

LETTER NO. 36

Dated: 2/26/01

Rev Juan Antonio Ruiz, CM
Saint Vincent De Paul Church
621 West Adams Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90007

COMMENT 36.1

St. Vincent de Paul is a Roman Catholic church located at Figueroa and Adams about fifteen blocks south of the Staples Center. On an average Sunday, 7,000 people attend Mass at St. Vincent's. Most of our faithful are minority families, mainly latino low-income workers who struggle to make ends meet. Our parish community not only lives close to the Staples Center, but also will feel the impact the Staples expansion makes on housing, noise, and traffic.

This letter concerns the draft EIR for the proposed Sports and Entertainment District. The residents of this area already suffer negative impacts from current operations of the Staples Center, especially the elimination of affordable housing, increased traffic and associated air and noise pollution, a rise in crime and vandalism, and decreased, pedestrian and public safety. Because these residents are low-income, many non-citizen immigrants, there is a tendency to ignore both their voice and their needs. Justice demands that the EIR and all aspects of the proposed Staples expansion receive close scrutiny to be sure that the residents of the area benefit along with the business community.

RESPONSE 36.1

Existing conditions, such as those associated with operation of STAPLES Center, were carefully considered in the planning of the Los Angeles Sports and Entertainment District Project and also contributed to the assessment of identifying the potential impacts of the Project and mitigation measures. It is important to note that although the STAPLES Center is owned by the Project Applicant, it is separate and distinct from the proposed Project, consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(c) which states, "[t]he term project refers to the activity which is being approved and which may be subject to several discretionary approvals by governmental agencies." STAPLES Center underwent its own environmental review process and the Final EIR for that project was certified by the City in 1997.

Regarding affordable housing, refer to Responses to Comments Nos. 15.7 to 15.16 and 15.36. The potential impacts of the proposed project on traffic congestion, and increased criminal activity were analyzed in the Draft EIR in Sections IV.F.1. Traffic, and IV.I.2. Police. Refer to Responses to Comments 15.19 and 15.20 for discussions regarding traffic. Refer to Responses to Comments

15.18 and 15.29 regarding impacts to air quality and noise, respectively. Pedestrian safety issues are addressed in Response to comment 15.27. Refer to Response to Comment 15.4 regarding the Project's construction period. Energy is addressed in Response to Comment 15.3 and water quality is addressed in Response to Comment 15.17.

COMMENT 36.2

With the Figueroa Corridor Coalition for Economic Justice, we specifically request that-

1) The City properly and thoroughly address the significant environmental impacts identified in the draft EIR through mitigation measures that are community developed and community based;

RESPONSE 36.2

Refer to Response to Comment 16.2.

COMMENT 36.3

2) The City review and implement the requests for additional analysis and mitigation measures developed by Figueroa Corridor Coalition for Economic Justice in their comments to the draft EIR;

RESPONSE 36.3

The City has reviewed the requests developed by the Figueroa Corridor Coalition for Economic Justice and has responded to these requests. Refer to Letter No. 15 and associated Responses to Comments.

COMMENT 36.4

3) The City request that a full energy analysis be completed in the final EIR, including appropriate mitigation and conservation measures as required by CEQA;

RESPONSE 36.4

Refer to Response to Comment 15.3 for discussions regarding the Project energy analysis.

COMMENT 36.5

4) The City provide all of the final EIR materials translated into Spanish so that community residents can take an active part in this important decision-making process. To refuse to translate the materials would be a violation of civil rights law, and bad public policy; and

RESPONSE 36.5

Refer to Response to Comment No. 15.2.

COMMENT 36.6

5) The City request that the Developer incorporate into the Project proposal community benefits such as affordable housing, quality jobs and community services that will help mitigate negative Project impacts. These benefits are outlined in the FCCEJ's comments to the DEIR.

RESPONSE 36.6

Refer to Responses to Comment 15.7 to 15.16 and 15.36.

COMMENT 36.7

Thank you for your attention to this letter and for your concern for the residents of Central Los Angeles impacted by this important project.

RESPONSE 36.7

The comment is noted for the record and will be forwarded to the City decision makers for their review and consideration.