

Minutes for HHWNC PLUM Committee meeting on January 8, 2020.

PLUM Committee members Orrin Feldman, Danielle Mead, Oren Katz, Jeff Straebler and Barbara Witkin were present.

Lincoln Williamson, HHWNC's Area 7 Chair, was present to participate as a committee member with regard to 7917 W. Sunset Boulevard's Veggie Grill location. Brian Dyer, HHWNC's Area 3 Chair, was present to participate as a committee member with regard to 1744 N. Highland/6760-6778 W. Yucca Street's Urban Redwood building.

The meeting got underway at approximately 6:05 p.m.. A sufficient number of committee members were present to establish a quorum.

Approximately 15 people attended the meeting.

The draft minutes of the committee's prior meeting held on November 4, 2019, were discussed. A motion to approve the draft meeting minutes, as revised, was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

1. 7917 W. Sunset Boulevard - is the new site of The Veggie Grill restaurant, which is in HHWNC's Area 7 and City Council District 4.

Elizabeth Valerio, the restaurant's architect and representative, gave a brief presentation of the restaurant's plans to relocate from 8000 W. Sunset, remodel the interior, which had been the site of The Counter Burger restaurant, which closed last Summer. Ms. Valerio explained that The Veggie Grill was applying for the same Type 41 license/conditional use permit to sell beer and wine, which it's operated with at 8000 W. Sunset, for the restaurant's new site. The proposed hours of operation also would be the same as what Veggie Grill had at 8000 W. Sunset, which was and would be from 11 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Sundays through Fridays, and from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Saturdays.

The Planning Department's case no. is ZA-2019-6567.

Following Ms. Valerio's brief presentation, several committee members complimented the restaurant for being a good operator. The committee voted (6 to 0) to recommend that the Board should support The Veggie Grill's pending application for a new conditional use permit (Type 41) at its new location.

2. 1744 N. Highland Avenue and 6770 -6770 - are the addresses for The Urban Redwood building.

The Urban Redwood is a mixed use retail and residential building, which formerly was known as The Jefferson. The building is located in HHWNC's Area 3 and City Council District 13.

At the committee's meeting on December 2, 2019, the voted (7 to 0) to recommend to HHWNC's Board that HHWNC should not support and oppose the application, as presented, for a master conditional use permit for three restaurants to be allowed to sell a full line of alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption. The proposal, which still is pending at the City's Planning Department, is to have three restaurants in retail spaces on the building's ground floor along Highland Avenue and Yucca St., and to have outdoor dining spaces adjacent to each of the three restaurants. The proposed hours of operation would be from 6 a.m. to 2 a.m. daily.

Christine Rivera, the building's representative from The Elizabeth Peterson Group, Scott McCarter, the manager of RWBP Highland, L.P., the building's owner, and Matthew Nichols, Esq., the building owner's counsel, attended and participated in a long discussion with regard to the requested entitlements and how the building would be operated.

Amy Ablakat, CD 13's Planning Deputy, and Senior Lead Officer Brian White, LAPD Hollywood's senior lead officer for the Entertainment District, also attended and participated.

The committee members and others present continued to be concerned about (i) granting authority to the building's owner to approve who would be entitled to sell a full line of alcoholic beverages at the three proposed restaurants, and (ii) how the residential tenants on the building's upper floors AND the neighbors in nearby buildings would be able to sleep if the outdoor dining spaces were to operate to 2 a.m.

Oren Katz and several other committee members expressed great skepticism to Mr. Nichol's assertion that the neighborhood council would still be allowed to review the tenants after the building's approval if the City were to approve the proposed master conditional use permit. Mr. Katz and the other committee members' skepticism was based on prior experiences with the City's Planning Department in other cases involving master conditional use permits granted before neighborhood councils, such as HHWNC, existed.

Before Senior Lead Officer White had to leave towards the end of the meeting to attend another meeting elsewhere, SLO White said that the concerns discussed at the meeting were legitimate concerns.

At the end of the discussion, the committee thanked Ms. Rivera and Messrs. McCarter and Nichols for coming to the meeting and participating in the discussion.

The committee also decided to not reconsider its prior motion and vote to recommend that HHWNC should not support, and should oppose, the pending master land use application.

Ms. Rivera, Mr. McCarter and Mr. Nichols said that they would consider the discussion, and consider whether to come to HHWNC's next Board meeting, which was scheduled for January 15, 2020, with a compromise offer.

3. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:50 p.m.