Minutes for HHWNC’s PLUM Committee Meeting on May 2, 2019

PLUM Committee members Orrin Feldman, Oren Katz, and Barbara Witkin were present. A sufficient number of committee members were present to establish a quorum.

Mary Yarber, HHWNC’s Area 6 chair, was present to participate and vote with regard to the agenda item concerning 2070 Nichols Canyon Road.

Lincoln Williamson, HHWNC’s Area 7 chair, was present to participate and vote with regard to the agenda item concerning the proposed Starbucks store at 7915 West Sunset Boulevard.

Orrin Feldman called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Approximately 35 additional stakeholders were present.

The draft minutes of the committee’s prior meeting held on April 4, 2019, were discussed. A motion to approve the draft meeting minutes was approved by a vote of 3 to 0.

1. 7915 West Sunset Boulevard - is the site of a small mixed use retail and office building.

A Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf store has been a ground floor tenant for many years. The store has been operating from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily.

Matthew Clemente, a site development coordinator for GreenbergFarrow, represented Starbucks, which has filed an application with the City’s Planning Department in connection with Starbucks upcoming replacement of the Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf store on the site.

Starbucks initially filed an application proposing to operate the store from 5 a.m. to 12 midnight daily. Mr. Clemente told the committee that Starbucks will revise its application to propose closing the store at 11 p.m. daily.

Following a discussion about the City’s commercial corner rules and how the Coffee Bean store had been opening earlier than the commercial corner rules would allow for approximately twenty (20) years, the committee voted unanimously (4 to 0) to recommend that the HWHNC adopt the following motion:

Motion: HHWNC supports Starbuck’s application to operate the store at 7915 West Sunset Boulevard with operating hours form 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily.

2. Russell Carleton’s “Blue Moon Trilogy” mural in the Odin Underpass, which is in HHWNC’s Area 3 and City Council District 4.

Scott Haskins is the Fine Arts Conservation Laboratories conservator who restored the late Russell Carleton’s “Blue Moon Trilogy” mural.

Mr. Haskins gave a presentation about the mural’s history, the mural’s condition when he came on to the project, how he and his team restored the visible part of the mural, and how additional funds would need to be raised to pay for restoring the remainder of the mural, ———which is still under material which Caltrans or the City installed over the mural (seemingly many years ago).

3. 2070 Nichols Canyon Road - is an approximately 2 acre vacant lot in HHWNC’s Area 6 and City Council District 4.

Justin Klentner, who does business as Western Built Construction, has an application pending and being processed with the City’s Planning and LADBS departments for a large compound on the site. Mr. Klentner is claiming that (i) the proposed project is “by right”, and (ii) that the proposed project is exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as a single family house.

Orrin explained that Mr. Klentner was invited to participate in, or send a representative to, the committee’s meeting. Neither Mr. Klentner nor any representative was present.

Robert Silverstein, Esq., who represents a neighbor living across Nichols Canyon Road from the site, made a presentation of the proposed project. Mr. Silverstein explained that the proposed project includes building a driveway of 200 to 300 feet in length, which would be upslope and largely parallel to Nichols Canyon Road, numerous retaining walls, and several buildings and motor courts.

Mr. Silverstein’s position is that CEQA requires the proposed project to be reviewed publicly after the applicant prepares an environmental analysis of the proposed project’s likely impacts and suggests possible mitigation measures for those impacts.

Justine Schmidt described a petition, which had been signed by almost 300 residents, to ask the City to determine that the proposed project would be subject to CEQA analysis and review.

Julie Kremkus, Stacy Sillens and several other Nichols Canyon residents voiced similar concerns.

Following the discussion, the committee voted unanimously (4 to 0) to recommend that the HHWNC Board adopt the following resolution:

Motion: HHWNC recommends to Mayor Garcetti, Council Member Ryu, Vince Bertoni, the City’s Planning Director, and the LA Department of Building and Safety Commissioners, that they should determine that the application should not be exempt from review under CA CEQA, and that the City should order the applicant to prepare a draft environmental impact report (EIR) on the proposed project.

HHWNC further recommends that, even if the City were to determine that the proposed project were to be “by right” and a single family house, that the City should order the applicant to prepare a draft EIR on the proposed project because (i) the proposed project’s site is located adjacent to state parkland, which is The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority’s Trebek Tract and near to a year round stream, and (ii) the proposed project is likely to have significant environmental impacts, which the applicant should be required to mitigate.

4. State Senate Bill 58

Gilbert Morra is a prevention coordinator at Behavioral Health Services at the Hollywood Family Recovery Center.

Mr. Morra explained that SB 58 would authorize dome of California’s cities to extend the time for alcohol sales from 2 a.m. to 4 a.m. for restaurants and clubs, but not for liquor stores.

Mr. Morra asked the committee to recommend that HWHNC’s Board should support City Council Member Paul Koretz’s motion to have the City oppose SB 58, which is referenced in City Council file no. 19-0002-539.

There was a spirited discussion by committee members and stakeholders of the pros and cons of extending the time from 2 a.m. to 4 a.m. for alcohol sales. Jeremy Gardiner spoke in favor of SB 58’s proposal to extend closing times to 4 a.m. The other speakers raised concerns about how the later 4 a.m. closing time would put more drunks on the road, encourage party houses, and provide more personal liberty to drink in public at the expense of public safety.

Following the discussion, the committee voted unanimously (3 to 0) to recommend the following motion:

Motion: HHWNC supports City Council Member Paul Koretz’s motion to oppose SB 58.

5. Public Comments on non-agendized items.

There were no public comments on non-agendized items.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:57 p.m.