



PAUL KREKORIAN

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December 9, 2016

The Honorable Jose Huizar
Chair, Planning and Land Use Management Committee
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: NOHO West, 6150 North Laurel Canyon Boulevard, CA 91606, CF: 16-1280

Dear Councilmember Huizar:

On Sept. 22, 2016, the City Planning Commission voted overwhelmingly to approve the NOHO West Project in my district. It marked a significant step forward in redeveloping what has been a blighted commercial property for many years. This project is important to the residents of the East San Fernando Valley because this property (known as Laurel Plaza), together with the adjacent Valley Plaza, has tremendous potential as economic engines for the future of the area, and they have an important and beloved place in the area's history as well.

NOHO West will provide a shot of adrenaline to the area by delivering retail and entertainment facilities for the community. The project includes 327,850 square feet of exciting commercial space that will serve the needs of the people of the East San Fernando Valley and beyond, including shops, a movie theater, a grocery store and a fitness center. It will also create 244,150 square feet of new, state-of-the-art office space to support hundreds of high paying jobs in the San Fernando Valley. To make the project viable, and to bring new families to the area, it will include 642 units of housing.

Since I joined the City Council in January 2010, I have continually emphasized the successful redevelopment of these properties as my top economic development priority. With NOHO West, a considerable piece of that priority will be achieved. NOHO West has the potential to bring Laurel Plaza back as a major commercial draw for people in the immediate and outlying areas. The project will also serve as a catalyst for improving the surrounding area.

Community Engagement Shaped the Project

Throughout this process, my office has been in constant contact with residents in Laurel Grove and greater North Hollywood about NOHO West. I have listened to and worked with both the community and the developer in an open process to get the best possible project for the community.

Most of the communications my office has received about NOHO West have been supportive of the project. The Mid-Town North Hollywood Neighborhood Council voted overwhelmingly to support NoHo West, as did the property's immediate neighbor, Laurel Hall School. This is hardly surprising as people in the area have been waiting for a good project to come to the site for years. Others expressed general support, but articulated specific concerns with parts of NOHO West. I listened to all of this feedback and took the neighborhood's comments and concerns directly to the property's owners. I also demanded that they adjust their proposal to address these issues and make the project a better fit for everyone in the neighborhood.

Because of my insistence that NOHO West be tailored to meet the needs of the local community, I was able to secure positive movement in all the areas about which the community had expressed concerns, including size, use mix, aesthetics, traffic, parking, landscaping, project sequencing and labor. Among the changes I secured were lowering the amount of housing by 100 units (almost 15 percent less than the original proposal, and almost 40 percent less than what would be allowed by right); adding open space, green space and landscaping; lowering the height and reducing the massing of the project; and adding nearly 30,000 square feet of additional commercial space.

It is also worth noting that, unlike most projects of this size, NoHo West does not require a General Plan Amendment or substantial zone change. The only changes involve cleaning up antiquated parking zoning that exists on the lot.

Requested Action by PLUM

While the abovementioned changes dramatically improve the project, I believe that more needs to be done, especially concerning traffic mitigations, to protect the surrounding community. Thus, I request that PLUM grant in part and deny in part the appeal on file and make the following changes to the City Planning Commission's recommendations:

1. Amend mitigation measures M3 and M4 to incorporate the changes in the Revised Traffic Study Assessment by the Department of Transportation, dated Dec. 5, 2016. This would require the developer to pay for additional traffic mitigations beyond

those identified in the original EIR. This includes the requirements of installing double northbound left turn lanes on Laurel Canyon Boulevard and installing an eastbound right turn lane on Oxnard Street. Additionally, require the creation of a southbound exclusive right turn lane on Laurel Canyon at Burbank Boulevard. This would fully mitigate the impacts to intersections #11 and #12 in the study area.

