this in perspective, recall that the University of California at Berkeley is 120 years

old, that Stanford University is 90 years old and that the California Institute of Technology is over 80 years old. These premier West Coast universities are babes compared with the University of Pennsylvania, Columbia University and Yale University that are well over 200 years old and Harvard University that is in its fourth century. Such European universities as the University of Bologna, the University of Paris and Oxford date from the 12th century. My point is that when one begins to build a university one talks not of decades but of centuries. The University of California, San Diego has just completed a decade of undergraduate instruction. San Diego may achieve world recognition as a great university center at the time of our nation's Tricentennial and our reputation may still be reverberating in the year 2500. That is the long perspective for university building and planning.

Third, it was such long-range perspective that motivated the far-sighted Regents and City Fathers who worked jointly to establish a campus of the University of California in San Diego. They agreed that it was not just a campus that they wanted but a great university and they recognized that a great university requires a favorable environment and an appropriate surrounding community that might take decades to mature. An unwritten compact for cooperation between Regents and City Fathers is today coming to reality in many ways. One of these is the University Community Plan, an element of the San Diego General Plan. The University Community Plan sets out guidelines for a community that includes the campus but within a setting that extends beyond the campus. It visualizes a transitional mixed community around the University with a unique personality harmonizing town and gown. The model is not Berkeley, nor Isla Vista, nor Westwood, nor Harvard Square. In fact, there is no fixed model-- there are only guidelines to encourage a creative expression by the entire community, one that it will contribute to and accept with pride.

My fourth point is that basic to that planning conception is a community center, not on the campus but functionally linked to it. Let there be no misunderstanding. This community or town center is not intended to serve primarily immediate campus needs, although hopefully it will in major ways contribute to them and benefit from them. This is to be a center for the community of which the campus is a part, a community larger than the campus but influenced in its character by the presence of the campus. That community already includes Scripps Hospital, the Salk Institute and the Sorrento Valley and Torrey Pines industrial parks. We think such a community will be a benefit to all of San Diego; we think it is indispensable to the excellence of the University.

Why is it so important to the university? Because whatever greatness means with respect to a university it ultimately rests on people-- unusual people who make up faculty, student body and supporting staff. What attracts people of high academic excellence? First, creative opportunity in the special field of their interest. Second, other people of high creativity in other areas. Third, a community rich in activities that creative people enjoy. This last requirement the campus alone cannot supply, it must be provided by the broader university community. Once established, we believe it will be a source of satisfaction and enjoyment for the greater San Diego region.

For all of these reasons we have not only endorsed the Town Center concept but have steadily pressed for its multi-purpose definition. A simple shopping center, of size, is not a town center. A town center is alive day and night; it brings people to it for recreational, cultural and civic purposes as well as for shopping; it includes a diverse resident population as has been spelled out in our letter. Above all a town center is the true hub of its community, it physically and psychologically identifies it. We have emphasized and detailed this in our communication to you and in our many discussions with the developer and his staff. We have found the developer sympathetic and understanding, though soberly and honestly cautious in protecting what he regards as essential economic constraints.

Given the progress being made, we are today endorsing the general concept of the PCD and the understandings so far recorded with respect to that concept. We have asked the developer, the City Planning Department and all other interested parties to go on record in their understanding that the Planned Commercial District ordinance is a flexible instrument under which all parties can continue to plan and negotiate with each step to be successively heard and approved by the Planning Commission. We ourselves regard the plot plan here submitted by the developer as illustrative and not binding. We are not convinced that in its overall design or in the placement of its major structures a suitable balance between town center requirements and shopping center requirements has yet been reached. We believe that such a balance can be reached and negotiations of the last several months have moved us significantly ahead in this regard. We look forward, if this Council acts favorably,

to a Planning Commission workshop involving all parties before a revised plot plan is submitted formally to the Planning Department and the Commission.

Finally, I restate our concern that we not forget that we are planning a community and not just a Town Center. Effective relationships and communications must be established with the rest of the community if we are to create a true town center. We believe that a precise plan for the larger area we have, defined in our communication to you must be established before the Town Center plan itself is completed. We urge that your hoped-for approval of the PCD also makes suitable stipulation on this point to the Planning Commission.

I appreciate to opportunity to appear before you to discuss this important matter. I know that there will be many other occasions when the City and the University will consult to the mutual benefit of both. Perhaps no other occasion, however, will so clearly involve such a landmark, decision. The action you take today is not only essential to the task began some fifteen years ago, it can be a very large step to assure that there will truly be not only a University of California campus but a matching, university community on Torrey Pines Mesa.

Thank you very much.

May 6, 1975

Clifford Grobstein

Vice Chancellor

for University Relations

University of California, San Diego

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