

From: Alexa Iles <alex@mediaart.com>
Sent time: 06/01/2020 11:11:41 AM
To: Mindy Nguyen <mindy.nguyen@lacity.org>
Cc: David Ryu <david.ryu@lacity.org>; mayor.garcetti@lacity.org; councilmember.ofarrell@lacity.org; vince.bertoni@lacity.org; kevin.keller@lacity.org
Subject: ENV-2018-2116-EIR Hollywood Center Project
Attachments: A Skarpelos Comments on DEIR May 2020.pdf

Dear Mindy,

Here attached are my comments as a resident of Hollywood on the DEIR for the Hollywood Center Project.

Please confirm receipt.

Sincerely,

Alexa Iles Skarpelos
6421 La Punta Drive
Hollywood, CA 90068

Alexa Iles Skarpelos

6421 La Punta Drive
Hollywood, CA 90068
Email: alexa@mediaart.com

May 30, 2020

Mindy Nguyen
City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning
221 North Figueroa Street, Suite 1350
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Public Comments
Environmental Case Number: ENV-2018-2116-EIR
State Clearinghouse Number: 2018051002
Project Name: Hollywood Center Project

Dear Ms. Nguyen:

I am a homeowner and twenty-year resident of the Hollywood Dell. I have been an active member of the Hollywood Dell Civic Association since 2000, served on the HDCA Executive Board since 2010, and currently President of the HDCA. I also serve on the Hollywood Community-Police Advisory Board. Over the years I have volunteered with numerous community organizations, projects and events.

To begin, I would like to register my deep disappointment and shock that the decision makers in the City of Los Angeles have ignored the numerous requests from residents and neighborhood organizations to extend the public comment period due to the unusual circumstances around the COVID-19 pandemic. To release this draft environmental impact report in the midst of this crisis, while we are being told to "shelter at home" and allow just 45 days to review thousands of pages in this report, is appalling.

Additionally, to suggest that the report was available to anyone who wanted to review it online, does not address the members of my community who may not have access to a computer at home, or reliable Internet service. The report must be made available and accessible for the public to review. Since your own offices and the public libraries where one might view the documents in person were both closed to the public due to the Mayor's "Safer At Home" orders, the only option was for you to arrange for a printout of the report be delivered to whomever requested it. That's a lot of paper.

I have a lot of questions about how this project will impact my neighborhood. The Hollywood Dell is located a mere block north of the Project site. There has been a lot of development in Hollywood since I came to the area 20 years ago. As a rule, I don't object to thoughtful and appropriate development. However, I also have seen first-hand how lengthy construction efforts for massive projects can cause real and lasting problems for the surrounding community.

- I. **Scale.** 46-story high-rise buildings in an environment of buildings a fraction of that height will result in a huge and long-lasting eyesore for those of us who live and

