

# Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN SUNLAND TUJUNGA

7747 Foothill Blvd., Tujunga, CA 91042 • www.stnc.org • 818-951-7411 • FAX 818-951-7412

## Land Use Committee

April 16, 2014

Mr. Roger Kiesel  
Planning & Neighborhood Services Division  
City of Glendale  
633 East Broadway, Room 103  
Glendale, CA 91206-4386

Re: Chamlian Armenian School, 4444 Lowell Avenue, Glendale, CA  
Proposed Increase in Enrollment and Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration  
Use Variance No. PVAR 1403259  
Standards Variance No. PAR 1403260  
Parking Reduction Permit Case No. PPRP 1403257

Mr. Kiesel,

The Land Use Committee (LUC) of the Sunland Tujunga Neighborhood Council has been following the Chamlian Armenian School's request for an enrollment increase from 500 to 700 students. This matter was brought to our attention by a number of City of Los Angeles residents who live in proximity to the school on Lowell Avenue. It was placed on a Special Agenda of the Land Use Committee on April 7, 2014 for discussion and community input.

We estimate that several hundred L.A. City families reside west of Lowell, just east of the Cooks Canyon Channel, and south of Foothill Blvd. These L.A. City homeowners are part of the 91214 postal zone served by the La Crescenta Post Office. In addition, L.A. City families live north of Foothill Blvd. along the Lowell Avenue corridor and in neighborhoods just west of the City of Glendale.

The Foothill communities have seen a significant increase in traffic during the last twenty years. Lowell Avenue, in particular, has been severely impacted by increased traffic volumes because it provides direct access to the I- 210 Freeway access ramps. In addition, Lowell Avenue frequently serves as an alternative north/south travel route for Tujunga Canyon Blvd.

Looking beyond past and current traffic levels, we must also take into account two large residential projects: Canyon Hills' 223 houses approved by the City of L.A. in 2005, as well as the Verdugo Hills Golf Course., which has been proposed for a 224-home development. Both projects are located on La Tuna Canyon Road less than a mile from Tujunga Canyon Blvd. Both projects would add substantially to local traffic, including traffic on Lowell Avenue. Motorists seeking to avoid inevitable increased traffic delays on La Tuna Canyon Road will seek out Lowell Avenue as an alternative route to the I-210 freeway on and off ramps.

It is important to note also that the analysis of traffic and transportation impacts in the CEQA document (mitigated negative declaration) relies almost entirely on a proposed "Traffic and Transportation Plan" developed by the applicant's consultant, Jano Boghdanian and Associates. This is a proposed busing plan that attempts to mitigate increased vehicle trips in the area of the school by shuttling in students from nearby locations. As such, it lacks adequate analyses of traffic impacts in the area, does not model impacts, does not account for cumulative traffic impacts (see remarks above), does not address traffic and pedestrian safety, and offers no meaningful mitigation. At a minimum, the mitigation monitoring plan for the project should include the *mandatory assignment* of students to designated shuttle buses accessing the site.

As you know, in 2012 the Glendale City Council approved a new gymnasium for the Chamlian Armenian School. In granting several variances for the gymnasium, the City Council also stipulated that the school's enrollment be capped at 500 students. Based on what we are hearing from our community members, as well as from our own observations, we fully support this stipulation and believe it absolutely vital to maintain the enrollment cap at 500 students.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our views and concerns regarding this important local issue. We would appreciate a copy of the final determination on this case be sent to:

Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council  
Land Use Committee  
7747 Foothill Blvd  
Tujunga, CA 91042

Thank you for your consideration,



Dean Sherer  
Land Use Committee Chair  
Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council  
Certified by the City of Los Angeles in 2003

cc: L.A. City Councilman Felipe Fuentes, Council District 7  
L.A. City Transportation Committee  
Jon Kirk Mukri, General Manager, L.A. Department of Transportation  
Mayor Zareh Sinanyan  
Councilmember Ara Najarian  
Councilmember Laura Friedman  
Councilmember Dave Weaver  
Councilmember Frank Quintero