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May 9, 2011

City of Los Angeles  
Planning and Land Use Committee  
200 N. Spring Street, Room 350  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Attn: Councilmember Ed P. Reyes, Chairman

RE: CPC-2008-3087-ZC-HD-ZAA-SPR, VTT 70119-1A  
Council File #11-0317

Dear Mr. Reyes,

I am writing this letter to comment on the impacts of the proposed Hollywood-Gower Project at 6100-16 Hollywood Boulevard and 1633-49 N. Gower Street. As a historian who has successfully researched, written and or advocated over 125 successful Historic Cultural Monument nominations for the City of Los Angeles I have been actively involved in the field of historic preservation for almost three decades. My resume is attached to the end of this letter.

The project is of a massive scale and will have potential negative impacts on the Hollywood Walk of Fame and the Henry Fonda / Music Box Theater, the former being Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument No. 194 and the latter being deemed eligible for listing as an HCM. In addition, there is the issue of the proposed building's 270 foot height and its effect on the historic nature of the Hollywood Boulevard corridor.

The Environmental Impact Report deals with the aforementioned individual resources that are adjacent to the project site. However, it fails to address the latter issue of the historic view of Hollywood Boulevard. There is no precedent for a project of this height in Hollywood, let alone along the historic boulevard itself.

The documents note other tall buildings in the area, both historic, such as the Taft Building, the Broadway-Hollywood and the Capital Tower and recent, such as the "W" Hotel, as examples, but none of these existing structures come close to the height that is planned for this project. All of these large existing buildings fall at 150 feet or less, which has been the rule for the historic Hollywood area.

Now, through the use of spot zoning, the city is granting an exception for this project. This flies in the face of the proposed Hollywood Community Plan, which states that the height of new construction should not overpower that of the existing neighborhood. As an example, a photo of the one of the new buildings adjacent to the Cinerama Dome is shown noting how its scale does not overpower the historic structure.

To grant this exemption from the height requirements of the Community Plan creates a dangerous precedent that will open the door to other developments seeking similar exceptions from the stated rules. This will, in time, eliminate the historic scale of Hollywood Boulevard and result in the loss of the very historic context that has made the street such an important part of our Nation's history. The historic buildings along the street will be overshadowed by larger and larger development to the point that they will become the anomalies rather than the dominant edifices that they are today.

This type of erosion of the historic character of the area must be stopped now, before it can begin. Otherwise, the type of overbuilt environment depicted in the 1980 movie "Blade Runner" will be the inevitable result of this slippery slope of changing the rules for individual projects just because it seems to "make sense" at the time.

Let us do the right thing and grant the appeal, so that the Hollywood-Gower Project will play by the rules that were put in place to preserve Hollywood.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charles J. Fisher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Charles J. Fisher,  
Historian

# Charles J. Fisher

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## Summary of qualifications

A versatile and independent professional with extensive skills in the historic preservation of real estate preservation, including research, documentation, advocacy. Accomplishments include the successful nomination of over 125 Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monuments, and spearheading the establishment of the Highland Park Historic Preservation Overlay Zone, the largest HPOZ in the city of Los Angeles, and the first HPOZ in Los Angeles to include a commercial district. Steps in creating the HPOZ involved initial advocacy, working with city officials to authorize an historic survey, supplemental research on contributing structures. Demonstrated ability in researching and standardizing data for information systems. An enthusiastic and innovative problem solver who produces quality work and gets along well with others. Three-time President of the Highland Park Heritage Trust; Chair of the Highland Park Historic Preservation Overlay Zone Design Review Board; a founding member of the Los Angeles HPOZ Alliance; serving two years as the President of the Heritage Coalition of Southern California (2005-2006); Co-Chair (with The Late David Cameron) of the Cultural Resources Committee of the Los Angeles Conservancy (1991-1996); Presently serving as Commercial Chair for the Los Angeles Conservancy Modern (Modcom) Committee.

