

# VALLEY VILLAGE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 4916, Valley Village, CA 91617 • (818) 506-5158

*Serving the Valley Village Community located in the City of Los Angeles, bounded by Burbank Blvd., on the North, Ventura Fwy. on the South, Tujunga Wash on the West and the Hollywood Fwy. on the East.*



January 23, 2019

Los Angeles City Council Planning and  
Land Use Management Committee  
Attn: Sharon Dickinson, City Clerk  
City Hall, Room 360  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: No Ho West Sign District Amendments – CF-18-0634-1, CPC 2018-3276-SD

Dear Members of the Planning Committee,

On August 13, 2018, The Valley Village Homeowners Association sent a letter in support of the Laurel Grove Neighborhood Association's (LGNA) opposition to proposed amendments to the sign district for the NoHo West project. We are now writing to again support LGNA in its protest against the developer's appeal to the City Council and in support of Commissioner Cloe's reservations about granting such an appeal, based on several of the reasons noted by LGNA and in our Association's letter.

The City Planning Commission was appalled by this appeal and unanimously disapproved the developer's request for amendments to the NoHo West Sign District and again did not approve the two large digital signs facing the Hollywood Freeway. At their September 27, 2018 hearing the Planning Commission was upset that the developer had returned. Commissioner Caroline Cloe stated that: "I have a concern about requesting something that we have approved and taken a look at it very seriously not too long ago . . . think about the precedent we may set in the future for developers to come up and decide they want changes after you know big picture negotiations have been made." Commissioner David Ambrose commented that "a sign district is supposed to remove blight, this does not do that. In fact they (the developer) want to weaken the little bit it was doing." Commissioner Ambrose also stated that the two proposed digital signs facing the freeway "do not enhance the proposed sign district ....they create a danger in that they distract drivers on the freeway which is my main concern as well as the surrounding neighborhoods....the aesthetics of the community are not enhanced by having these brightest, largest digital signs in the Valley located at this project."

The amendments would reduce the ratio of square feet of existing billboard sign area to be taken down in exchange for new square feet on digital billboards from 10:1 to 2:1, reduce the billboard sign area to be taken down for new supergraphics signs from 5:1 to 1:1 and abolish the requirement that 10 square feet of billboard sign area be taken down for one foot of billboard sign area on kiosks. It would also add three additional supergraphics signs to the eight signs already approved with two of the signs facing the Hollywood Freeway and, for the three digital billboards that were approved, add two additional hours to the five hours that they can be turned on at night.

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The reduction in the takedown ratios and the elimination of the takedown requirement will greatly reduce the public benefit required in exchange for NoHo West's being permitted to put up the three lucrative digital billboards and eight supergraphics signs. Since NoHo West will be adding to the signage in Laurel Grove, they should be required to substantially reduce other sign clutter within the three-mile radius of NoHo West so that the overall appearance of the area around it is improved.

The three approved digital billboards proposed to remain on until 1:00am may be in locations that will have additional light impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods. However two of the three new digital billboards will definitely have an additional distracting effect on motorists passing by on the Hollywood freeway. We do not think that two more hours should be added to the five hours during which motorists are subjected to a dangerous distraction. The Transportation Institute at Virginia Tech published a fact sheet based on their 2006 study of car accidents and near collisions. They found that nearly 80% of crashes and 65% of near-crashes occurred due to driver inattention such as distraction or simply looking away for three seconds. A Swedish study in 2012 revealed that drivers look at digital billboards significantly longer than conventional ones.

The eight supergraphics signs already approved for the NoHo West project are enough. They will provide a substantial revenue stream for the project. This is an attempt by the developer to try to renege on what the City Council approved in order to generate even more revenue from NoHo West.

Please hold the line against these self-serving changes to what has already been approved for NoHo West that are contrary to the public good.

Sincerely,



Paul S. Hatfield  
President Emeritus

Cc: VVHA Board  
Diann Corral, Laurel Grove Neighborhood Association