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Area 3  
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At Large  
Representative

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At Large  
Representative

**Vacant**  
USC Interest  
Representative

**Joe Ward-  
Wallace**  
Business Interest  
Representative

May 9, 2022

Hon. Marqueece Harris-Dawson  
City Hall, 200 N. Spring Street  
LA, CA 90012

RE: 3685 S. Vermont, ZA-2020-55-CU-SPR, proposed 168 room hotel with 4300 sq.,  
ground floor retail, Letter of Determination (LOD)

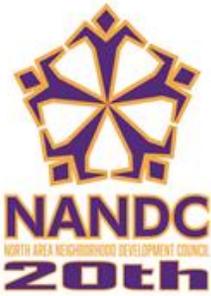
Dear Councilmember:

On behalf of the Empowerment Congress North Area Neighborhood Development Council (NANDC), we ask the Councilmember and his staff to support the ZA Letter of Determination of March 25, 2022 which is now on appeal to the South Area Planning Commission.

*As the Letter of Determination states the proposed hotel project is an internationally branded hospitality operation seeking to meet the needs and demands of the destination attractions and regional users that visit and patronize such uses located along Figueroa Street. Additionally, it is intended to meet the USC's needs and demand for lodging. The proposed project is seeking to achieve this objective from a neighborhood serving commercial corner that has historically served the adjacent residential community west of the publicly owned parcel.*

*The proposed internationally branded project displaces opportunities for affordable housing, a youth center or any other community serving use. As the applicant stated, the proposed hotel is intended primarily to benefit the destination and regional attractions located along Figueroa Street, while secondarily providing some opportunities for local residents from the immediate neighborhood adjacent to the publicly own land.*

*Testimony was repeatedly provided that the 33,400 square-foot publicly own site within the Community Commercial district could be better utilized by providing an opportunity to replace the former community serving use with another community serving use.*



NANDC is on record opposing the use of this site for a hotel. The project will not enhance the built environment in the surrounding neighborhood nor will perform a function or provide a service that is essential or beneficial to the community, city, or region.

### **History**

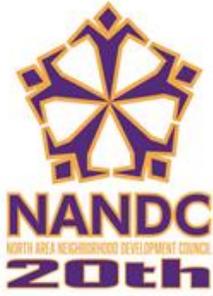
The site of the former Bethune Library has a long-standing history in the community. The former Bethune Library opened in 1975, and named in honor of Mary McLeod Bethune, a prominent entrepreneur, philanthropist, and leader in civil and women’s rights. Like its namesake the Bethune Library exemplified the value of equal access to education and equity for black communities. The library offered crucial resources and a vibrant community meeting space to the South Central community until it was demolished in 2009. In the absence of this integral community asset, the City and other local entities have over the years supported an affordable housing project in its place. In 2016, the City sought approval to convert the site into permanent supportive housing. Still, in 2019 City Council voted to prioritize this land for commercial development. The Bethune Library Site was selected for an affordable housing development in the past:

The project does not substantially conform with the purpose, intent and provisions of the General Plan, the applicable community plan, and any applicable specific plan. It is located within the Hoover Expo University Park Redevelopment Plan area whose expressed goals are:

Goal 2: To make provisions for housing as is required to satisfy the needs and desires of the various age, income, and ethnic groups of the community, maximizing the opportunity for individual choice.

Goal 3: To alleviate overcrowded, substandard housing conditions and to promote the development of a sufficient number of affordable housing units for low and moderate-income households.

Goal 4: To make provisions, throughout the Project Area, for well-planned community uses, facilities, pedestrian and vehicular circulation, and adequate parking, particularly as these relate to Exposition Park.



Goal 5: To implement the City’s policy to establish “opportunity areas” to specifically encourage private investment, consistent with the plans objectives in housing, commerce, and industry.

Goal 6: To encourage a thriving commercial environment which will contribute to neighborhood improvement.

This project does not meet these goals nor the decades under redevelopment where the community was made promises about this site when CRA acquired the site, and the Bethune Library was demolished.

Hotels do not historically contribute to neighborhood improvement and create a thriving environment except within its own confines. Another project which had been in the works and nearing approval was a mixed use and economic incubator project. This had a relationship to community improvement which hotels do not.

We ask that you support the Letter of Determination at the appeal hearing (date TBA.)

NANDC is a self-governed, self-directed, and independent organization empowered by the Los Angeles City Charter. This charter offers neighborhood councils a role in the City’s decision-making process. NANDC was certified by the City of Los Angeles on April 27, 2002 and was the 24th neighborhood council formed under the guidelines of the City Charter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Thryeris Mason".

Thryeris Mason, President  
Empowerment Congress North Area Development Council (NANDC)  
[www.NANDC.org](http://www.NANDC.org)

cc: Albizael Del Valle, Kidada Malloy, Isaias.Benavides