



Etta Armstrong <etta.armstrong@lacity.org>

Council Files 13-0593-S1 & 13-0593: Millennium Hollywood - PLUM meeting and City Council Vote

1 message

Mary Holmes <maryholmes@aol.com>

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To: sharon.gin@lacity.org, etta.armstrong@lacity.org

To be included for the June 18th PLUM Meeting, and the June 19th Council Vote, and public record.

I live and work in Hollywood. I grew up here. I went to Hollywood High School. There's a lot to love about this city, and in many ways, I think Hollywood is better than it's been in many years. It's cleaner. It looks better. A lot of the development I see, I like. But that doesn't make it a good idea to approve anyone who wants to build anything. We need thoughtful planning that allows the people who live and work in this city to thrive. Instead evidence suggests that we are fast creating gridlock and putting a dangerous strain on our already shaky infrastructure. I oppose The Millennium Hollywood Project in its current version because:

1. The Hollywood Community Plan that paves the way for Millennium Hollywood is based on incorrect population projections, and the truthful statistics were never considered nor made available.
2. Even though lobbyists for the developers have spent close to half a million dollars in the first quarter of 2013 alone to promote their project, the general population who will be most impacted by this project remain woefully unaware of its existence. I continue to ask people on the street, in restaurants, hiking, at the post office, in stores, and every where else I go, "Do you know about the skyscrapers in Hollywood?" (My most recent surveys took place June 14th, 15th, and 16th, 2013.) They do not. While informing people within 500 feet of the project conforms to the letter of the law, in this case in particular, it is clearly insufficient to inform those who deserve to know. Finding out anything from the city/council website about it is difficult at best, for those who already know what's going on. For anyone else? Impossible. I'm sure that the letter of the law has been adhered to, whereas both the meaning and intention of The Brown Act have been violated.
3. The last minute change of date for the PLUM Meeting from June 4th to June 18th because the lawyers for Millennium requested a continuance, (without even bothering to offer a reason – I guess they're on better terms with City Hall than the people who live in the city that the council members are elected to serve), created what it intended – that anyone opposed to the project who had already taken time off work, hired babysitters, anyone willing to inconvenience their lives to be heard, either came and could not speak meaningfully to the issues, or had to change their plans when they found out, and did not come at the last minute. The net effect, as the lawyers and developers well know, is that rallying support when the public's voice and opinions are so consistently thwarted and disrespected results in the average citizen giving up, and coming to the very understandable conclusion that government could not care less what they think, so why bother? The disingenuous and jaded tactics employed are as contemptible as they are predictable.
4. I was informed of the original date in a letter from the city. I was not informed by the city of the date change. Again, the consistent inconsistency makes it impossible for the public to have appropriate notice and access to government.
5. The city has not satisfied CALTRANS concerns that this project, as presented and approved by the planning commission, and stated, "we would like to, once again, bring to the City's attention that the project impacts will likely result in unsafe conditions due to additional traffic congestion, unsafe queuing, and difficult maneuvering. As mentioned in our previous letters, these concerns have not been adequately addressed in the EIR. In summary, without the necessary traffic analysis, Caltrans cannot agree that the FEIR substantively identifies and mitigates the Project's impacts to the State highway facilities as required under CEQA."
6. The Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations, Inc., representing 41 resident and homeowner associations spanning the Santa Monica Mountains and over 200,000 constituents, opposes the Millennium Hollywood Project as currently proposed. Federation members unanimously passed a motion opposing the current Project because it is out-of-scale and character to the recently approved Hollywood Community Plan

and will cause excessive cumulative negative impact on the health, safety, traffic and infrastructure of Hollywood and the neighboring hillside communities.

7. All pertinent Neighborhood Councils but one, the one with a board member who is directly employed by Millennium, are opposed to this project as currently proposed.

8. Three pending lawsuits against the Hollywood Community Plan remain unresolved, and moving forward with a project of this scale before they are seems like bad management and an irresponsible waste of taxpayer money.

9. The precedents of TOD projects – as in their colossal failure, and their cost to taxpayers – are an argument AGAINST using TOD as a reason to bulldoze forward. It defies logic that they have been successfully used to gain approval.

10. William Roschen's involvement constitutes a conflict of interest. The co-architect is also the President of the Planning Commission that approved all the variances, the faulty EIR, while ignoring CALTRANS' warnings (and spent at least twenty minutes discussing 100 Metro Passes as a solution to the lack of parking, (intentionally 500 places less than required without one of the many variances). Surely this tests the concept of recusal to the breaking point.

11. The EIR/Developers dismiss the fact that one of the earthquake faults in proximity to the project having been declared active is relevant, since it's half a mile away. What might Caltech say about such extrapolations?

12. According to a lawyer for the developers, (at a neighborhood council meeting I attended), the law says that when a design/building is wildly inconsistent with the area it seeks to occupy, then approval can be denied on that basis alone. How two towers, each over half the height of The Empire State Building can be seen as anything other than wildly, (my word, I believe the actual terminology is much more conservative), is beyond me. Show Millennium's renderings to a kindergarten class and ask them to identify what stands out like two sore thumbs.

13. Los Angeles is not Manhattan, and those who live here and love it don't want it to be. The idea that Los Angeles has to "grow up" and get tall isn't based on any facts. It's a marketing campaign, bought and paid for by people from New York.

14. It's dangerous. The current infrastructure will not support it. The city is already a decade behind on street mitigation reports. The water main system needs to be upgraded, and there is no money for that. Emergency response times are already too slow. How will anyone living in the hills, or those condos for that matter be saved in case of an emergency, let alone a natural disaster? To proceed with this project as is, is tantamount to turning a blind eye to disasters waiting to happen.

15. The Planning Commission has approved a project that has no "plans" with significant variances, over CALTRANS' concerns, that will significantly alter the landscape, look and feel of Hollywood. What's wrong with that (non) picture? Everything.

Mary Holmes