2. Require as part of the (Q) Qualified Condition of Approval that the developer's proposed "Main Street" through the center of the commercial area in the project be closed off to vehicular traffic during peak hours and require that the main street be closed off for a minimum of 20 hours a week, subject to the concurrence of the Los Angeles Fire Department. This will add to the pedestrian walkability of the site and provide for more meeting opportunities in the commercial area where people are likely to congregate.
3. Require the amendment of Conditions for Effectuating (T) Tentative Classification Removal Conditions to amend section 2.G.'s Other Traffic and Safety Improvements portion, requiring that the applicant shall complete the following improvements:
 - a. Install a continental crosswalk at all intersections abutting the project site and intersections at which the project is required to do traffic mitigations;
 - b. Analyze and implement the appropriate traffic control devices or physical barriers to prevent southbound project-related traffic from exiting the project site driveway onto Radford Avenue;
 - c. Analyze and implement the appropriate traffic control devices or physical barriers to prevent northbound traffic from traveling past Oxnard Street along Radford Avenue;
 - d. Analyze the following intersections for possible blockage and installation of "Keep Clear" road markings and "Do Not Block Intersection" signage per LADOT approval: Colfax Avenue and Califa Street, Colfax Avenue and Collins Street, Colfax Avenue and Hatteras Street, Colfax Avenue and Erwin Street, Colfax Avenue and Calvert Street, Colfax Avenue and Sylvan Street, Oxnard Street at Vantage Avenue, Oxnard Street at Carpenter Avenue, Oxnard Street at Morella Avenue, Oxnard Street at Simpson Avenue, Oxnard Street at Rhodes Avenue, and Oxnard Street at St. Clair Avenue;
 - e. Establish from the issuance of the first Certificate of Occupancy to a minimum of two years after the issuance of the last Certificate of Occupancy

(or until such time that the City of Los Angeles establishes DASH service connecting the project to the Red Line Station, whichever comes first), a free shuttle service connecting the project site directly to the North Hollywood Metro Red Line Station at a minimum frequency of every 30 minutes at peak hours (or as deemed appropriate by LADOT in consultation with the Council office); and

- f. Pay LADOT to study the establishment of a Permit Parking District in the community surrounding the development, and to cover all initial expenses to establish the district.
4. Amend the following City Planning Commission actions to the sign ordinance to revert back the recommendations of the Planning Department staff: section 7. E. 3 height of Large Pillar Signs should be limited to 35 feet, with a maximum area of 350 square feet; section 7. H. 4 shall be amended to allow eight super graphics on the west elevation of the parking structure; section 7. I. 4 shall refer back to the original planning department recommendations of one digital display on the north side of the parking structure and one digital display on the south side of the parking structure;
 5. Amend the City Planning Commission (Q) Qualified Condition of Approval A.10 Project Phasing to require that construction of a minimum of 50,000 square feet of new commercial space, in addition to the full rehabilitation of Building J (the current Macy's building), for both office and commercial uses, and the full buildout of the park/open space shall have commenced prior to the issuance of a building permit for residential building A;
 6. Make the following technical correction and amend the City Planning Commission's (Q) Qualified Condition of Approval A.1.(2) to read "approximately 316,000 square feet of new commercial development, to include office, retail, restaurant, health club, and cinema uses;
 7. Make the following technical correction and amend the Commercial Buildings Heights as defined in LAMC 12.03: Commercial Building A = 40 feet, Commercial Building B & BA = 33 feet, Commercial Building C = 54 feet, Commercial Building D and E = 42 feet, Commercial Building F = 41 feet, Commercial Building G = 58 feet, Commercial Building H = 83 feet, Commercial Building J = 110 feet and Parking Structure = 71 feet; and

8. Amend the actions of the City Planning Commission to require that a minimum of five percent of the code required parking for both the residential and commercial uses be provided with EV Chargers to immediately accommodate electric vehicles at a minimum of a Level 2 charger and 20 percent of the code required parking to be EV ready.

By making these additional changes, amendments and corrections to the project, I believe the City will allow NOHO West to realize its full commercial potential, and also provide additional safeguards for residents in the surrounding community.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of this matter. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact my Director of Planning and the Environment, Karo Torossian, at karo.torossian@lacity.org or (213) 473-7002.

Very truly yours,



PAUL KREKORIAN
Councilmember, Second District

cc: Director of Planning Vince Bertoni