

Press Release

FIX THE CITY LAWSUIT TARGETS PUBLIC SAFETY

First Responder Response Times Inaccurate, Earthquake Safety Rules Violated

Los Angeles, CA March 31, 2017: Fix the City, a public safety and land use advocacy organization, filed a reply brief (attached) challenging 8150 Sunset, a massive high-rise luxury project proposed for Sunset and Crescent Heights. The project is located within the Hollywood Fault Zone and also a city-designated Mountain Fire District at the entrance to Laurel Canyon. The reply brief argues that not only did the City hide a covenant for a 45-foot height limit, it also relied on false LAFD emergency response times.

“Rules matter. Public safety matters. When someone dials 911 they have a right to expect help to arrive quickly,” said James O’Sullivan, Vice President of Fix the City.

“Planning laws are safety laws,” said Laura Lake, a Fix the City board member. “It is outrageous that the City/Developer Brief dismissed the City’s key response time standard as ‘only an aspirational goal.’ Providing emergency services is not a goal. It’s a duty,” said Lake.

Increasingly, due to budget cuts and traffic congestion, help is delayed beyond crucial response time standards. “Our lawsuit is about forcing the City to follow state law, its own laws and to keep its solemn promise to keep us all safe. The City told us that they would make sure development did not outpace the City’s ability to provide for public safety. It’s time they kept their promise,” said O’Sullivan.

Before approving increased density, the City must provide evidence that its infrastructure, traffic and emergency services are adequate to serve the new development as well as existing development.

“Anyone driving through Laurel Canyon or on Sunset Boulevard knows that they are overburdened. What they may not know is that the three stations serving the project area fail to meet LAFD’s response standard for EMS of five minutes 90% of the time,” Lake stated.

Needing to say that emergency services were adequate, the city and developer resorted to citing wholly inaccurate LAFD response times. The city’s findings on the massive project were based on this flawed data and analysis.

Compounding this error, the city also cut corners on seismic safety when it failed to require the developer to investigate potential earthquake faults within 50-feet of the property line along Sunset Boulevard, as required by the Alquist Priolo Act. In the absence of such a seismic study, state law requires a 50-foot setback. There was no study nor was there a setback.

“It is time for the City to be honest with its citizens starting with its environmental reports and how it reports adequacy of emergency response. It is unacceptable to intensify development at the cost of public safety. The city should know that. After all, that’s what they promised us,” concluded O’Sullivan.

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