



**JEAN FROST**  
2341 SCARFF STREET  
LOS ANGELES, CA. 90007

Item 24  
19-1603

February 2, 2020

Re: CF 19-1603  
806 West Adams, ZA-2018-2453-CU-DB-SPR, ENV-2018-2454-CE  
Appeal of the CE to City Council

RECEIVED  
FEB - 4 2020

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

To: Los Angeles City Council  
Via email and by hand  
c/o City Clerk Holly L. Wolcott, CityClerk@lacity.org, www.LACouncilComment.com  
City Hall, Room 395  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Honorable Members of the City Council

On February 4, 2020, a critical vote will take place at Los Angeles City Council. It is the Councilmembers last opportunity to stand up for fairness and environmental justice and support the appeal by the North University Park Community Association (NUPCA) that a categorical exemption is not an adequate environmental review for this complex, discretionary and impactful project.

It is also the Council's last opportunity to process the development in a manner that not only meets the requirements of CEQA but also the requirements of processing discretionary approvals under the overlay of the Exposition/University Park Redevelopment Project Area and its requirements and goals.

#### **FINDINGS FOR THE DENSITY BONUS UNDER CRA HAVE NOT BEEN MADE**

Discretionary action and specific findings are the required for density bonus granting under the Exposition/University Park Redevelopment Project Plan ("the Plan.") As a land use overlay, it is very much still in place and it governs development within the adopted boundaries of the Project Area – which includes the Subject property. The Project is inconsistent with the Redevelopment Plan. The density bonus is a discretionary action under the Plan and requires a public hearing and findings.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 5. Review Procedures for Redevelopment Plan Project Compliance.

(a) Initiation. A property owner files an application for Project Compliance Review with the Department of City Planning.

(b) Notice of Public Hearing. The Director shall provide notice as required by the LAMC

(c) Decision. Decision Maker. The Director is the initial decision maker and may approve, conditionally approve, or deny the Project Compliance (Ordinance 186325)

Further this action is appealable.

The City has ignored its responsibility pursuant to the recently adopted Ordinance #186325 called colloquially the CRA Takeover Ordinance that *“the City shall review and take action regarding any Redevelopment Plan Amendment or land use approval or entitlement.”*<sup>2</sup> It has not done so, but rather stuck its head in the sand, ignored its responsibilities and moved to adopt a CE. The City has permitted the applicant to defer his requests under the Plan to a later time, while allowing the CE to be processed and heard by Council on February 4. This makes no sense, especially since the City’s actions under the LAMC are conditioned and superseded by the requirements of the Plan.

As the appeal states, for a density bonus,

*The Agency approval of such development shall:*

- 1). Contribute to the revitalization goals of the Plan.*
- 2). Contribute to a desirable residential environment, neighborhood stability, and not adversely impact the neighboring environment.*
- 3). Provide units with adequate living area and avoid excessively dense development.*
- 4). Provide adequate parking.*<sup>3</sup>

Findings need to be made that support each of these requirements, noting that these findings would be “and” not “or” for each of the above-listed requirements.”

The Categorical Exemption is improperly before you. The discretionary action required under the Plan has not taken place, nor has the developer sought the discretionary action, by his own admission:

*The Project will separately seek a clearance from the City for Redevelopment Plan compliance at the appropriate time in accordance with the City's new procedures for Redevelopment Plan clearances. Thus, the issue is not ripe for any determination until such time as the City makes a determination on the Project's consistency with the Redevelopment Plan, **which has not yet occurred.***<sup>4</sup> (My emphasis)

When there is a conflict with other land use provisions, the Redevelopment Plan supersedes.

*The Redevelopment Regulations are in addition to the provisions of Chapter 1 of this Code and any other relevant City ordinances.*

*1. Whenever the Redevelopment Regulations conflict with provisions contained in Chapter 1 of this Code or any other relevant City ordinances, the Redevelopment Regulations shall supersede those provisions, unless the applicable Redevelopment Regulations specifically provide otherwise or are amended.*<sup>5</sup>

The City has been well aware and been repeatedly informed that for a bonus density very specific findings are required.

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<sup>2</sup> Ordinance #186325

<sup>3</sup> The Redevelopment Plan does allow density bonuses [Sec. 1334], and is not specific as to the percentage. However, the Plan is quite specific as to the circumstances and mandatory requirements under which such density bonuses are to be approved.

<sup>4</sup> Letter to PLUM, Andrew Brady, DLA Piper, Attorney for Champion, January 20, 2020

<sup>5</sup> Ordinance #186325

*...as I and others repeatedly have made clear, and has been stated in the Appeal, this Project is inconsistent with the Hoover-Exposition-University CRA Redevelopment Plan. I sat on the Project Advisory Committee to this Redevelopment Plan from 1989 until the Community Redevelopment Agency's demise. The land use component of the Redevelopment Plan, however, continues to be in effect. The import of that is outlined in detail both in my attached previous letter and also in the Appeal, which has updated information now that the jurisdictional responsibility has transferred from the Successor Agency to the City Planning Department. The basic "rules" for a project within the redevelopment project/plan area have not changed.*

*For a density bonus, several specific findings shall be made (details in the attached letter as well as the Appeal). No one has made any move to do so. Applicant (as far as anyone can see with transparency on the City website) has thus far not applied for the Director's Determination that is required in this case; no staff-led public hearing has been yet held, and no report/determination has been issued. No related CEQA evaluation has occurred. This despite my having brought it to the Planning Staff's attention via a series of letters, and via public testimony on several occasions.*

