



## Planning, Land Use and Mobility Committee



*DeSoto Ave. perspective showing east and north facades*

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**Case Report-Draft:      Woodland Hills Senior Living  
DIR-2019-3481-SPP-DI  
ENV-2019-3482-SE**

**6033 DeSoto Ave.  
Woodland Hills, CA 91367**

PLUM Meetings:      August 1, 2019  
                                 September 19, 2019

Site Location:        6033 DeSoto Ave., Warner Center 91367  
                                 (College Dist.--2035 Warner Center Specific Plan)

Applicant: Matt Booma, Senior Living Holdings ([Mduggan@ca-ventures.com](mailto:Mduggan@ca-ventures.com))  
 Representatives: Brad Rosenheim, Rosenheim & Associates ([brad@raa-inc.com](mailto:brad@raa-inc.com))  
 Jessica Pakdaman, Rosenheim & Associates ([Jessica@raa-inc.com](mailto:Jessica@raa-inc.com))

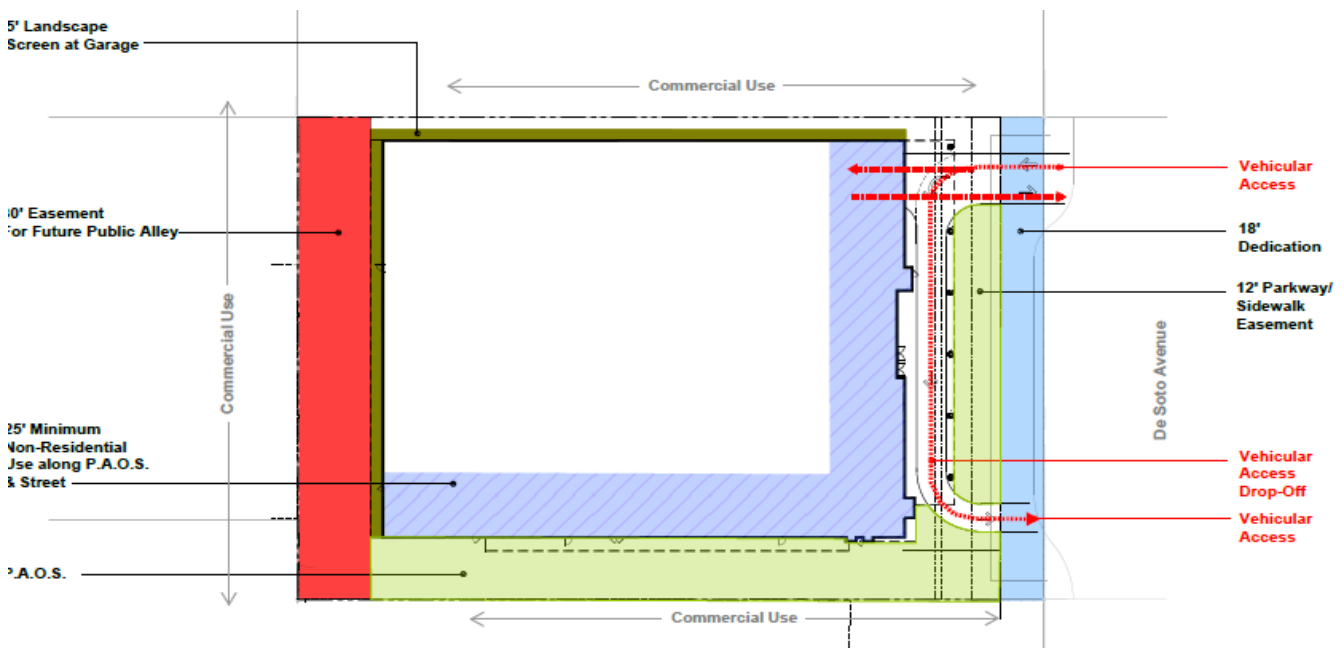
Planning: Alycia Witzling  
 PLUM Case Leaders: Martin Lipkin  
 August Steurer

**Project Summary:**

The Applicant is proposing the demolition of an existing commercial building and to construct a 97-foot tall, 7-story, 189,211 Square foot Senior Living Center with a total of 190 dwelling units and guest rooms (86 Independent Living dwelling units / 74 Assisted Living dwelling units /30 Memory Care guest rooms) on a 60,255 Square Foot lot (1.38 acres) in the College District of Warner Center. Two parking levels (ground and subterranean) will contain 120 parking spaces. The Applicant is asking for a Director’s Interpretation of the parking provisions in this Warner Center Specific Plan as they pertain to eldercare facilities. There will be 19,788 SF of open space—including 9,038 SF of Publically Accessible Open Space.

**Site Plan Overview:**

The proposed project will be the third large senior living complex that has filed for construction in Warner Center, joining a site proposed on Variel Ave. and a complex proposed for a portion of the Litton site on Canoga and Burbank Blvd. This proposed development will replace a 1.5 story commercial building that is currently used for trampoline-based recreation and classes.



