

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA

EAST HOLLYWOOD
NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

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NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

GOVERNING BOARD OFFICERS

David Bell, President
Eric Moore, Vice President
Alex Holsheimer, Treasurer
Armen Makasjian, Recording Secretary
Alfredo Hernandez, Corresponding Treasurer
Doug Haines, Corresponding Secretary

GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

Maria Yepremian
Craig Cox
Ashley Stracke
Shahan Suzmeyan
Ruby Garcia
Maria Drews
Jennifer Moran
Noel Lingad
Sam Kbushyan
Jennifer Tell



ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA
MAYOR

June 22, 2012

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Darlene Navarrete
Los Angeles City Department of City Planning
City Hall, Room 750
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

RE: ENV-2007-365-MND-REC 3. 5245 Santa Monica Blvd. project, East Hollywood.

Please note the enclosed action by the Governing Board of the East Hollywood Neighborhood Council at its March 19, 2012 Board meeting in regards to the above referenced application.

The East Hollywood Neighborhood Council is on record in support of requiring the applicant to prepare an Environmental Impact Report for this proposed project.

Thank you,

David Bell, President
East Hollywood Neighborhood Council

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ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA
MAYOR

March 25, 2012

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Los Angeles City Planning Commission
City Hall, Room 272
Los Angeles, California 90012

RE: DIR-2009-2065-DB-1A; ENV-2007-365-MND. 5245 Santa Monica Blvd. project, East Hollywood.

The East Hollywood Neighborhood Council voted at its March 19, 2012 Board meeting to oppose an application by Petros Taglyan for a series of Density Bonus requests and related Site Plan Approval to allow a 109,825 sq. ft., 60-foot-tall mixed-use project at 5241-5247 Santa Monica Blvd. and 5238-5246 Virginia Ave. in East Hollywood. The vote of the Board was eight members in opposition to Mr. Taglyan's request, with one member in support and two members voting to abstain. The City Planning Commission will consider this project at its April 12 meeting.

Comments in opposition to Mr. Taglyan's proposed development focused on several factors, including: the five-story project's incompatibility with the surrounding low-scale community and historic Route 66; the overwhelming opposition to the project by affected neighbors and parents of children at Kingsley Elementary School; the applicant's refusal to consider a reduced scale project in response to community concerns; and potential environmental impacts to the adjacent elementary school and low-density residential community, including construction noise, year-round loss of direct sunlight for some residents, and the inadequate analysis on the former auto repair shop site of a buried hydraulic lift and, potentially, an underground fuel storage tank.

Comments in support of the project concentrated on its improved architectural design and a desire to encourage business investment in East Hollywood. In response to a request to provide the applicant with options for the site, the Board amended its motion to express support for a project limited to a 3-story height on Santa Monica Blvd. Community members who attended the meeting supported this proposal.

Due to the efforts of Council District 13, the applicant's architect and legal counsel appeared at the March 19 Board meeting and discussed the revised project. Members of the public also attended and distributed over 300 petitions in opposition to a 5-story development. The vote of the Board followed consideration of the application by the neighborhood council's planning committee, which unanimously determined that the requested entitlements were not justified under the LAMC. The committee also requested that two items be provided to the Board to review the project: a revised pro forma, and architectural renderings showing Santa Monica Blvd. buildings in context to the proposed project. Neither was provided by the applicant.

Attached please find additional information reviewed by the Board prior to its decision.

David Bell, President



**EAST HOLLYWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
Planning Entitlement Review Committee**

Information regarding an application by Petros Taglyan for a series of Density Bonus approvals and related Site Plan Approval to allow a 109,825 sq. ft., 60-foot-tall mixed-use project adjacent to Kingsley Elementary School at 5241-5247 Santa Monica Blvd. and 5238-5246 Virginia Ave. Discussion and possible action scheduled for the March 19, 2012 Board meeting.

The applicant is seeking: a density bonus allowing the averaging of the project's floor area ratio (FAR) across the entire 5-parcel site to permit a 600% increase in the commercially zoned C-2 parcels on Santa Monica Blvd. (from 0.5 to 3.0); averaging of required open space; averaging of required parking; allowing vehicle access from a commercial zone to a restricted residential zone; a site plan approval; denial of an appeal filed against the project; and certification of the Mitigated Negative Declaration. The applicant is Petros Taglyan

Background

In 2007, the applicant filed an application with the Planning Department to build a 121,236 sq. ft., 5-story, 60-foot tall assisted living/medical offices development with 186 parking spaces on the vacant lot adjacent to Kingsley Elementary School. Following negative feedback from the neighborhood council, Council District 13 and the Hollywood Design Review Committee, the applicant proposed a 99,366 sq. ft. mixed-use density project consisting of a 5-story, 60-foot-tall building fronting Santa Monica Blvd., and a separate 30-foot-tall residential structure on Virginia Ave. That proposal consisted of 32,272 sq. ft. of commercial/retail on two levels in the Santa Monica Blvd. building, and 49 units (with 10 units reserved for low income) of residential in both structures totaling 67,091 sq. ft., with parking consisting of 192 spaces in a two-level subterranean garage covering the entire project site. Following denial of the commercial square footage increase by the Planning Department, that project was also withdrawn.

The revised project is a 109,825 sq. ft. mixed-use development consisting of 84 residential units (16 units reserved for low income) and 14,497 sq. ft. of commercial use. The building fronting Santa Monica Blvd. consists of five stories reaching 60 feet in height with 74 apartment units, while the building fronting Virginia Ave. is two above-grade levels and one sub-grade level, and contains 10 apartment units and a rooftop pool. Total parking would be 181 spaces. The City Planning Commission is scheduled to act on the project at its April 12 meeting.