- work in this area. Why were the applicants allowed to create a design that is so massive in height? Why aren't they being asked to come up with a plan that is more in scale with the existing and proposed projects around the Project site?
- II. **Historic.** One of my great joys is seeing the historic Capitol Records building as I come in and out of my neighborhood. How could this project claim that the historic views of this Hollywood icon will be retained? Seeing it through slivers of openings doesn't really honor its place in Hollywood's history.
 - III. **Traffic.** One of the biggest impacts from the recent development in the Hollywood Entertainment District is the increase in traffic. Since the DEIR fails to provide traffic studies that address the key intersection at Franklin Avenue and Argyle, just a block north of the project, there's a lack of information on how the Project will add to the problem. Why weren't the applicants required to submit something on this? In the previous (2012 DEIR) CALTRANS commented that the traffic analysis didn't include anything looking at the key 101 freeway ramp intersections closest to the Project site. CALTRANS rightly pointed out that there needed to be a traffic analysis to show the projected queue build-up for the on and off-ramps at Argyle, Cahuenga, Gower and Vine Street. That was six years ago. Why haven't the applicants been advised to provide this for the current DEIR?
 - IV. **Transit.** The idea of density forcing Angelenos out of their cars and into public transportation is an idealistic theory. Assuming that 100% of the residents of these buildings will forgo car travel because of the proximity to mass transit is a fantasy. Where are the studies that show the rates of transit usage, and more important, that reveal the continued use of automobiles in similar scale projects with access to comparable mass transit options? How about the very real reluctance to use mass transit after this COVID-19 pandemic?
 - V. **Homeless.** I am a member of the Hollywood Community-Police Advisory Board and I have worked with our LAPD partners in the Hollywood Division to address the key issues in our community. I was quite surprised that there was no mention of the ongoing and overwhelming homelessness crisis that we have been dealing with for the past several years. Hollywood has (as of 2019) approximately 2,953 people un-housed, living on the streets. Many of them are in encampments around the Project site, under the freeway overpasses and ramp embankments. This is a huge problem throughout Los Angeles, but it is front and center in this area. The associated garbage and disease concerns have been amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic. How could this Project ignore such a major issue in the area?
 - VI. **Public Green Space.** One of the great accomplishments of our neighborhood has been the creation of the Franklin Ivar Community Park. It took years and countless volunteer hours to secure the property, create a design (with much public input) and fund the project. One of the reasons that we were so intent on seeing this pocket park completed, was the lack of public green space in Hollywood. The report talks about public spaces, but it doesn't paint a full picture of how green or natural the experience will be for visitors. Providing a cement plaza with a few planters doesn't really create the much needed "park" experience people look for (especially now, in a post COVID-19 reality). How can we ensure that our Franklin Ivar Community Park, the closest park to the Project site, doesn't become

overwhelmed with people and lose its neighborhood charm? What are the requirements for the public spaces? How green will they be?

- VII. **Parking.**The biggest negative by-product of the development boom in the area of Hollywood just south of the Hollywood Dell is the fact that workers and patrons of the businesses use our neighborhood streets for free parking. Again, the reality is that even though there is mass transit, people still use their cars to get to work. What part of the report addresses that concern? There's not enough parking planned onsite for the residents, customers, workers, and hotel guests as it is.

- VIII. **Inclusion.** In general, I was very disappointed at how little consideration was given in the report to the nearby residential neighborhoods like ours. We have struggled over the years with the weird boundary line that falls at Franklin Avenue. LA City Council District 4 (ours) is north of Franklin, while LA City Council District 13 (Project site) is south of Franklin. Many of the issues that affect those of us north of Franklin, originate in the area directly south of Franklin. Just because we don't live in the district of the Project site, doesn't mean it won't be a huge impact on our lives. Where is the outreach effort? Why weren't the sound studies, traffic studies and other impacts measured from our location?

- IX. **Fire.** I have very real concerns about fire danger. With the recent and devastating wildfires, the fact that the hillside is a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) keeps us all on our toes. Our neighborhood streets are typically narrow / substandard widths. They are steep and have lots of sharp curves. That, combined with the limited access points into our neighborhood from the areas where emergency vehicles would come from makes me along with my neighbors very concerned about how quickly the fire and police could arrive on the scene during an emergency. How come the Project site proximity to a VHFHSZ is not addressed in the report?

- X. **Earthquakes.** We have been preparing our neighborhood for what we are told is the inevitable major earthquake event. We have participated in evacuation exercises, my husband and I have both taken CERT training and we work public safety officials to prepare our neighborhood and ourselves. How then, can this very real safety concern not be an issue for this Project?

I know there are likely many more questions, but due to the restrictive process and time limits, it's all I can muster.

I look forward to a response.

Sincerely,

Alexa Iles Skarpelos

Cc:
Mayor Eric Garcetti
Council Member Mitch O'Farrell
Council Member David Ryu
Director of City Planning Vince Bertoni
Exec Officer of City Planning Kevin Keller