## Professional experience

2005 - Present Historian (on call) with ICF International, LA office

2004 – Present Historian 4 Hire Los Angeles, CA  
Historical Research, Preservation Advocacy

- Successfully submitted and or advocated over 125 Historic Cultural Monument nominations for the City of Los Angeles, starting in 1987.
- Extensive advocacy to Neighborhood Councils on historic issues.
- Preparing and filing Mills Act applications for owners of historic properties.
- Successful nominations result in increased property values and change of use in terms of adaptive reuse, resulting in entire districts improved.
- Preparing historic resource reports required by redevelopment agencies.
- Clients include Murray Burns, president of the Historic Preservation Overlay Zone Alliance (Arthur B. Benton Residence, HCM 827, Marshall Flats, HCM 823, and Mary Stilson Residence, HCM 824); Ambassador-Hill Association (Franklin T. Briles Residence, HCM 809); St. Andrews Square Association (J. A. Howsley House, HCM 805, Ernest Borgmeyer House, HCM 810); Silver Lake Homeowners Association (Modification of Disney Site to Include Site of the Animators School HCM 163). Notable nominations include Santa Fe's Arroyo Seco Bridge, HCM 339 (Adapted for the MTA Gold Line); the Zeigler Estate, HCM 416 (now on the National Register of Historic Places); Casa de Adobe, HCM 493 (re-nominated after original nomination failed); Hodel Residence and Tea House, HCM 802, designed and built by famed Russian architect Alexander Zelenko; Octagon House, HCM 413 (Heritage Square) and identifying and nominating the Purviance Residence, a previously unknown early work by R M Schindler, HCM 844 (See list of nominations, attached)

	1976 – 2004	Transamerica Real Estate Tax Service	CA
	Supervisor of Bonds and Assessments (Coordinator II)		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Responsible for maintenance and utilization of the automated files for improvement bond information for over 100 government agencies. Extensively utilized computer and word processing applications.</li> <li>▪ Created, compiled and maintained automated bond plant for Los Angeles division, coordinated all billing for customers on improvement bonds and irrigation districts</li> <li>▪ Cut down penalty losses in department by over 95%,</li> <li>▪ Processed over 35,000 conversion new orders annually</li> </ul>		
	Real Estate Tax Examiner		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Worked extensively with property tax maps and legal descriptions. Learned in real world how to do property research.</li> <li>▪ Processed an average of 250 to 300 orders daily</li> </ul>		
Publications and Lectures	Highland Park (Images of America), © 2008, Arcadia Publishing, Charleston, SC, ISBN 978-0-7385-5570-6		
	Garvanza (Images of America), © 2010, Arcadia Publishing, Charleston, SC, ISBN 978-0-7385-8120-0		
	Currently in draft form, a compendium of architect biographies focusing on architects featured in Los Angeles Historic Cultural Landmarks, “The Architects of Los Angeles”, numerous published photographs of landmark buildings in Los Angeles. Extensive use of original language in monument descriptions included in the book Landmark L.A. published by Cultural Heritage Commission, edited by Jeffrey Herr. Presentations include talks on both preservation issues and historical subjects.		
Education	1975 – 1976	California State University	Los Angeles, CA
	Baccalaureate work for Pre-Law, Political Science		
	1971 - 1974	East Los Angeles College	Los Angeles, CA
	Associate of Arts, Political Science		
Awards received	City of Los Angeles Citation for research and Historic Cultural Monument nomination on The Black Cat, HCM 939 (2009)		
	California Preservation Foundation Award for research on Palomar Hotel (2006)		
	Los Angeles Conservancy Preservation Award for research on Palomar Hotel (2006)		
	Los Angeles Conservancy Preservation Award for research on St. George Hotel (2005)		
	Certificate of Appreciation from Highland Park Heritage Trust (2000)		

California Preservation Foundation Award for Historic Work on Arroyo Seco Bridge (1997)

Certificate of Appreciation for HPOZ work from Los Angeles Conservancy (1996)

Outstanding Contribution to Preservation from the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission (1996)

USC School of Architecture Spirit of Preservation Award (1995) (second recipient)

Certificate of Merit for renewal work from Los Angeles City Council District One (1992)

Certificate of Appreciation Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society (1992)

Certificate of Appreciation from Los Angeles Conservancy (1990)