Minutes for HHWNC’s PLUM Committee Meeting on December 6, 2018

PLUM Committee members Patty Dryden, Orrin Feldman, Danielle Mead, Luminita Roman and Matt Shichtman attended the meeting.

There were a sufficient number of committee members present to establish a quorum.

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

Approximately 10 stakeholders were present.

The draft minutes of the committee’s meeting held on November 1, 2018, were discussed. A motion to approve the draft meeting’s minutes, as revised, was approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

1. 2005 North Highland Avenue - is the Hilton Garden Inn Los Angeles/Hollywood, which is in HHWNC’s Area 4 and City Council District 4.

Alfonso Torres, the hotel’s general manager, and Steve Rawlings, the hotel’s representative, lead the presentation on behalf of the hotel. They explained how and why the hotel’s prior conditional use permit to sell alcohol for on-site consumption had expired inadvertently when (or soon after) the hotel’s ownership changed. They also explained how there had been a problem with the noise coming from the hotel’s outdoor patio dining area facing Highland Avenue.

Following a discussion, the committee voted (5 to 0) to recommend that HHWNC’s board support the hotel’s application for a conditional use permit to sell alcoholic beverages or on-site consumption (and for off-site consumption for picnic basket meals going to the Hollywood Bowl and Ford Theaters), but subject to the condition that any speaker(s) directing noise north of the outdoor dining patio facing Highland Boulevard be turned off by 8 p.m. in order to allow The Belmont’s residents to enjoy quieter evenings.

1. 6801 West Hollywood Boulevard- is the Hollywood & Highland Shopping Center, which is in HHWNC’s Area 4 and City Council District 13.

The Hard Rock Cafe Los Angeles is a tenant in the Hollywood & Highland Shopping Center.

Donald Smith, the cafe/restaurant’s general manager, and Gary Benjamin, the cafe/restaurant’s representative, explained how the cafe operates and what additional discretionary entitlements it was requesting. The cafe is seeking to renew its conditional use permit (CUP) to sell alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption, change some of the conditions which were part of the original CUP, and change it’s site plan to allow the cafe to rearrange how it utilizes its space for some special events.

Luminita was concerned about some streets sign(s) in front of the cafe, and about the noise coming from the Hollywood Boulevard entrance area. Other committee members asked her to take those concerns to LAPD and to work with Mr. Smith to resolve her concern(s).

The cafe has asked to be allowed to sell tickets to special events there, but currently is not allowed to do so unless the event is associated with a nonprofit organization. The cafe wants to be able to impose a cover charge for “comedy nights”. The cafe agreed to limit the number of these special events to 12 per year, but also would be allowed an unlimited number of “buyouts” when a customer comes to buy out the entire cafe. No promoters would be allowed. For the special event nights and the buyout nights, the cafe would be allowed to remove the tables in front of their stage area, and turn that space into a dance floor.

The cafe also has asked to be allowed to have karaoke, and has agreed to limit the hours when karaoke could occur to between 8 p.m. and midnight. Most of the committee members believed that the site was well suited to karaoke and other live music because it’s deep inside the shopping center. Luminita objected to the karaoke and other live music primarily because of her concern about noise at the Hollywood Blvd. entrance area.

There was a brief discussion about the restaurant’s scrolling billboard, and the restaurant agreed that there would be no changes made to how the restaurant uses it for promoting itself, rather than specially priced drinks.

The cafe volunteered to include a change of control provision so that their conditional use permit and site plan changes could be reviewed in the event of a change of control of the cafe.

Following the discussion, the committee voted (4 to 1) to recommend to HHWNC’s Board that the Board support The Hard Rock Cafe Los Angeles’ application for a conditional use permit renewal and site plan change(s) if it is modified to include the aforementioned conditions.

3. Public Comments on non-agendized items.

There were no public comments on non-agendized items.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 p.m.