*Indeed, on the morning of the Planning Commission hearing, Staff made the unprecedented action of including an agenda amendment that resulted in the Commission adopting relatively loose language regarding that the Applicant must get a clearance from the CRA (or, now, Planning Department Staff who handle redevelopment) before obtaining a building permit. I do not know why this was treated as an "emergency" under the Brown Act, allowing for a sudden agenda addition, when Staff had known of the issue for many, many months. In any case, the required Redevelopment Findings (not yet made) are at odds with a Categorical Exemption, Class 32.<sup>6</sup>*

In an email to me from City Planning's Nicholas Ayars on 11/5/2019, he explained to me that the City must process any approvals and granting under the Redevelopment Plan. The density bonus is a discretionary, not a ministerial action and a public hearing would be required. For Council to approve a CE on February 4, when none of this Plan approval process has been undertaken, is simply not permitted under CEQA.

*Hello Jean,*

*The technical modification you mentioned requested the addition of a Condition of Approval that requires the applicant to obtain approval from the CRA/LA or the Department of City Planning, as the successor to the Community Redevelopment Agency, prior to the issuance of any building permits. As the project site is located within the Exposition/University Park Redevelopment Project Area and subject to all of the requirements of the plans, this condition ensures that the project will be reviewed to determine its compliance with the applicable Redevelopment Plan. Effective November 11, 2019, pursuant to Ordinance 186,325, the Department of City Planning will assume the land use authority for these Redevelopment Plans and will review projects in the remaining Redevelopment Project Areas and ensure the ongoing implementation of the Unexpired Redevelopment Plans.*

*My apologies if I was unclear during our phone call, but the process of determining project compliance with the Redevelopment Plans is based on the review of City Planning staff assigned to our Redevelopment Unit. Projects that are determined to require a discretionary action will be required to follow the public hearing/notification process as well as make the findings required by Ordinance*

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<sup>6</sup> Laura Meyers, email, 11/16/2019, to Nicholas Ayars, City Planning

*186,325. After the transfer of land use authority, Giselle Corella is the staff member from City Planning assigned to supervise review of projects within the active Redevelopment Project Areas.*

*For more information regarding the transfer of land use authority and the processes related to the review of the projects within the active Redevelopment Project Areas, please see the attached Ordinance.<sup>7</sup>*

We urge the Council to uphold the appeal and rescind the CE and begin review under CEQA. At the very least the Council should not permit a CE when there are administrative discretionary processes that are required but have not occurred.

The Redevelopment Plan is an essential overlay to guide development in this area. It was created because of a finding of blight and has had several amendments since 1969. For the City to ignore its responsibilities under the Plan and press forward with a CE cannot be justified.

Overlays are critical tools to achieve long range planning goals. They are not easily created and require substantial investment in seeking public and governmental approval. The City or State create overlays when the requirements under the adopted Code do not suffice to attain development goals and objectives.

The entire history of planning for the future of University Park has entailed numerous overlays due to the unique environment and consideration of its context.

The City has continued to stick its head in the sand relevant to the substantial evidence in the record to show clearly a categorical exemption does not apply because the project falls within the exception under Section 15300.2.

*This class is not intended for projects that would result in any significant traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality impacts.*

*A CE should not be issued when there are unusual circumstances creating the reasonable possibility of significant effects; The project may result in damage to scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within an officially designated scenic highway;*

*A categorical exemption should not be issued when there are sensitive issues and the project fails to comply with the redevelopment plan and the south community stated objectives. To permit a CE in this case would cause irreparable and irreversible harm to the environment<sup>8</sup>*

The City has completely ignored the substantial evidence in the record and, in an unfathomable turn of events, AZA Chu has stated before the CPC and PLUM that “there is no substantial evidence that an exception pursuant to CEA Guidelines applies.” This defies the record.

Substantial evidence is defined in the CEQA statute to mean “facts, reasonable assumptions predicated on facts, and expert opinion supported by facts” (14 CCR § 15064.7(b)).

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<sup>7</sup> E mail, November 5, 2019, from Nicholas Ayars to Jean Frost.

<sup>8</sup> Letter from Roland Souza, President, West Adams Heritage Association, December 19, 2019, (WAHA) to ZAA Henry Chu



AZA Henry Chu statement is not fact based and ignores the extensive information provided by City entities, expert consultants, USC, and the fact based testimony of stakeholders. It also ignores the site plan review compatibility analysis AZA Chu himself provided in his own May 17, 2019 decision that found the development incompatible. He later reversed this position before the CPC after the developer made some minor adjustments that were cosmetic but not substantive.

## **FAILURE TO MEET THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS OF CEQA**

**(c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances<sup>9</sup>**

**(d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway<sup>10</sup>**

According to the CEQA Guidelines, substantial evidence means “enough relevant information and reasonable inferences from this information that a fair argument can be made to support a conclusion, even though other conclusions might also be reached.”

Substantial evidence, which is defined in the CEQA statute to mean “facts, reasonable assumptions *predicated on facts, and expert opinion supported by facts*” (14 CCR § 15064.7(b)).

