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May 11, 2023

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. ENV-2022-4434-CE FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 956-966 SOUTH VERMONT AVENUE WITHIN THE WILSHIRE COMMUNITY PLAN AREA (CF 23-0343)**

The project involves the demolition of two existing two-story commercial buildings for the construction, use, and maintenance of a new six-story approximately 89 feet high mixed-use building with 90 residential units above approximately 2,915 square feet of commercial space on the ground floor. Nine units will be set aside for Extremely Low Income households. The project proposes to provide 85 vehicle parking spaces in two subterranean levels and a portion of the ground floor.

The Director of Planning approved the project on November 14, 2022. Subsequently, the Supporters Alliance for Environmental Responsibility (SAFER) appealed the Director of Planning's determination to the City Planning Commission. At its meeting of February 9, 2023, the Los Angeles City Planning Commission denied the appeal and upheld the Director of Planning's approval of the project. The City Planning Commission found that the appellant's appeal justification, which primarily concerned potential environmental impacts, did not provide any substantial evidence of any deficiencies in the project's environmental clearance or error in the Director of Planning's determination.

Following the City Planning Commission's denial of the first appeal, SAFER appealed the project's environmental clearance, a Class 32 Categorical Exemption. For the appeal herein, the appellant submitted the same comments 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 environmental consultant, CAJA Environmental Services, in correspondence previously submitted to the City Planning Commission and also included in the subject council file; a summary is provided as follows:

The appellant contends that the City improperly approved the Site Plan Review request for the project because the project does not qualify for a Class 32 Categorical Exemption and thus was not properly analyzed under CEQA. The appellant specifically states that the project does not qualify for a Class 32 Categorical Exemption because the project will have significant air quality, hazardous waste, and energy impacts. However, the project's environmental impacts were fully analyzed in the Categorical Exemption document dated October 2022 prepared by CAJA Environmental Services. As noted in this analysis and the supporting technical data in the Appendices, the project will not exceed any air quality thresholds of significance for construction or operation. As a primarily residential development with ancillary commercial retail/service-type uses, the project will not result in the generation of any significant amounts of hazardous waste. As an urban infill housing and commercial development that will be developed to the latest energy and construction standards, the project will also not result in any wasteful consumption of energy.

It should also be noted that CAJA Environmental Services submitted an updated Class 32 Categorical Exemption document to the subject council file on May 10, 2023. While this document updates various references and background information, the analysis has not substantially changed and the previous conclusions that the project will not have any significant environmental impacts remain the same.

In summary, the appeal does not provide any substantial evidence of any significant environmental impacts. Planning has evaluated the proposed project and determined that it qualifies for a Class 32 Categorical Exemption under CEQA. Therefore, Planning recommends that the Planning and Land Use Management Committee deny the appeal and sustain the City Planning Commission's decision.

Sincerely,

VINCENT P. BERTONI, AICP  
Director of Planning

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'More Song', with a stylized, looping flourish at the end.

MORE SONG  
City Planner