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CITY COUNCIL VOTES TO SUPPORT COUNCILWOMAN GREUEL IN CALLING SUNLAND HOME DEPOT A "PROJECT"

Decision Requires Environmental Review and Traffic Mitigations at Site

LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles City Council voted today to uphold a Planning Department ruling that categorized construction at a Home Depot site in Sunland-Tujunga as a "project" thereby requiring environmental reviews and traffic studies to be performed by the retail giant.

"Today we made it clear that every business in Los Angeles, no matter how large or how small, must play by the same rules," said Councilwoman Wendy Greuel, who represents the residents surrounding the proposed Home Depot site. "I was confident that once my Council colleagues reviewed the facts of this case they would join me and the community members, in demanding environmental and traffic reviews to mitigate the level of construction proposed by Home Depot at this site."

The Sunland-Tujunga community will now be entitled to an environmental review on issues such as traffic, air quality and noise, before building permits are issued. The Planning Department will dictate the parameters of these reviews.

According to City Planning Director Gail Goldberg's report "The determination herein will not have a Citywide impact as the use of the specific property, circumstances and issues are unique to the affected site and will not generally apply to other sites in the City."

Councilwoman Wendy Greuel asked the City Council to assert jurisdiction over the case after the North Valley Area Planning Commission granted a Home Depot appeal and overturned the Planning Department decision to require mitigations. However, on July 24th, in a unanimous vote the City Council agreed to hear the case. The City's Planning and Land Use Management Committee voted unanimously to deny the Home Depot appeal on August 7th. Today the full City Council declared the construction "a project" by a vote of 12-1. The Council was the last appeal to which either Home Depot or local residents were entitled.

In March, a Los Angeles City Zoning Administrator issued a 20 page report signed by Gail Goldberg asserting that the structural changes at the building site qualified as a "project" according to the Foothills Blvd Specific Plan.

According to the Foothills Blvd Specific Plan, a project is defined as "the construction, erection, structural alteration of, or addition to, any building or structure, including architectural projections attached to exterior walls or roof structures, which requires the issuance of a building permit or a change of use permit."

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