*The Class 32 “Infill” Categorical Exemption (CEQA Guideline Section 15332), hereafter referred to as the Class 32 Exemption, exempts infill development within urbanized areas if it meets certain criteria. The class consists of environmentally benign infill projects that are consistent with the General Plan and Zoning requirements. This class is not intended for projects that would result in any significant traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality impacts.*

*A CE should not be issued when there are unusual circumstances creating the reasonable possibility of significant effects; The project may result in damage to scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within an officially designated scenic highway;*

*A categorical exemption should not be issued when there are sensitive issues and the project fails to comply with the redevelopment plan and the south community stated objectives. To permit a CE in this case would cause irreparable and irreversible harm to the environment.”<sup>11</sup>*

As the Title 14. California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3. Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act states:

*(a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located -- a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive*

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<sup>9</sup> 15300.2. Exceptions

<sup>10</sup> 15300.2. Exceptions (d)

<sup>11</sup> Roland Souza, Letter from Roland Souza, President, West Adams Heritage Association, December 19, 2019, (WAHA) to ZAA Henry Chu

*environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.*

*(b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.*

*(c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.<sup>12</sup>*

*(d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.*

and

*(f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.*

The record shows substantial, fact-based evidence from City entities, experts in planning, land use and preservation, detailed testimony by affected stakeholders, realty and rental experts, and others. I was present at both the CPC hearing and the PLUM hearing where City staff turned a deaf ear to the record and asserted that there was no substantial evidence in the record. This is simply not true.

In fact, the AZA Chu's initial May 17, 2019 decision cited below bears witness to the incompatibility of this project.

*Findings that the arrangement of buildings and structures will be compatible with the existing and future development on adjacent and neighboring properties cannot be made. P.17*

*The physical challenges of the surrounding multi-family structures west of the site immediately abutting the subject property, the one-story child care center, as well as the east portion of the site, which abuts a two-story building, Institute for Multimedia Literacy, and associated parking lot used by the University of Southern California creates challenges for the project to be compatible....A view from St. James place looking south towards the project site, provides shows a rendering of the development that walls itself off from the general public due to the podium and above grade parking level. While there are active uses above, the development appears to separate and wall itself from the public right of way and while not appearing to give the separation of each building and break up of the massing..." P 19*

*The open areas being placed on the rooftop would create uses that are atypical of surrounding development and being in active use on the rooftops of each of the seven buildings that would potentially affect surrounding uses through noise and music. P.20*

*The project's scale and massing, in addition to the podium level add to a development that would not be comparable to any residential project in the immediate area. In addition to the height and massing, though not deviating from the Code, the rooftop amenity would overwhelm those multi-family structures*

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<sup>12</sup> 15300.2. Exceptions

*immediately abutting the subject property on Severance Street, as shown on the overall Elevations. As such, the finding that the arrangement of the building and associate components of this finding cannot be made. P 20*

*The projects residential levels are on the second, third and fourth floors with the roof decks proposed for each building will be atypical of any development in the immediate area and in the residential zone. P 19<sup>13</sup>*

What is particularly disturbing is the statement made by the AZA Henry Chu and also in writing that “there is no substantial evidence that an exception pursuant to CEQA Guidelines applies.”<sup>14</sup> This statement is not fact based. He himself provided his own expert analysis of the projects incompatibility in his decisions of May 19. And none of the issues he noted were addressed by the minor cosmetic changes made by the developer which consisted of screening and stuccoing the metal garage podium, adding a small entrance on Adams, and moving the number and placement of the roof decks. None of these changes mitigate the issues that he himself and numerous others raised and further, the attempt to mitigate the impacts of this project raise the issue of mitigating a CE. This confirms that a CE is not permitted.

The City in its entire process has ignored the impacts of this project. The oversized and incompatible development could adversely impact the historic significance of the surrounding historic resources, both at a project level and cumulatively. The assessments by the developer’s consultant (HRG) first examined only the site itself and argued that since it was taking a parking lot and turning it into housing, there was no impact. Secondly HRG provided another analysis that stated that the impacts to the surrounding resources did not exist because they retained their historic eligibility and their architectural elements were not affected. Again, the consultant has narrowed its view to not see the severe and irreparable impacts (as experts have documented) should this project be built in its present form.

The HRG consultant erred in their limitation of what are impacts. Similarly, when Caltrans proposed to build a 55 foot concrete exit way adjacent to St. John’s Episcopal Cathedral, Caltrans alleged that since no part of St. John’s architecture was touched, there were no impacts, an argument that was challenged by NUPCA and for the record robustly overturned by the SHPO. (It was established by legal action that an EIR was required, even though no stone of St. John’s was touched nor its historic eligibility impacted.)

The entire basis on which the consultant HRG argued “no impacts” is not sustainable in a court of law. Nor should it be sustainable by the ZA, the CPC and City Council. There are unique and unusual circumstances in which this project is undertaken. In addition to its being on Adams Boulevard, a City scenic highway, it is surrounded by overlays and monuments that provide a fragile environmental setting. Individually and cumulatively, if this project is built in its present form there will be severe and irreversible impacts.

The City recognized the uniqueness of this University Park environment first by establishing the Hoover Redevelopment Plan, amended it at least three times over decades to adapt it to present needs, and establishing the North University Park Specific Plan, the University Park Historic Preservation Overlay Zone, and dozens of historic cultural monuments. The State established four National Register historic districts.

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<sup>13</sup> Letter of Determination Decision, AZA Henry Chu, May 17, 2019

<sup>14</sup> That AZA Chu could advise the CPC, PLUM and Council that “there is no substantial evidence that an exception pursuant to CEQA Guidelines applies” is misleading and simply not supported by the record.

