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Public Comments Not Uploaded Response of Venice V Hotel to Appeal ENV2021-2021-7224-CE

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Reply-To: clerk.plumcommittee@lacity.org

To: "clerk.plumcommittee@lacity.org" <clerk.plumcommittee@lacity.org>

Cc: Elizabeth Peterson - EPGLA <elizabeth@epgla.com>

Good afternoon-

I represent the Venice V Hotel, and the appeal of the West LA APC's grant of the V's liquor license will be before the Committee this Tuesday, June 18, 2024.

Please note the document below as a brief response of the Venice V Hotel to the issues raised in the appeals. We will be making an oral presentation as well.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

Daffodil Tyminski
Attorney for the Venice V Hotel



Response of Venice V Hotel to Appeal ENV2021-2021-7224-CE - 2024-06-14.pdf

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Response of Venice V Hotel to Appeal ENV2021-2021-7224-CE

Planning and Land Use Committee Meeting - June 18, 2024

- **The ONLY very narrow issue before this Committee is whether the issuance of this liquor license to a small restaurant and tiny theater is exempt under CEQA.**
The answer is yes; the project is exempt under CEQA, and the appeals should be denied. Even Appellants admit their “appeal is with respect to the environmental clearance only.”
- **Public policy and the local community support the issuance of this liquor license.**
This Committee has a strong track record of protecting and restoring historic projects, and this building – built in 1915, the heyday of Venice Beach – has a storied history, having housed Charlie Chaplain, Clara Bow, and many others over the past century.
- **The Project has over 200 letters of support.**
Adjoining neighbors, long-term residents, true Venice community members, LAPD, the Venice Neighborhood Council, and the local Chamber of Commerce all support this Project.
- **Both the ZA and West LA APC found that a Class I Categorical Exemption to CEQA applies.**
They concluded that because there is no change of use in the Project, and the issuance of a liquor license to a historic restaurant has a negligible impact on the use. Appellants claim incorrectly that “[t]he ZA Determination improperly found that the Project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) under the Class 1 “Existing Facilities” exemption,” asserting that “[t]he uses to which the exemption are being applied are not existing but long-discontinued uses that no longer conform to the City’s zoning code. They represent significant expansion of existing and former uses.” Appellants are simply misstating the facts.
- **The issuance of a liquor license does not have an effect on the environment.**
This is plainly demonstrated under Section 15061(b)(3) of the State Guidelines to Implement the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which states the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing an effect on the environment.
- **Appellants have lost every challenge to this Project in every forum possible.**
After the Department of Building and Safety, the Planning Department, the Housing Department, the Coastal Commission, and the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission, Appellants recast their failed arguments as an environmental appeal, improperly weaponizing CEQA.
- **All City agencies have recognized the use of the building containing the Project as a hotel.**
In an attempt to misdirect the Committee into believing that this project involves a housing issue, Appellants seem to suggest that the building containing the Project is being improperly used as a hotel. It is not. As the California Coastal Commission, which confirmed “that the building has traditionally been a mix of hotel and apartment use per the Certificate of Occupancies (C of O) and in fact no change in use has occurred that would require a CDP [Coastal Development Permit].” These housing determinations are final and not at issue here.
- **Public policy supports the issuance of the liquor license.**
The Project revitalizes a historic restaurant and theater, and the creation of visitor-serving public amenities in the Coastal Zone and in one of the most visited destinations in Los Angeles for tourists and locals.
- **The Appeals should be denied, and the ZA and APC decisions upheld.**