The East Hollywood Neighborhood Council is the certified Los Angeles City neighborhood council responsible for local review of Mr. Taglyan's application. The District rep is Doug Haines. The Board of the East Hollywood Neighborhood Council voted unanimously at its February 22, 2010 meeting in opposition to the proposed project. The NC subsequently voted unanimously at its June 20, 2011 meeting to support efforts to seek alternative uses for the parcels, after receiving petitions from over 300 residents.

The lot consists of five parcels; three parcels on Santa Monica Blvd. are zoned C2-1D, with an FAR of 0.5:1. The Virginia Avenue parcels are zoned RD1.5-1XL. The current zoning essentially allows a 1-story building on half the lot for the parcels on Santa Monica Blvd., and a 10-unit, 2-story residential bldg. with a maximum height of 30 feet on Virginia Ave. The site formerly housed auto repair and paint shops.

Application by Petros Taglyan for a 5-story, 60-foot-tall mixed-use project at 5241-5247 Santa Monica Blvd. and 5238-5246 Virginia Ave.



View of project site.



Kingsley Elementary School on Virginia Ave., adjacent to proposed project site.

Application by Petros Taglyan for a 5-story, 60-foot-tall mixed-use project at 5241-5247 Santa Monica Blvd. and 5238-5246 Virginia Ave.

Standard of Review

Density Bonuses: The purpose of a Density Bonus is to increase the production of affordable housing, consistent with City policies, in conformance with the requirements of California Senate Bill SB1818 as defined under Government Code Sections 65915 – 65918, and the City’s implementing ordinance (No. 179681).

Under California Government Code Section 65915, when an applicant seeks a density bonus for a housing development, the City shall provide incentives or concessions for the production of housing units and child-care facilities. These concessions are outlined under Section 12.22.A.25 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code. In return for such incentives, the applicant shall ensure that the units have continued affordability for 30 years or longer. Rents shall be set at an affordable rate as defined in Section 50053 of the California Health and Safety Code.

The Director of Planning or his designee has the initial decision-making authority regarding whether or not to approve an application for a Density Bonus concession or menu incentive for a housing development, so long as that decision requires no other discretionary actions. Under LAMC Sections 12.22.A.25(g)(2)(i)(c) & (i), the Director shall approve a Density Bonus incentive unless:

- The incentive is not required in order to provide for affordable housing costs.
- The incentive will have a specific adverse impact upon public health and safety, or upon the environment.

Site Plan Approval: A Site Plan Approval is required for developments having 50 or more residential units. The following are the required findings under Section 16.05.F of the Los Angeles Municipal Code that are legally necessary to approve a Site Plan Review:

- a) That the project complies with all applicable provisions of the Zoning Code and any applicable specific plan;
- b) That the project is consistent with the General Plan;
- c) That the project is consistent with any applicable adopted redevelopment plan;
- d) That the project consists of an arrangement of buildings and structures (including height, bulk and setbacks), off-street parking facilities, loading facilities, loading areas, lighting, landscaping, trash collections and other such pertinent improvements, which is or will be compatible with existing and future development on neighboring properties;
- e) That the project incorporates feasible mitigation measures, monitoring measures when necessary, or alternatives identified in the environmental review that would substantially lessen the significant environmental effects of the project, and/or any additional findings as may be required by CEQA;
- f) Any project containing residential uses provides its residents with appropriate type and placement of recreational facilities and service amenities in order to improve habitability for the residents and minimize impacts on neighboring properties where appropriate.

Application by Petros Taglyan for a 5-story, 60-foot-tall mixed-use project at 5241-5247 Santa Monica Blvd. and 5238-5246 Virginia Ave.

Prior Review by East Hollywood Neighborhood Council

The applicant presented his original proposed project to the former Planning and Beautification Committee in 2009. The applicant then appeared before the full Board to present a revised project. Following that appearance, the applicant refused any further meetings with the neighborhood council. As previously stated, the NC voted on February 22, 2010 to oppose the project.

In March of 2011, the Director of Planning approved the applicant's project in part and denied it in part. Both the neighbors and the applicant appealed to the City Planning Commission, which initially heard the appeal on June 9, 2011. There have since been six continuances of a hearing before the Commission, with April 12 now scheduled for a possible vote.

The Planning Entitlement Review Committee held a meeting on the proposed project on Saturday, March 17. The project architect and a representative for the applicant appeared. Two immediate neighbors who appealed the project also attended. Discussion centered on the perceived incompatibility of the proposed 60-foot-tall development with the existing low-scale streetscape; the NC's votes for future development to be consistent with historic Route 66 and the zoning regulations; and the lack of a financial pro forma from the applicant to decide whether or not the density bonus incentives are necessary to provide for the affordable housing expenses. Discussion also focused on potential environmental impacts to the adjacent elementary school and low-density residential community, including construction noise, year-round loss of direct sunlight for some residents, and the inadequate analysis on the former auto repair shop site of a buried hydraulic lift and, potentially, an underground fuel storage tank.

Following consideration of the requested entitlements, the committee unanimously determined that the entitlements were not justified.

Action under consideration by the Board

The application involves three separate requests: 1) Approval of the density bonus menu incentives; 2) Approval of the Site Plan Approval; and 3) Approval of the environmental document, a Mitigated Negative Declaration that determines the proposed project would have no significant impacts that cannot be mitigated to insignificance. The Board also has the option of supporting or opposing the neighbors' appeal of the project, and supporting an alternative project of a smaller scale.