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ENV- 2015 - 2026- EIR (Crossroads project)

1 message

David Shultz <david@vitagraphfilms.com>

Tue, Jul 25, 2017 at 4:21 PM

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Crossroads Hollywood Project Comments-David Shultz-Vitagraph Films.pdf

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July 25, 2017

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Dept. of City Planning
City Hall, City of Los Angeles
200 N. Spring Street, Room 750
Los Angeles CA 90012

Case No: ENV – 2015-2026 - EIR

Mr. Huerta,

I am writing to share my observations regarding the proposed Crossroads Hollywood Project DEIR.

I am the President & CEO of Vitagraph Films LLC, an independent theatrical film distribution company, that has been part of Hollywood's independent theatrical distribution landscape since 1999 and has been closely aligned with the American Cinematheque's Egyptian Theatre since the theatre reopened its door's for business in December of 1998 after the renovation and rehabilitation.

I have tried to help the non-profit American Cinematheque through professional contacts I have in the film industry to assist with their public programming, but I have also assisted in securing board members for the organization (which was founded in 1981 and has been an integral part of the city's film culture). Another way I have helped the organization, is by renting the theatre for industry and premiere screenings of the films I am promoting, including screenings for Academy of Motion Picture Sciences and industry guild members during award season. I also recommend it to industry colleagues for the same purpose. One of the key determining factors when selecting a venue for industry screenings, is easy parking for 300-400 cars. **The loss of parking lots available to service the theatre will result in a devastating loss of income for the American Cinematheque which is viewer-supported and relies on this indispensable revenue stream to offset costs associated with running the theatre.**

As you probably know, the 1922 Egyptian Theatre holds a very special place in Hollywood history, as it is the home of the first Hollywood movie premiere. Established by the renowned Hollywood showman, the Egyptian Theatre is an L.A. city declared historic cultural landmark. Because of this history it is an ideal place for us to run premieres.

Additionally, our industry has had a long standing tradition of patronizing historic restaurants in the area. We meet for business purposes and after premieres at places such

as Musso & Frank's (1919), where the great Orson Wells once ate and drank, as well as Miceli's (1949) and the re-fabricated Pig 'n Whistle (original restaurant opened in 1927), because we enjoy the historic atmosphere and the ambience of the legends of Hollywood whose spirits still infuse these spaces. Patronizing these restaurants also requires access to parking. By limiting access to the "old-timers" who still frequent these places, through the elimination of close and easy parking, will put a dent in their business as well. Being a regular in at a business is a priceless experience.

The Crossroads Hollywood Development absolutely must offer public parking as a benefit to the community. It is my understanding that ALL of the surrounding new development basically ONLY has calculated for parking for their own residents and patrons and is not planning to offer parking to visitors to our historic Hollywood Boulevard business district.

I am not in favor of clogging up the streets with a thousand people trying to access events at super-sized night clubs in the 30-story hotel. This is not a good match for this area. It irritates people trying to patronize the surrounding non-nightclub related businesses, to have to push through crowds of drunk teenagers on Las Palmas Avenue who are there to have a wild night out in Hollywood. This is already an unpleasant aspect of coming to Hollywood and when there is an even bigger nightlife quotient emanating from Selma Avenue (a small side street that is questionably planned to be the hotel's valet entrance AND currently a quiet residential corridor), there will be even more bad behavior – and more citizens who ARE NOT looking for a "party," will stop coming into the area. Leaving the Egyptian Theatre after a double feature puts us into the thick of this circus of unpredictable, drug and alcohol fueled potential danger. I personally know many patrons of the theatre who feel that their personal safety is threatened by this element that the Crossroads Hollywood Project is attempting to cash in on with their 22 liquor licenses and numerous live performance permits.

The quick cash the city might get from liquor sales will be paltry compared to the cost of alcohol related crimes and it will further tarnish Hollywood's reputation as a place to avoid. I love the Egyptian Theatre and surrounding restaurants, but what is going on downtown is more dignified and interesting.

I believe this to be a very poor development plan. I grew up in LA and graduated from Venice high school in 1978. Although I have spent the majority of my life working in and frequenting the Hollywood and West Hollywood regions, I lived for seven years (1988-1994) in NYC, working under three mayors (Edward Koch , David Dinkins & Rudolph Giuliani) there, after graduating with a Masters Degree in Public Administration. I moved back to Los Angeles permanently in 1994, but I go back to New York several times a year and I have watched the city change. I have seen the authenticity of certain areas of NYC diminish. Most famously, Times Square. In my opinion, this area no longer gives the narrative of that regions history with the exception of some of the historic theatres. What is the point of making all cities look the same with generic, monolithic housing that is like something out of the worst dystopian sci-fi movie imaginable?

It has to be acknowledged by Los Angeles City Planners, that this city is NOT New York. This is a sprawling city that is too big and too under served by public transportation, to become as dense as New York City. It is a newer city and it was not planned like an old European city or one of our older downtown cities in the US. We have to acknowledge that. Southern California living is not skyscrapers.

I hope that the city can work with this developer to create a project that will fit in more with Hollywood's future. A future that allows people to continue using the businesses that have been there for almost a century, as well as new ones that fit in with what is there. Don't bulldoze now and be sorry later when the fabric of the community is gone and only hoodlums are rewarded with fancy discos and \$1000 minimum bottle service. That isn't what Hollywood needs.

Sincerely,
David Shultz
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