



Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council

Certified May 27, 2003

P.O. Box 635 • Tujunga, CA 91043-0635 • 818-951-7411 • Website: stnc.org

February 10, 2022

Via: Email

Los Angeles City Planning Department

Attn: City Planners

Phillip Bazan – phillip.bazan@lacity.org

Eric Claros – eric.claros@lacity.org

Expedited Processing Section – planning.expedited@lacity.org

RE: Case #CPC-2021-9909-DB-SP-SPP-HCA AND ENV-2021-9910-EAF

7577 West Foothill Blvd. Tujunga, CA 91042

NON-SUPPORT OF PROJECT: Proposed 46-unit, 42-foot tall Multi-Family Apartment building located in the Foothill Blvd Corridor Specific Plan C2-1, CR-1VL & RD2-1 zones.

Summary: The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC) Land Use Committee (LUC) met with the owner's representative, Edgar Khalatian, at our January 10, 2022 public meeting. Mr. Khalatian gave a power point presentation.

The Sunland Tujunga Neighborhood Council strongly opposes this proposed project for the following reasons:

- ❖ **Request for a Specific Plan Amendment & Special Plan Project Permit Compliance:** The project violates the commercial-only provisions of the Foothill Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan (FBCSP), does not meet the needs of the community, requests numerous changes and entitlements to enable building the project and would negatively impact the quality of life and the safety of the neighboring community. It should be noted that the project is prohibited under the commercial-only provisions of the FBCSP. The developer is requesting an amendment to the FBCSP to create a new target area to allow for residential construction. This would create an undesirable precedent.
- ❖ **Community concerns:** Sunland-Tujunga needs commercial development to provide new jobs, small business opportunities, and entertainment venues such as restaurants for the community. The community is concerned that this developer has not made any arrangements for developing appropriate improvements to the infrastructure, such as water, sewage, electricity, adequate emergency fire evacuation routes, traffic and adjacent traffic / parking congestion. The small-town nature of this community and the mountain views are all valuable aspects of Sunland-Tujunga and protected by zoning overlays. The size and density of this project will tower over the three street intersections of Plainview Avenue, Foothill Boulevard and Day Street and will block the mountain and Valley views for surrounding properties – which the community insists is the unique quality and basis of their property value. The increased density, without adequate study and without infrastructure improvements will diminish the enjoyment of the neighboring properties and decrease property values for the current residents and property owners.
- ❖ **Traffic, Parking and Safety Concerns:** The streets around the project are narrow. No accommodation for guest parking has been made except to say the guest can park on Wilsey which already is over- crowded with very limited city street parking; and yet the developers have not included improvements to ameliorate this problem. Further, Plainview, Foothill and Day Street converge into one intersection directly in front of the project, creating confusion and hazards for both drivers and pedestrians. The traffic problems existing at this three-street intersection have not been addressed by the developers and will increase with the additional vehicles from this development.
- ❖ **Ingress and Egress:** The developers show just one ingress and one egress to the parking structure at Plainview. It is unclear in the plans how the developer will mitigate the existing and soon- to-be created traffic problems.
- ❖ **Evacuation Concerns:** Foothill Boulevard is the only commercial corridor in this community and serves as the only evacuation route for all of the residents of Sunland-Tujunga, both on the East and West sides of the town. In the event of another wild fire, or other natural disasters requiring immediate evacuation, the congestion of residents at this intersection would increase the bottleneck danger already existing.



Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council

Certified May 27, 2003

P.O. Box 635 • Tujunga, CA 91043-0635 • 818-951-7411 • Website: stnc.org

- ❖ **Environmental Concerns:** Since the turn of the last century, those with crippling respiratory illnesses looked to Sunland-Tujunga as one of only two places in the world with the ideal air quality for healing respiratory conditions. After spending a brief holiday in Tujunga, settled at the time by only a handful of households, California Poet Laureate and Mission Play author John Steven McGroarty promptly moved here after sleeping through the night for the very first time, finally able to breathe. An asthmatics colony through the 1980s, people feared that Tujunga Valley would lose the healing quality of its air after the opening of the 210 freeway, but although the quality deteriorated through to the early years of the 21st Century, the last of the AQMD's readings showed it tentatively holding on. To this day, approximately half the households of Sunland-Tujunga have an asthmatic who relies on the fragile air quality the Lung Association has called endangered. The growth in population represented by a development of this size with its incumbent additional vehicles' fossil fuel emissions and natural gas methanes could easily tip the air quality from its life-sustaining magic for asthmatics to just another Valley community blanketed by a persistent brown haze of pollution.
- ❖ **Aesthetics:** Overall, this gigantic building looming over the intersection would be out of character with the community. It would decrease rather than increase the quality of life for the area, both in terms of reduced aesthetics and by not providing the commercial products and services that our Sunland-Tujunga residents do need.

The STNC recommends that the request to amend the FBCSP be denied. The community remembers that this property has a long and successful history of restaurant use and recognizes its highest and best use is for a restaurant, specifically family-style. The economic feasibility of a restaurant has been established. It is zoned for restaurant use including the two zoning overlays, so it is legally feasible. The past one-story restaurants with onsite parking, ingress and egress from both Foothill Blvd and Plainview, shows a commercial restaurant is physically possible. Further, the community insists that if alternate uses outside of the zoning overlays are considered, that (1) an EIR be required to address the concerns noted above (2) all impacts of such an egregious development on the community be studied, (3) mitigating actions including wild fire evacuation, water use, utilities infrastructure and traffic be addressed and (4) that these issues be resolved before project approval.

Upon the recommendation of the STNC's Land Use Committee, the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council, at its February 9, 2022 meeting voted to oppose this application by a vote of **19** (yea), 0 (nay), 0 (abstained) and 0 (recused).

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments and considering the community. If you have any questions, please contact us by email at secretary@stnc.org or phone 818-951-7411.

Sincerely,

Lydia Grant

Lydia Grant, President
Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council

cc: Councilmember Monica Rodriguez, CD7 councilmember.rodriguez@lacity.org
paola.bassignana@lacity.org
dominick.ortiz@lacity.org
anissa.raja@lacity.org

Owner's Rep: Edgar Khalatian ekhalatian@mayerbrown.com