These overlays were part of an understanding that this was an area that required unique recognition and planning tools beyond what code provided. In the 1960s there was an acknowledgement of blight and under recognition of the context of this neighborhood. Over time this lack of understanding was supplanted by greater research, knowledge and comprehension of the significance of this area in the history of Los Angeles. The project site itself was the home of Mark Sibley Severance and Caroline Severance in "the big red house" featured in Mark Regan's 'Mansions of Los Angeles.' So even this site itself has a linkage to what is the essential character of University Park.

In creating additional overlays it was understood that the CRA Redevelopment Plan would 1. Offer protections to our historic resources; 2. Insure compatibilities in the character defining features of the area and 3. That the manner in which the historic resources were perceived and operated would not be impacted by new development.

Along with the creation of numerous overlays, the North University Park Community Association (NUPCA) was founded which identified four quadrants that were interrelated and provided context in which this site is located. The NUPCA representative to the Exposition/University Park CRA Project Laura Meyers has commented separately and expertly to the record.

We affirm the comments already in the record by the NUPCA Representative, along with experts Mitzi March Mogul, Jim Childs, David Raposa, Brian League of USC, the Adams Severance Coalition, the West Adams Heritage Association and the many others who are seeking, as stated in the South Community Plan, the goal of *Protecting residential neighborhoods from increased development pressure*

*LU4-1 Architectural Compatibility. Seek a high degree of architectural compatibility and landscaping for new infill development to protect the historical and architectural character and scale of existing residential neighborhoods, including front yard fence location, design, and materials.*

We ask that the City Council set aside the categorical exemption issued for this project which is not the appropriate level of environmental review.



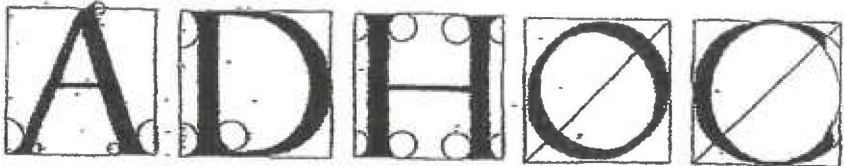
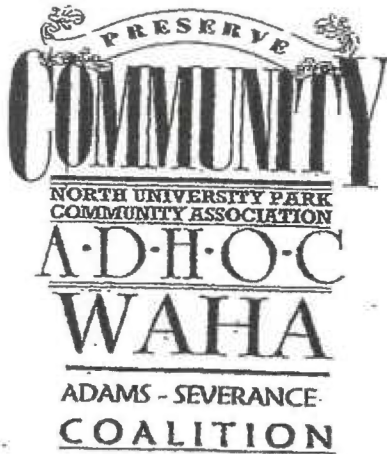
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Member, CRA Interagency and Community Task Force on Historic Preservation  
Chair, Adams Normandie 4321 Project Area Committee, 1979-1084, 1986-2000  
Chair, University Park HPOZ, 2000-2019  
Vice President, Preservation, West Adams Heritage Association



Item 24



ADAMS DOCKWEILER HERITAGE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

COUNCIL FILE 19-1603  
Case No. ZA-2018-2453-CU-DB-SPR-1A  
ENV-2018-2454-CE  
Project Site: 758-832 West Adams Boulevard

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FEB - 4 2020

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

February 01, 2020

Honorable members Los Angeles City Council,  
Planning and Land Use Management Committee

I am writing in response to a letter submitted to the administrative public record by DLA Piper LLP (1/17/20) attorneys for the developer-Applicant Bob Champion: Attorney Andrew Brady's comments found on page 8, section-v, "The Appeal's Claim that it is based on Expert Opinion is Irrelevant and Unfounded" claims that I am not an "expert" but am 'merely being a member of a community association.... claiming falsely to being a preservation consultant.' His claim is both wrong and insulting.

As the Appellant, on behalf of the North University Park Community Association (N.U.P.C.A.) and the Adams-Severance Coalition I speak as a historic preservation consultant and have for the past 35 years. City State and Federal administrators have received my comments and my record of preservation advocacy in South Central Los Angeles is second to none.

I am forwarding a curriculum vitae that certainly fulfills the criteria required as professional qualifications as used by the National Park Service's Code of Federal Regulations, 36 CFR Part 61. Since most of my consulting has been on behalf of the community I have included expanded examples of the work performed to add to the context in which it was supplied. My submission although lengthy does not reflect the whole of my work experience.

CURRICULUM VITAE

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Fine Arts / Film Major  
Chouinard Institute of the Arts (CALARTS) 1967

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION EXPERIENCE

When in 1978 my wife, Jean Sarah Frost, and I bought an old, worn but affordable house near the campus of the University of Southern California I was blissfully unaware of the very concept of "historic preservation". A short time later however my life-course as a maker of educational and documentary films was overtaken and redirected when the Los Angeles Unified School District illegally bulldozed the nearby historic Childs Mansion.

We joined with other outraged neighbors who formed the North University Park Community Association (N.U.P.C.A.) to protect our immediate historic neighborhood. Many of us then formed the West Adams Heritage Association (W.A.H.A.) to protect the larger historic areas south of the Santa Monica Freeway. Some of us understood the need for an even larger organizational voice to speak to citywide issues and helped in the founding of the Los Angeles Conservancy.

