



PACIFIC PALISADES COMMUNITY COUNCIL

August 25, 2019

Kenton Trinh, City Planning Associate
Department of City Planning
City Hall, 200 N. Spring Street, #720
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Via email: kenton.trinh@lacity.org

**Re: 17346 Sunset Blvd., Pacific Palisades; Case No. CPC-2018-504-DB-DRB-SPP-CDP-MEL;
ENV-2018-505-MND; OPPOSE at proposed height & density**

Dear Mr. Trinh:

Pacific Palisades Community Council (PPCC) is the most broad-based organization in Pacific Palisades and has served as the voice of our community since its formation in 1973, 46 years ago.

PPCC held several well-attended public meetings regarding the above-referenced project: two Land Use Committee (LUC) meetings (in August 2018 and June 2019) and one Board meeting (on August 22, 2019). At all meetings, public comment was taken, robust discussion ensued and full consideration was given to the proposed project.¹ Comment at all meetings was overwhelmingly negative, with the community clearly expressing opposition to the project at the proposed height and density.

After discussion and full consideration at the August 22 Board meeting, the PPCC board unanimously passed the motion attached below (opposition to the project at the proposed height and density).

PPCC respectfully requests that this letter be placed in the above-referenced file and that PPCC's position be brought to the attention of the City Planning Commission or other City official who may hear this matter.

Thank you for your anticipated courtesy and cooperation.

Sincerely,

George Wolfberg, Chair
Pacific Palisades Community Council

cc: Hon. Mike Bonin, Councilmember, Council District 11

Via email: mike.bonin@lacity.org

Attachment:

**PPCC Motion regarding the mixed-use project proposed
for 17346 Sunset Blvd. (former Jack-in the-Box site) – “the Project”**

Pacific Palisades Community Council (PPCC) opposes issuance of a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) for the Project as proposed at 5 stories and 60 ft., 9 in. in height, with no upper level set-backs along Sunset Blvd. and with a floor area ratio (FAR) of 2.15:1, on the following grounds:

¹ The applicant's attorney gave presentations at both LUC meetings but declined PPCC's invitation to attend and present again at the August 22 Board meeting.

1) Specific Plan Consideration. At the proposed height and density, the Project is more than twice the size otherwise allowed under the applicable Pacific Palisades Commercial Village and Neighborhoods Specific Plan (SP) -- a maximum of 2 stories, 30 ft. in height and FAR of 1:1. Because the Project as proposed would provide 4 affordable housing units among its 40 dwelling units, state “density bonus” law permits the proposed Project height and density notwithstanding the SP limitations. However, because the Project is also within the Coastal Zone, a CDP is required and the provisions of the California Coastal Act (Public Resources Code, Sec. 30000, *et seq.*) therefore must apply.

2) Violation of Coastal Act (PRC §30251). The Project at the proposed height and density does not comply with the relevant provisions of Public Resources Code Sec. 30251, which requires that development in the Coastal Zone be “visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas.” The Project’s mass and scale are clearly out of proportion to all other similarly situated buildings which front the same (south) side of the street as the Project, and its visual impact on pedestrians as well as nearby residences is out of character and will be significant. While there are 6 and 9 story buildings to the south and north (on the slope to the rear and across the street from the Project), **all adjacent or similarly-situated buildings fronting the south side of Sunset Blvd. are no higher than one story in height** (including Vons Market and the Palisades Electric building to the west and a strip mall to the east). The proposed 5 story Project building situated in the midst of 1 story structures along the south side of Sunset Blvd. would be strikingly inconsistent, out of proportion in terms of mass and scale and visually incompatible with all other structures which front Sunset Blvd. in this location; the Project would therefore violate the Coastal Act.

3) Further Violation (PRC §30251). Because the Project does not include upper level set-backs (as does the 6 story mixed-use building across the street on the north side of Sunset Blvd.) and the plan does not appear to include any provision for trees fronting the building, the Project building would present a bleak streetscape and an imposing, monolithic façade along the south side of Sunset Blvd. which is inconsistent with the across-the-street building façade and is not visually compatible with similarly situated buildings in the surrounding area. In addition to upper level set-backs, at a minimum, at least two 15’ x 15’ x 15’ tree wells with appropriately sized trees should be required and included in the plan.

4) Environmental Impacts. The Project will provide required open space for residents by way of a roof top deck. As can be seen in Project renderings, at 5 stories in height the top story of the Project building (or a substantial portion thereof), including the roof top deck, will rise above open space areas of the residential tower immediately to the south and will be clearly visible to residents at the same or nearby levels of the residential tower. The use of the roof top deck at this height and in this location will potentially negatively impact nearby residents in terms of noise, reduction of privacy and quality of life. Such environmental impacts would be significant and cannot be adequately mitigated at the proposed Project height.

PPCC further advises that should the City or Coastal Commission decide to proceed with approval of the Project despite the above, the following modifications be considered as part of a conditioned CDP: a **lowered Project building height**, either 4 stories with upper level set-backs along Sunset Blvd., or alternatively 3 stories with no upper level set-backs, with a reduction in the number of dwelling units if necessary to accommodate the lowered height. In either scenario, at least two tree wells with appropriately sized trees as described above should be required and included in the plan. The Project at such an alternative height and configuration would more closely comply with the Coastal Act requirement of visual compatibility with the surrounding areas and would mitigate negative impacts from the roof deck.

Motion unanimously adopted 8/22/19 by the PPCC Board