

Statement of Ron Bitzer
6245 Gentry Ave. (490 feet from Laurel Plaza)
North Hollywood
Council File 18-0634-S1
January 24, 2019

City Council approval of the appeal of the Merlone Geier Partners Laurel Plaza LLC (MGP) for a NoHo West Sign District is foreordained as evidenced alone by their perfunctory arguments for precedent-setting signs in the City.

For example, "The appeal requests reinstatement of the two Digital Displays (facing the freeway) which were eliminated by the CPC," *Appeal of CPC-2018-3276-SN*, November 14, 2018, p. 4.

Where are MGP's persuasive arguments for precedent-setting off-site 50 ft high digital display signs (2) each facing a different direction of freeway 170 traffic?

Does the "economic challenges facing redevelopment of the site" p.2 unsubstantiated argument then foretell off-site signs advertising the following off-site businesses now operating within walking distance of Laurel Plaza? Already residents have expressed concerns and opposition to this advertising.

- Major strip club
- 9 Licensed businesses for the sale of alcohol
- Cannabis outlets
- Tobacco lounge
- Massage parlor

**Documented Opposition to the MGP Appeal for a
NoHo West Revised Sign District**

Experts in land use planning --- the City Planning Commission --- have twice denied strategies of a North Hollywood developer to erect precedent-setting digital display "off-site" 50 ft. billboards (2) facing the 170 freeway.

Local homeowners -- some of whom live adjacent to the freeway and the proposed 50 ft. blinking billboards -- have learned that a City "NoHo West Sign District" overrides a 2009 City Ordinance prohibiting most freeway-close commercial signs.

City of Los Angeles Municipal Code

SEC. 14.4.6. FREEWAY EXPOSURE.

(Amended by Ord. No. 180,841, Eff. 8/14/09.)

A. **New Signs.** No person shall erect, construct, install, paint, maintain, and no building or electrical permit shall be issued for, any sign or sign support structure within 2,000 feet of a freeway.

City Planning Commissioner David Ambroz has consistently opposed freeway-facing digital signs. **“I am not willing to put the public in danger,”** he said at the 9/27/18 public meeting on the NoHo West Sign District.

A unanimous motion voted by City Planning Commission on September 27, 2018 stated **“Remove in its entirety any digital sign facing the freeway.”**

Commissioner Dana Pearlman said, “I don’t understand why we have a single digital sign facing the freeway ... if the developer gets it, why doesn’t every developer with a property next to the freeway get to come in and say we want digital signage facing the freeway?”

Proposed Site of Freeway-Facing Digital Signs



North-bound view on the 170 freeway at the location (right) of 2 proposed 50 ft. blinking digital signs --- one facing north and one facing south ----well within 2,000 feet of the 170 freeway. September 18, 2018 motion of the **Greater Valley Glen Council** requested City Planning “to revisit the approval of digital displays and supergraphic displays facing the 170 freeway proposed for placement on the project parking structure.”

The “Inconsistencies” Fallacy

Finally, MGP raises the “inconsistencies” argument: “MGP has also become aware of inconsistencies in the final adopted Ordinance as compared to other recently adopted sign districts in the City” p. 2. Commissioner David H. Ambroz countered this argument at the September 27, 2018 hearing and said, “I don’t know what city-wide standard they are referring to So I don’t think there is one size (that) fits all.”