In a few brief years I had come from "unaware" to committed. Committed, as a steward, in protecting our community's cultural and architectural history. The many skills I honed as a filmmaker were well suited to my new cause, especially, research, photography, analytical thinking, and perseverance. Many of my neighboring homeowners lacked the financial resources necessary to employ any "qualified" historian, others lacked the vision, so we founded the Adams Dockweiler Heritage Organizing Committee, A.D.H.O.C. a 501c3 non-profit to serve as the grass-root local advocate for historic preservation designation and protections under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The majority of the following A.D.H.O.C. designations were done at no charge to the homeowners and most are located in North University Park. Please note that the use of \* indicates a collaboration with other historic preservation consultants. In 1995 I started a for-profit historic preservation consulting business, Preservation Video, to assist in funding the A.D.H.O.C. advocacy.

### A.D.H.O.C. DESIGNATIONS:

Certification by the California State Office of Historic Preservation  
National Register Historic Districts

- Proponent, Research & Photography:
  - ST. JAMES PARK National Register Historic District\* 1991
  
- Proponent, Research & Photography
  - TWENTIETH STREET National Register Historic District\* 1991
  
- Proponent, Research & Photography:
  - NORTH UNIVERSITY PARK National Register Historic District\* 2005.

Certification by the Los Angeles City's Cultural Heritage Commission  
Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments 1989-2014

Proponent, Research & Photography

- LA-HCM #407 SEYLER Residence 1894 Queen Anne Victorian
- LA-HCM #408 SEAMAN House 1888 Queen Anne Victorian
- LA-HCM #409 BURKHALTER Residence 1895 Queen Anne Victorian
- LA-HCM #410 LA POWER DISTRIBUTION STATION No.3 1925 Industrial
- LA-HCM #434 STEARNS Residence 1900 Colonial Revival
- LA-HCM #454 CHOUINARD INSTITUTE OF THE ARTS 1929 Art Deco
- LA-HCM #455 CREIGHTON Residence 1896 Colonial Revival
- LA-HCM #456 STIMSON House 1901 Tudor Revival
- LA-HCM #457 TEED House 1893 Victorian-Craftsman
- LA-HCM #466 FOSTER Residence 1889 Queen Anne Victorian
- LA-HCM #467 CHALET Apartments 1923 Craftsman
- LA-HCM #489 ALEXANDER Residence 1888 Eastlake Victorian
- LA-HCM #497 GIBBONS Residence 1892 Queen Anne Victorian
- LA-HCM #498 ARNOLD Residence 1888 Queen Anne Victorian
- LA-HCM #499 HEIMGARTNER Residence 1893 Eastlake Victorian
- LA-HCM #500 KANE Residence 1892 Eastlake Victorian
- LA-HCM #501 SHANNON Residence 1890 Eastlake Victorian
- LA-HCM #507 SHORT Residence 1888 Eastlake Victorian
- LA-HCM #516 ST. JOHN'S Episcopal Church\* 1924 Romanesque
- LA-HCM #519 COCKINS House\* 1894 Queen Anne Victorian
- LA-HCM #560 WRIGHT House 1889 Eastlake Victorian
- LA-HCM #561 ALLEN House 1889 Shingle Style
- LA-HCM #574 PIERCE BROTHERS MORTUARY 1923 Spanish Colonial
- LA-HCM #578 EMANUEL Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church\* 1937
- LA-HCM #583 ZOBELEIN Estate 1937 Mediterranean Revival
- LA-HCM #606 KERCKHOFF House 1906 Tudor Revival
- LA-HCM #607 POWERS Apartments #1 1908 Prairie Style
- LA-HCM #608 POWERS Apartments #2 1908 Prairie Style
- LA-HCM #609 POWERS Apartments #3 1910 Prairie Style
- LA-HCM #610 SHANKLAND House 1896 Colonial Revival-Foursquare
- LA-HCM #662 PERRINE House 1908 Craftsman
- LA-HCM #779 CONNELL Carriage-House 1900 Victorian-Shingle
- LA-HCM #297 WEST ADAMS GARDENS #7 1920 Tudor Revival
- LA-HCM #xxx\* FELIX CHEVROLET Neon-Sign\* 1950 Modern Commercial-Industrial
- LA-HCM #1021 BROWN- GORSLINE House\* 1878 Victorian Italianate
- LA-HCM #1043\* H.KERCKHOFF Residence 1898 Victorian Shingle Style

CONSULTANT ONLY

Certification by United States Forest Service:

SOUTHWEST SHORE National Register Historic District / Big Bear Tract USFS

- CABIN #2 / CABIN #55 / CABIN #78 / CABIN #85 2007-2010

Consultant to insure that the Projects conform to established historic preservation concepts, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards & Guidelines as required by the California State Office of Historic Preservation and was consistent with the Architectural Standards as approved by the District Management Plan under the administrative authority of the United States Forest Service.

## COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

- Chair, Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency / Adams-Normandie 4321 Project Area Committee's Housing and Planning Sub-Committee 1990-2000.

The Community Redevelopment Agency arrived in University Park almost simultaneously with Jean and myself. When we understood the power of their administrative authority on land-use issues, especially their impact on historic resources, we began a twenty-year engagement in which I was elected to the PAC six consecutive times. During my tenure as H&P Sub-Committee Chair I reviewed all Building & Safety permits for exterior work throughout the Project Area for not just compliance with both LA City and CRA code requirements but also for compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for all of the affected historic resources.

To better facilitate a more positive understanding between the Agency's process and the issues of the community I formed a select committee to draft a program for design guidelines that would articulate and illustrate specific requirements for the needed compliance issues. The draft was revised by the Agency's executive architect, John Kaliski, and adopted by the CRA Board and implemented. The AN-4321 Urban Design Program was the first and only community-initiated set of guidelines ever empowered by the CRA. The document states:

"INTRODUCTION: The Adams Normandie 4321 Urban Design Program was prepared by the joint Adams Normandie Project Area Committee and the Community Redevelopment Agency. The elements within the program serve to reinforce the physical character of the community by promoting the development that is compatible with and enhances existing structures and neighborhoods.

