Section 12 rezoning plan raises eyebrows

Residents furious to learn five parcels of land will be turned to fully commercial

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Residents of Section 12 were shocked to find a notice from the Petaling Jaya City Council (MBPJ) in their mailboxes on Sunday informing them of a rezoning proposal.

The notice said five parcels of land in the area would be rezoned from commercial and residential, to fully commercial.

Puzzled by this development, Subang Jaya assemblyman Hannah Yeoh and Residents Association of Section 12 Petaling Jaya president Datuk A. Narayanan have called for an explanation and transparency from the council and mayor Datuk Roslan Sukiman.

Yeoh is looking after Bukit Gasing, which includes Section 12, following the death of assemblyman Edward Lee.

Narayanan said the residents were against the plan to rezone the five parcels of land.

“Our main concern is the traffic congestion will get worse and the security of residents and their properties will be jeopardised because of the increased number of people, he said.

He said the residents had not been informed of the proposal earlier.

“None of them was called up or briefed by the council on the proposal to rezone the five parcels of land,” he said.

Even councillor Richard Yeoh, who was present at the press conference, claimed to have no knowledge of it.

“Not only did the council fail to follow proper procedures, it should have treated the residents better instead of placing the notice containing insufficient and confusing information in their mailboxes,” he said.

“The information was on a small piece of paper and they call that a proper announcement?”

Hannah clarified that an announcement was published in an English daily on March 29 but it was “too small and lacking in vital information” on the rezoning proposal.

“The announcement was also made without any consultation with the residents or councillors,” she said.

“Despite raising the matter with the mayor, the council proceeded to issue them with notices regarding the rezoning plan in their mailboxes.

“The notices did not contain any additional information.”

Checks on the council website revealed the rezoning proposal covered an empty lot next to Armada Hotel, which is presently gazetted for a petrol station and parking lot, the Filem Negara land, the controversial Universiti Malaya land and two other parcels of land in Section 12.

Last month, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim told The Malay Mail the proposed RM1.25 billion Universiti Malaya Health Metropolis in Section 12 would boost Petaling Jaya’s credentials as a service-oriented city.

He had said the council should call for a town hall meeting to hear of any objections before the area gets converted into a commercial zone.

On Dec 7, the council’s One-Stop Committee (OSC) rejected the proposed development for contravening basic planning laws as the residential area had not been rezoned.

Universiti Malaya vice-chancellor Tan Sri Dr Gauth Jasmon later submitted an appeal to the Selangor Appeals Board on Jan 12.

The medical hub was proposed to be built in Jalan 12/5, which is now occupied by 30 bungalows and zoned as residential or limited commercial.

Residents opposed the project claiming it would result in heavy traffic and parking woes in the otherwise quiet neighbourhood bordering busy Jalan Universiti.