

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Tracy Cook

**Date Submitted:** 05/16/2023 10:23 AM

**Council File No:** 23-0340

**Comments for Public Posting:** Last week Bright Star Charters went before the LAUSD school board and asked for a change in a conditional permit to build one of their schools, Rise-Kohyang, in a residential neighborhood. The school board voted no. This vote signals a shift in Los Angeles, not just in the school board but in the communities it serves. People are tired of their neighborhoods being undermined by buildings that make no sense. They are asking legitimate questions about these buildings and those in leadership who green light builds that defy common sense. For example, Bright Star is mid construction near Beverly & Vermont on a high school that is under enrolled at a location which already has six schools in one square block, and this will be number seven. That Bright Star build is insane by any measure and speaks to a system that props up big moneyed interests. The character of an organization like Bright Star can also be assessed by their moves during the darkest time in our city and nation. In April 2020, in the beginning of the lock down, small businesses were desperate for any financial assistance they could get but due to ridiculous hurdles in the PPP program they were shut out of that needed money. However, the road was paved by Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos for the charter schools to get PPP funds, pain-free of which Bright Star applied and received \$5-10 Million dollars. Remember, Bright Star like all schools did not need it, since Governor Newsom protected the teachers and staff jobs in California. Unfortunately, there were no big money or power players to help a business like a car repair shop on Plummer, a restaurant on Columbus or a hotel on Sepulveda. What happened to them? How many employees did they lose who moved away? What businesses closed in 2020 and never reopened but of course Bright Star collected millions. Now in spring of 2023 communities are calling foul. They don't like what they see when big monied charters plow their way into their neighborhoods like what happened at 14203 Valerio Street with GALS charter. Who helped those neighbors? No one. So, what's their future and other neighborhoods when an under enrolled charter school fails? Who gets the land? What will happen to that building that got shoehorned into a community during declining enrollment by big money? And who wants a vote of yes on their record for a project not needed and could fail? And certainly, may not be approved by LAUSD. These are important question and

The PLUM committee should vote NO on this Bright Star Charter Valor project. It is time to get on the right side of history now.

The insanity of a new build by Bright Star – Rise Kohyang

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpTdAfL049s>

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Sarah Megan Heller

**Date Submitted:** 05/15/2023 04:37 PM

**Council File No:** 23-0340

**Comments for Public Posting:** Dear City Council Members and City Council Planning and Land Use Management Committee Members, I am in opposition to the proposal to build a Brightstar / Valor Charter Elementary School at 15526 Plummer Street. A better use for the site would be a park and museum. The neighborhood needs green space. A school should not be built so close to the 405! Furthermore, a new school is not needed in this area -- 1/3 of a mile from my son's elementary school, which was built only 12 years ago and serves the community well. It is a waste of resources to build schools where they are not needed. Please reject the Letter of Determination issued by City Planning, support the appeals filed and order a full EIR to be conducted before anything is reviewed or approved for this project.

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Francis Laguardia

**Date Submitted:** 05/15/2023 03:29 PM

**Council File No:** 23-0340

**Comments for Public Posting:** Dear City Council Members and City Council Planning and Land Use Management Committee Members, Please reject the Letter of Determination issued by City Planning, support the appeals filed and order a full EIR to be conducted before anything is reviewed or approved for this project. Sincerely, Francis Laguardia

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Fran Potaski

**Date Submitted:** 05/16/2023 09:46 AM

**Council File No:** 23-0340

**Comments for Public Posting:** Council Members and City Council Planning and Land Use Management Committee Members, Please reject the Letter of Determination issued by City Planning, support the appeals filed and order a full EIR to be conducted before anything is reviewed or approved for this project. There are 12 elementary schools in North Hills and only 1 park. Let's do the right thing and restore our newest Historic Cultural Monument and create a park surrounding the site for EVERYONE to enjoy.

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Sarah Megan Heller  
**Date Submitted:** 05/16/2023 12:00 PM  
**Council File No:** 23-0340

**Comments for Public Posting:** I am writing as a parent of two children in LAUSD schools, in opposition to the plan to build an elementary school at 15526 Plummer Street. This is a bad location for a school--right next to the 405 Freeway. I am appalled at the lack of oversight and the wasteful spending of resources demonstrated by the fast tracking of this project. Who is responsible for determining the need for a school in this location? Isn't that the job of City Planning? I am writing to let you know that there is an amazing public school just 1/3 of a mile from the proposed site. It is a regular public school, called Carlos Santana Arts Academy. It has a new building that was built only 12 years ago (behind Sepulveda Middle School). The facilities, staff, teachers, and services are excellent. My son is in 3rd grade there, and he is learning both Spanish and English in the Dual Language Program. He is learning to play the guitar during school, and also is in the Rock Band class after school. The school has some green space where there is an outdoor classroom, a small garden, and where the kids play soccer. There is a STEAM teacher and dedicated classroom, where my son learned to do stop-motion animation and other fun projects. Santana is a community school, which means that they have been given additional resources to serve the community—such as partnering with the LA Food Bank, offering ESL classes to parents, and providing social workers and psychological services to families in need of help. The neighborhood does not need to build another school. There are 12 existing elementary schools in North Hills, a town of 5.5 square miles. If Valor Academy moves closer and grows bigger, Santana's enrollment will shrink as a result. Consequently, Santana will have to lay off teachers, combine multiple grades into single classrooms, and will have more empty classrooms. We do not need schools fighting over students. We need to invest in the schools we have already built—with taxpayer dollars. We need the city to look at the big picture, because this charter school is not. Furthermore, traffic is already gridlocked during school drop off/pick up hours. Valor Academy will be half a block away from Sepulveda Middle School and Carlos Santana Arts Academy -- creating a traffic nightmare. Santana parents will be tempted to avoid Plummer Street and instead approach Santana from the South— dropping their children on the wrong side Columbus Ave or making a U-turn where there is a blind curve.

There will be car accidents and someone may hit a pedestrian. The neighborhood needs green space, not another elementary school. A 60-member community group named the North Hills Preservation Consortium has a competing plan for the property on Plummer Street. They want to transform the property into a museum and build a much-needed park. I am attaching the Needs Assessment Report, which was conducted by LA County. Mission Hills/Panorama City/North Hills have an average of 0.5 park acres per 1,000, while LA County has an average of 3.3 park acres per 1,000 people. They described the need for a park on this particular stretch of Plummer Street as "Very High." The community is in dire need of open space that can be used by everyone. Building a new school on the Plummer Street property is not the best use of the oldest house in North Hills. Thanks to the North Hills Preservation Consortium, the 1914 house has been identified as a Historic Cultural Monument. The Consortium would like to restore the house and create a museum featuring the agricultural legacy of the San Fernando Valley. But most importantly, they want to create a new open space for the entire community. The Valor Academy plan will not restore the house and it will not be open to the public; they will build upon some of the last open space available in North Hills. I hope you appreciate that North Hills is not a good location for this charter school.