OBJECTIVES: The objectives of the Urban Design Program are consistent with the objectives of the Adams Normandie 4321 Redevelopment Plan and draw upon the development review experience of the community and the Agency since the adoption of the Redevelopment Plan. The objectives that have guided the formation of the guidelines are:

- To provide an instrument to protect and enhance the quality of the physical character of the project area;
- To ensure that new construction and rehabilitation is consistent with the established development pattern of the area;
- To assist developers in formulating plans that are acceptable for the community;
- To provide developers with an understanding of community concerns regarding the physical form of the area



- Enforcement of mitigations for an adverse environmental effect under Sec 106, NEPA, CEQA Sec. 4(f).

On January 18 1995 the AN-4321 PAC voted to "request that appropriate officials enforce the revised mitigations of the Cal Trans I-110 Terminus EIR." This action was taken in

response to the failure of Caltrans, FHWA and the City of Los Angeles "to restore and preserve the historic ambience along Adams Boulevard and Figueroa Street, in compliance with Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act.

On behalf of the PAC and ADHOC I had been advocating for the enforcement of the approved mitigation since the agreement in 1991. However it was my appeal for help from then State Senator Diane Watson that overcame the inertia. Working with Architectural Historian Diane Kane of Caltrans' Environmental Planning for the next several years we were finally able to force the City to complete their responsibility for the mitigations that included the installation of 33 UM-1906 reproduction historic light standards. To facilitate this action a new 3-section reproduction to replace the 11-segment originals were created by Union Metal of Canton Ohio, the same manufacturer of the original light standards. This unexpected synergistic replica is now being utilized throughout the city to reduce the high maintenance costs of the original.

- Chair-Secretary, Los Angeles Department of City Planning's University Park Historic Preservation Overlay Zone Board. 2000-2008.

A.D.H.O.C.'s quest for an ever-larger voice in local historic preservation issues successfully sought the termination of CRA when their mandate expired in 2000. Working with CD-1 City Councilman Mike Hernandez we were able to empower the University Park Historic Preservation Overlay Zone. As the historic-preservation representative of the Los Angeles City Cultural Heritage Commission I was the first UP-HPOZ Board appointment.

When the University Park H.P.O.Z. Board convened it immediately began the process of adopting a Preservation Plan as required by the City's Ordinance. University Park was the 10<sup>th</sup> historic overlay zone created since the inception of the concept in 1980, however during the preceding twenty years of city wide implementation there had not been any preservation plan developed by either an HPOZ Board or the LA Planning Department itself. Undeterred, our University Park Board moved forward and adopted the AN-4321 Urban Design Program as its' intermediate standard.

Throughout the following year and with no participation from the Planning Department our Board included the evolving draft preservation plan in its public hearings, as required by the Brown Act. With a grant from the West Adams Heritage Association for printing, the completed final draft was presented to the Cultural Heritage Commission and we were rewarded with their approval. When our UP-Board presented to the City Planning Commission the result was quite different.

The Commission, amazed that our Board could have generated such a work product without the City's assistance, was posed to adopt the Plan when the Director of Planning intervened. Stating that if every HPOZ Board created their own Plan format the Department

staff could be administratively overwhelmed and that they therefore needed time to create a citywide "template" Plan that could be customized for each unique HPOZ. The Commission acquiesced and our Board went back to work to integrate our efforts into the new template. Three years and 14-public hearings latter on July 15, 2005 our revised plan was finally approved. Knowing the limitations of staff I volunteered to provide the necessary local photo documentation, for all of the 308 photo-illustrations that illuminate the University Park Preservation Plan.

In addition to my participation in developing the University Park HPOZ Preservation Plan I served as the "preservation" Board member for my full two-term eight-year appointment, doing the Board's business of applying the Secretay of the Interior's Standards and compliance with CEQA for hundreds of cases involving both minor and major projects. Several projects were award winners including the historic Nolte Garage in-fill development that created an adaptive reuse loft-apartment complex that earned federal tax credits since it was a contributor to the ST. JAMES PARK National Register Historic District.

#### PUBLICATIONS

- 1988-present: Continuing contributor on all things about historic preservation and CEQA, to the W.A.H.A. Newsletter, a monthly publication of the West Adams Heritage Association.
- I became the editor and contributing writer of the bi-lingual CRA / AN-4321 "PAC NEWSLETTER" in 1991. I expanded its' format to include: a series of interviews with leading elected city and county officials, CRA and Planning Department administrators seeking their views on development and historic preservation, a photo series of historic University Park "Then and Now", and feature articles about the evolution historic buildings. After three years CRA terminated its financial commitment and we ceased operation.
- Feature article in Los Angeles Times, October 4, 1997, "The Stucco Wars: An Easy Fix or Eye Sore"\*
- In 2003 A.D.H.O.C. utilizing a grant from the West Adams Heritage Association, I created the "UNIVERSITY PARK CHRONICLE" a limited triple-issue bi-lingual publication in support of the University Park Historic Preservation Overlay Zone Board's goals, objectives, and activities.

#### AWARDS:

- 1998: University of Southern California's COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER AWARD.
- 1999: City of Los Angeles Historic Preservation Award of Excellence *"The Mayor and the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission hereby recognize the outstanding contribution to preservation by Jim Childs"*.

