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January 31, 2024

Los Angeles City Council
c/o Office of the City Clerk
City Hall, Room 395
Los Angeles, California 90012

Attention: PLUM Committee

Dear Honorable Members:

SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT REGARDING APPEAL OF CASE NO. CPC-2022-5429-GPA-VZC-HD-CUB FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 902-944 WEST 30TH STREET; 3011-3111 SOUTH UNIVERSITY AVENUE; 3042-3126 SOUTH HOOVER STREET; 835-847 WEST 32ND STREET WITHIN THE SOUTH LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY PLAN AREA (CF 23-1434)

The proposed project will replace an existing soccer field (McAllister Field) with a new athletic stadium for the University of Southern California (USC) Women's Soccer and Lacrosse teams. The proposed stadium would consist of three (3) levels with a maximum height of 55 feet, 27,714 square feet of floor area, 2,202 fixed seats and room for 2,458 total occupants including standing room areas. The east side of the stadium consists of a two-story pavilion level with a height of 15 feet. A six-foot-tall fence is proposed along the 30th Street frontage and a continuous 12-foot-tall sports netting system would be installed on the east, north, and west sides of the stadium. The applicant is seeking a General Plan Amendment to change the land use designation on the property from Medium Residential to Community Commercial in the South Los Angeles Community Plan Area, as well as a Vesting Zone Change and Height District Change to change the zoning from R3-1O to (T)(Q)C2-2D-O. The project also includes a Conditional Use permit for the sale and dispensing of beer and wine for on-site consumption during stadium events.

The City Planning Commission approved the project on September 14, 2023. Subsequently, on November 22, 2023, Felipe Caceres on behalf of USC Forward, appealed the City Planning Commission's approval of the project's Conditional Use permit.

On April 19, 2023, prior to the City Planning Commission meeting, Jordan R. Sisson from GK Law and Felipe Caceres from USC Forward submitted comment letters alleging that the project should require a subsequent EIR because the project is not within the scope of the prior Specific Plan EIR and because a significant change in the circumstances involving the USC Specific Plan has occurred, specifically an increase in student enrollment. Additionally, the comment letters contend that while legally the addendum does not need to be circulated, the City should nevertheless exercise its discretion and provide the public with a circulation period to review the CEQA document; that the addendum did not properly analyze the proposed project; and lastly, that a community benefits agreement should be required of the project.

These letters were included in the Staff Recommendation report reviewed and approved by the City Planning Commission on September 14, 2023. The City Planning Commission determined that there was no substantial evidence of any insufficiencies in the CEQA Addendum and that all of the project's potential environmental impacts have been appropriately analyzed, with the conclusion that the project will not have any significant impacts. In addition, CEQA does not impose any time limitations on Addendums to a prior EIR.

For the appeal herein, Felipe Caceres on behalf of USC Forward has submitted the same CEQA comment letters that were previously submitted to and evaluated by the City Planning Commission. Responses to the appellant's comments are provided in detail by the applicant's land use attorney Dale Goldsmith from AGD Land Use, in correspondence dated January 10, 2024 and included in the subject council file. In summary, the Addendum appropriately discloses and analyzes all potential environmental impacts, and the present circumstances do not indicate that a supplemental EIR would be necessary for the project.

In summary, the appeal does not provide any substantial evidence of any significant environmental impacts. In addition, the applicant has addressed that the project is within the scope of the certified EIR and therefore the addendum prepared is appropriate. The applicant also states that increased student enrollment at USC does not trigger a supplemental EIR, a community benefits agreement is not required, and the Addendum adequately analyzed the project's operations. Planning has evaluated the proposed project and determined that the Addendum dated September 2023 appropriately analyzes the project's environmental impacts under CEQA. Therefore, Planning recommends that the Planning and Land Use Management Committee deny the appeal and sustain the City Planning Commission's decision, and to adopt the Addendum as the project's environmental clearance.

Sincerely,

VINCENT P. BERTONI, AICP
Director of Planning



MORE SONG
City Planner