



JOHN S. LEE
COUNCILMEMBER, 12TH DISTRICT

Los Angeles City Planning Commission
200 N. Spring Street, Room 272
Los Angeles, CA 90012
RE: Item #6, City Planning Commission Agenda of February 27, 2025
Case No. ADM-2024-5202-DB-PHP-VHCA-1A
7556-7572 Woodlake Avenue, West Hills

February 26, 2025

Honorable Commissioners:

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspectives on the proposed project before you today.

First, I want to thank the residents of West Hills who have taken the time to call and write to my office and the Planning Department to share their views about this proposal. I also appreciate the efforts of the West Hills Neighborhood Council whose members have worked tirelessly over the last several months to help keep residents apprised.

I recognize and acknowledge that this has been a confusing and frustrating process for many residents. For years, the public has been able to rely on the availability of a public process to engage on proposed projects, ask questions and have them answered, and make their voices heard. With numerous changes to state laws over the years exerting authority over local land use matters, residents and the City alike have needed to adapt to the shift in how projects like this are being reviewed. With Planning's authority being limited in its scope and discretion, the most substantive review of critical issues will occur during the plan check process, a robust but nevertheless ministerial review conducted outside of the public arena by the City's development services departments to verify compliance with applicable codes.

The appellants have raised numerous issues for your consideration. Specifically, I would underscore the following key issues and respectfully urge you to evaluate these points prior to making a decision today:

- Los Angeles Fire Department Access and Fire/Life Safety Concerns: It is unclear how fire/life safety objectives to ensure emergency access and evacuation routes would be met, particularly in light of the granted on-menu incentives for reduced setbacks.
- Pedestrian Access/ADA Path of Travel: Both the Woodlake Avenue and Saticoy Street frontages of the subject site (235 linear feet and 606 linear feet, respectively) are unimproved, and it is unclear how the proposed project would relate to the street from a pedestrian access perspective.



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I firmly believe that regardless of the development rights afforded to an applicant under the law, the responsible thing to do is to design and develop a project- affordable housing for seniors especially- with the safety and well-being of the end users and overall community as a priority and with a holistic view of how the project will relate to the existing community. Also, while I understand the importance of streamlining processes, I feel it is essential to find a balanced approach that still allows local governments to address the specific safety needs of existing and future residents.

Finally, I want to express my appreciation for the Planning Department staff, Laura Frazin-Steele, for her detailed review of the proposed project.

Thank you for considering the points that the community and I have raised today in your discussion.

Sincerely,



JOHN S. LEE

Councilmember, 12th District