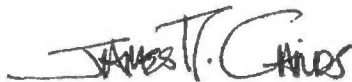
- 1999: CALTRANS Excellence in Transportation Award, Category 9: Historic Preservation/Cultural Enhancement, Project: Adams-Figueroa Historic District, Presented To: Jim Childs *"in recognition of your outstanding contribution to this award winning project."*
- 2000: California Preservation Foundation's PRESIDENT'S AWARD to Adams Dockweiler Heritage Organizing Committee *"In Recognition of Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Historic Preservation"*
- 2009: West Adams Heritage Association's MARTIN WEIL AWARD, for life time achievements in historic preservation.

In closing I must note that it is a sad day when unsupported assertions are cast about simply to impugn another's integrity and undermine their credibility in order to game an advantage before administrative decision makers. The comments that I made as a historic preservationist were rendered by me not as a hireling but as a concerned citizen. Concerned about the failure of the Department of City Planning to process their CEQA responsibilities in a manner transparent to the public.

I find, after many recent examples that the Planning Department has now contrived to expedite their lead agency administrative duties under CEQA by issuing blanket CE environmental clearances. This current CE epidemic conveniently allows Planning not to publicly publish environmental notices that can alert a community to possible impacts. That is certainly an issue in this case, simply proclaim compliance by obfuscating the facts and the truth will be lost.

It does not take a historic preservationist such as myself to review this project for a 500 bedroom student dormitory complex of 1,000 or more students four stories high and featuring a giant club-house at its prominent corner location to understand that there will be possible impacts to the surrounding communities. That conclusion can be arrived with nothing more than common sense.

So as a professional historic preservation consultant with common sense I ask you to join with me in the factual and obvious observation that this out of context project might have potential negative impacts and therefore a CE is inadequate for purposes of CEQA and should be rescinded and a new and higher environmental review be undertaken.



JAMES R. CHILDS, Vice President North University Park Community Association,  
N.U.P.C.A.

Email: [jeanjim2341@att.net](mailto:jeanjim2341@att.net) Work: (213) 747-2526  
2341 Scarff Street, Los Angeles, California 90007

Item 24

**MITZI MARCH MOGUL**  
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONSULTANT**  
1725 Wellington Road Los Angeles, CA 90019 323/734-9980 Mogulink@gmail.com

February 2, 2020

Re: 806 West Adams, ZA-2018-2453-CU-DB-SPR, ENV-2018-2454-CE  
Appeal of the CE to City Council

RECEIVED  
FEB - 4 2020  
BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Via email and by hand

Los Angeles City Council  
c/o City Clerk Holly L. Wolcott, [CityClerk@lacity.org](mailto:CityClerk@lacity.org), [www.LACouncilComment.com](http://www.LACouncilComment.com)  
City Hall, Room 395  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Re: CF 19-1603  
Case No. ZA-2018-2463-CU-DB-SPR-1A  
Environmental No. ENV-2018-2454-CE, CD9

Honorable Members of the City Council:

This letter is being submitted as an addendum to the one previously submitted by me dated January 9, 2020.

To recap, I have been asked by the North University Park Community Association (NUPCA) and the Adams Severance Coalition (ASC) to address the issues regarding the project located at 806 W. Adams Boulevard and 2610 Severance Street. I am a Historic Preservation Consultant with more than 30 years in practice in Los Angeles. I want to be absolutely sure that my comments and expert professional opinion regarding the project are clear to everyone who may be involved in reviewing this project

I am deeply concerned about the Historic Assessment Report Addendum submitted on January 16, 2020 by Historic Resources Group. The Report concludes that ALL of the neighboring historic resources will remain intact, that none will be demolished or materially altered. However, the Report still fails to adequately address secondary, indirect impacts. Impacts such as shade/shadow, noise, context and perception, as well as imposition on established residents and property owners, etc, are very real possibilities. The oversized and incompatible development could adversely impact the historic significance of the surrounding historic resources, both at a project level and cumulatively. When performing an assessment or review of a property, especially in an area that has so many historic resources as the University Park/West Adams District, it is essential—and customary—to examine all of the potential impacts on those other historic properties. This is specifically referenced in the CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2(f).

The issue is not whether there is proof that negative impacts will occur, but whether there is a fair argument that the project may have such an impact. There is no ironclad definition of what constitutes a negative effect and that if there is a disagreement among experts, the higher standard shall be adopted and, "the Lead Agency shall treat the effect as significant and prepare an EIR." (Section 15064 (b), (g))



To recap my original letter, there is no question that the secondary impacts of the project on adjacent and neighboring historic resources (which include the Kerckhoff Residence, Ezra Stimson House, Mount St. Mary's Doheny Campus/Chester Place Historic District, St. Vincent DePaul Church, the St. James Park National Register District, the CRA surveyed Fraternity/Sorority Row District, and many private residences on Severance and Scarff Streets) will have a negative effect on the aforementioned resources and possibly others unnamed. These resources have qualified for their status under rigorous sets of guidelines and they deserve more consideration than they have been given, either by HRG or the City of Los Angeles.

The preservation of historic resources in contemporary settings already requires the willing suspension of disbelief in order to understand what they represent. CEQA was established to ensure that every possible legal avenue for protection is methodically pursued. The conclusion of the HRG Report offers no evidence that there will be no secondary impacts and does not even make an attempt to discuss the possible secondary impacts. I disagree completely with their statements and conclusion.

