



Apr 21, 2025

**City of Los Angeles
City Council
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012**

**Re: Proposed Housing Development Project at 6266 – 6290 Sunset Boulevard;
CPC-2021-10588-DB-MCUP-SPR-VHCA**

To: submitted electronically via Council file system

Cc: Stephanie Escobar, City Planning Associate, stephanie.escobar@lacity.org; City Clerk's Office, clerk.cps@lacity.org; City Attorney's Office, cityatty.help@lacity.org

Dear Los Angeles City Council,

The California Housing Defense Fund (“CalHDF”) submits this letter to remind the Council of its obligation to abide by all relevant state laws when evaluating the proposed 170-unit housing development project at 6266 – 6290 Sunset Boulevard, which includes 26 units for very low-income households and eight units for low-income households. These laws include the Housing Accountability Act (“HAA”) and the Density Bonus Law (“DBL”).

The HAA provides the project legal protections. It requires approval of zoning and general plan compliant housing development projects unless findings can be made regarding specific, objective, written health and safety hazards. (Gov. Code, § 65589.5, subds. (d), (j).) The HAA also bars cities from imposing conditions on the approval of such projects that would render the project infeasible or reduce the project's density unless, again, such written findings are made. (*Id.* at subd. (d).) As a development with at least two-thirds of its area devoted to residential uses, the project falls within the HAA's ambit, and it complies with local zoning code and the City's general plan. Increased density, concessions, and waivers that a project is entitled to under the DBL (Gov. Code, § 65915) do not render the project noncompliant with the zoning code or general plan, for purposes of the HAA. (Gov. Code, § 65589.5, subd. (j)(3).) The HAA's protections therefore apply, and the City may not reject the project except based on health and safety standards, as outlined above.

Given that the project approval has been appealed on the basis of the environmental review, the City should be aware that AB 1633 amended the HAA so that its definition of a project

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disapproval now includes a failure to certify a sustainable communities environmental assessment (“SCEA”) (Gov. Code, § 65589.5, subd. (h)(6)(J).) In other words, if the Council remands this to the City Planning Commission for further environmental study, or otherwise fails to certify the SCEA, this action may constitute a disapproval of the project pursuant to the HAA.

CalHDF also writes to emphasize that the DBL offers the proposed development certain protections. The City must respect these protections. In addition to granting the increase in residential units allowed by the DBL, the City must not deny the project the proposed waivers and concessions with respect to the averaging of floor area, density, open space, and parking over the project site; vehicular access from a less restrictive zone to a more restrictive zone; floor area ratio; non-residential floor area; side yards; and building to building separation, unless it makes written findings as required by Government Code, section 65915, subdivision (e)(1) that the waivers would have a specific, adverse impact upon health or safety, and for which there is no feasible method to satisfactorily mitigate or avoid the specific adverse impact, or as required by Government Code, section 65915, subdivision (d)(1) that the concessions would not result in identifiable and actual cost reductions, that the concessions would have a specific, adverse impact on public health or safety, or that the concessions are contrary to state or federal law. The City, if it makes any such findings, bears the burden of proof. (Gov. Code, § 65915, subd. (d)(4).) Of note, the DBL specifically allows for a reduction in required accessory parking in addition to the allowable waivers and concessions. (*Id.* at subd. (p).) Additionally, the California Court of Appeal has ruled that when an applicant has requested one or more waivers and/or concessions pursuant to the DBL, the City “may not apply any development standard that would physically preclude construction of that project as designed, even if the building includes ‘amenities’ beyond the bare minimum of building components.” (*Bankers Hill 150 v. City of San Diego* (2022) 74 Cal.App.5th 755, 775.)

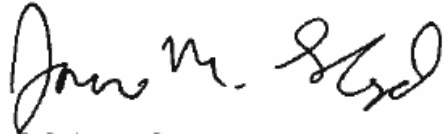
As you are well aware, California remains in the throes of a statewide crisis-level housing shortage. New housing such as this is a public benefit: by providing affordable housing, it will mitigate the state’s homelessness crisis; it will bring new customers to local businesses; it will grow the City’s tax base; and it will reduce displacement of existing residents by reducing competition for existing housing. It will also help cut down on transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions by providing housing in denser, more urban areas, as opposed to farther-flung regions in the state (and out of state). While no one project will solve the statewide housing crisis, the proposed development is a step in the right direction. CalHDF urges the City to approve it, consistent with its obligations under state law.

CalHDF is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation whose mission includes advocating for increased access to housing for Californians at all income levels, including low-income households. You may learn more about CalHDF at www.calhdf.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Dylan Casey', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dylan Casey
CalHDF Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'James M. Lloyd', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

James M. Lloyd
CalHDF Director of Planning and Investigations