I hope that I have made my position very clear and that the City will follow CEQA law, perform the required reviews and make the necessary changes to the project that will result in either no impacts or very low impacts to the recognized historic resources.

Sincerely,

*Mitzi March Mogul*

Mitzi March Mogul

Cc: Sherilyn Correa ([sherilyn.correa@lacity.org](mailto:sherilyn.correa@lacity.org)) CD9, Luciralia Ibarra [luciralia.ibarra@lacity.org](mailto:luciralia.ibarra@lacity.org) CD8, Gerald Gubatan CD1 ([gerald.gubatan@lacity.org](mailto:gerald.gubatan@lacity.org)), [andrew.pennington@lacity.org](mailto:andrew.pennington@lacity.org) CD3  
NUPCA, Jim Childs

Item 24

**Jean Frost**

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**From:** catherine m estrada <simpaticostudiola@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 3, 2020 7:34 PM  
**To:** Jean Frost  
**Subject:** Fwd: Public Comment Submission Validation - Council File No.: 19-1603

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** <[Clerk.PublicComment@lacity.org](mailto:Clerk.PublicComment@lacity.org)>  
**Date:** Mon, Feb 3, 2020, 7:32 PM  
**Subject:** Public Comment Submission Validation - Council File No.: 19-1603  
**To:** <[simpaticostudiola@gmail.com](mailto:simpaticostudiola@gmail.com)>

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BY: @

To [simpaticostudiola@gmail.com](mailto:simpaticostudiola@gmail.com),

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## Public Comment Submission Validation

Your Public Comment is now pending. For security purposes, please confirm your submittal by clicking on 'Click here to Validate' button below:

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**Council File Number:** 19-1603

### Comments for Public Posting:

As an Angeleno, homeowner, taxpayer and lover of historic places, specifically the University Park neighborhood, I'm not against progress. However, this project is in no way acceptable to my neighborhood. The density, magnitude and architectural design is not conducive to the Historic West Adams neighborhood. Fact based arguments to this project by experts have been submitted and seem to be ignored. Public opinion and relevant ordinances and regulations have also had no impact on the approval by the PLUM committee. According to the Los Angeles City Planning Newsletter, "there have been new guidelines adopted by the City Planning Committee for new projects and substantial building alterations...The 360 Degree Design principles encourage development that is integrated with the built and natural environment and supports Angelenos' health." A project of this density and magnitude does not qualify. There should be no one above compliance to city ordinances, regulations or plans. Yet, this has been approved. Please, don't turn a deaf ear and a blind eye to this when there are so many fact based evidences, plans and regulations supporting the negative impact of this enormous project. When this occurs, it seems a mockery of the process, obstruction of justice and abuse of power. This project should not have a categorical exemption or move forward as is.

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If the above button is not clickable or is broken, please copy and paste the entire URL (minus any spaces) into your browser window.

<https://cityclerk.lacity.org/Confirmation/?EmailConfirmation=2&c=8864B3AF-F4E8-4BA6-A7FB-059B95AE4A91&em=simpaticostudiola@gmail.com>

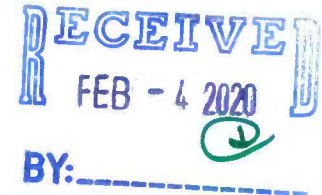
If you DO NOT want to submit this public comment, simply ignore this E-mail and do not click on the link above.

Thank you,

Office of the City Clerk  
Council & Public Services Division  
City of Los Angeles  
<https://clerk.lacity.org/council-and-public-services>

Item 24

Case: ZA-2018-2453-CU-DB-SPR-1A  
Environmental: ENV-2018-2454-CE-2A



Dear Council Members

We are longtime student housing providers and 30-year residents of University Park, and we're greatly concerned about noise from this project's rooftop "amenity spaces." Their inclusion in the project makes a Categorical Exemption inadequate and inappropriate.

The planned seven (eight?) rooftop party decks are not typical of – or compatible with – our residential neighborhood. In fact, there is no precedent. As city planners stated on Page F-9 of their Findings, "there are no rooftop amenities similar to the subject property."

The Planning Commission attempted to mitigate rooftop noise by imposing in its Conditions of Approval the following restriction: "The rooftop amenity spaces are limited to the following hours: 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Sunday through Thursday, and 7 a.m. to 12.00 midnight Friday and Saturday."

However, the prospect of seven rooftop parties occurring simultaneously each weekend, a block from our home, is unacceptable even if the partying ends at 10 p.m. or midnight. It will be especially devastating for residents of the project's immediate neighbor to the north, across Adams Boulevard, where more than 100 subsidized apartments run by the Retirement Housing Foundation would directly face the project's "clubhouse".

The commission's attempt at noise mitigation proved that a Categorical Exemption is inadequate. So did the Finding that the rooftop decks are without precedent in the neighborhood. As Page 13 of the project's Environmental Report notes, "A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances." This project's party decks are beyond unusual – they would be unique to the neighborhood.

Before the Planning Commission imposed its hours-of-use restriction, the Zoning Administrator had initially denied the project's Site Plan Review, citing concern over party-deck noise. Rather than offering a solution, the Applicant responded that the presence of USC's Fraternity Row, south of the project, was evidence the site was not in a "quiet, family-oriented residential neighborhood."

That response revealed a gross misunderstanding – or disregard – of the residential uses on all four sides of the project. It also undermined the Applicant's claim that the project is general, multi-unit housing and not the high-density student housing it so obviously is designed to be.

Jim and Janice Robinson

27 St. James Park

Los Angeles, CA 90007