*Site plan showing PAOS, alley, and front entry access*

Located on the outer edge of the College District in Warner Center, the project will have an 18' wide dedicated area along DeSoto that the City will utilize to widen the street. From the edge of the dedicated strip there will be a 12' parkway/sidewalk easement and a horseshoe driveway entry/exit to the front entry so that residents and guest can be dropped off without impacting traffic. Additionally, a 30' wide easement is at the west border of the property for a future public alley. Publically accessible open space will consist of the front (east) parkway and the area on the south property which will include hardscape and landscaping. Access to the two levels of parking will be via a spur off the front horseshoe driveway.

## **Project Attributes:**

The project will have two open-to-the-sky courtyards for residents—one for Independent Living residents and Assisted Living residents, and a second for Memory Care residents who require greater oversight. There is also be a “sky garden” on the north-east corner of the seventh floor that will have planters and seating areas, with tables, chairs and couches under a gull-wing, latticed roof.

There will be a mix of studio units (three types), as well several variations of both one and two bedroom apartments. All Memory Care units will be separated from the other units due to special nursing and oversight requirements. Most Independent Living and Assisted Living units will have balconies.



*View of Southeast frontage along DeSoto showing horseshoe driveway and passenger drop-off area. The PAOS on the south side is shown on the left.*

The complex will offer a Great Room and bistro, a theater/community room, a spa, salon, gym, yoga room and wellness center. A bike storage and laundry are also on-site. Parking is available for residents and guests. However because it contains Independent Living, Assisted Living and Memory Care uses and the WC 2035 Plan is silent on the parking requirements for such uses, the Applicant is requesting a Director’s Interpretation from Planning to clarify and determine that the parking requirements of the LA Municipal Code for Eldercare facilities apply.

All WC 2035 Plan requirements for Publically Accessible Open Space and future connectivity have been met by the project. The height, density and FAR also are permitted under the codes governing the College District.

### **Initial PLUM Presentation—August 1, 2019:**

The Applicant made his initial presentation of the first iteration of the project to the WHWCNC PLUM Committee and received comments and suggestions concerning the site, the design and architectural treatments and other important considerations. Overall, the PLUM Committee comments were less than enthusiastic about the initial design of the project and lack of any significant architectural features. There were some concerns about the plans for the rear of the project (western border) noting that it did not totally support the 2035 WC Plans for greater connectivity between parcels in order to facilitate pedestrian access through Warner Center. Addition PLUM concerns focused on the amount of open space and greenery that was available to residents, as well as the limited types of facilities the project contained.



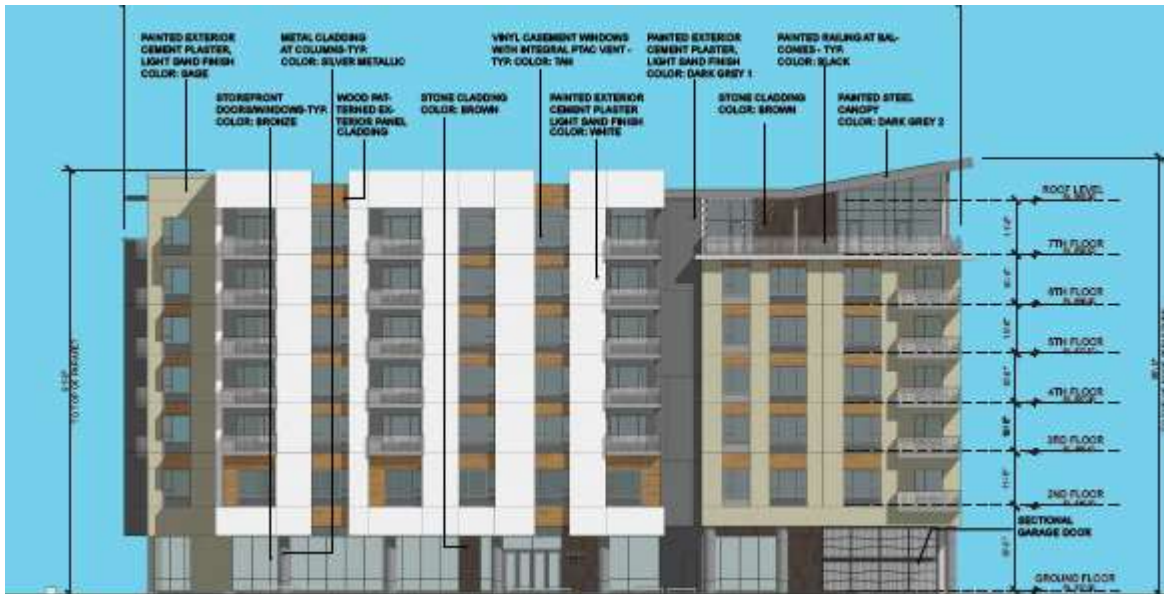
*Initial 8/1/19 design for project showing front façade along DeSoto Ave.*

Most of the comments focused on the architectural design of the facility and reflected the idea that the proposed design look like a majority of other proposed projects for Warner Center, utilizing the same architectural detailing and features. PLUM members feared that the “me too” styling would not add to

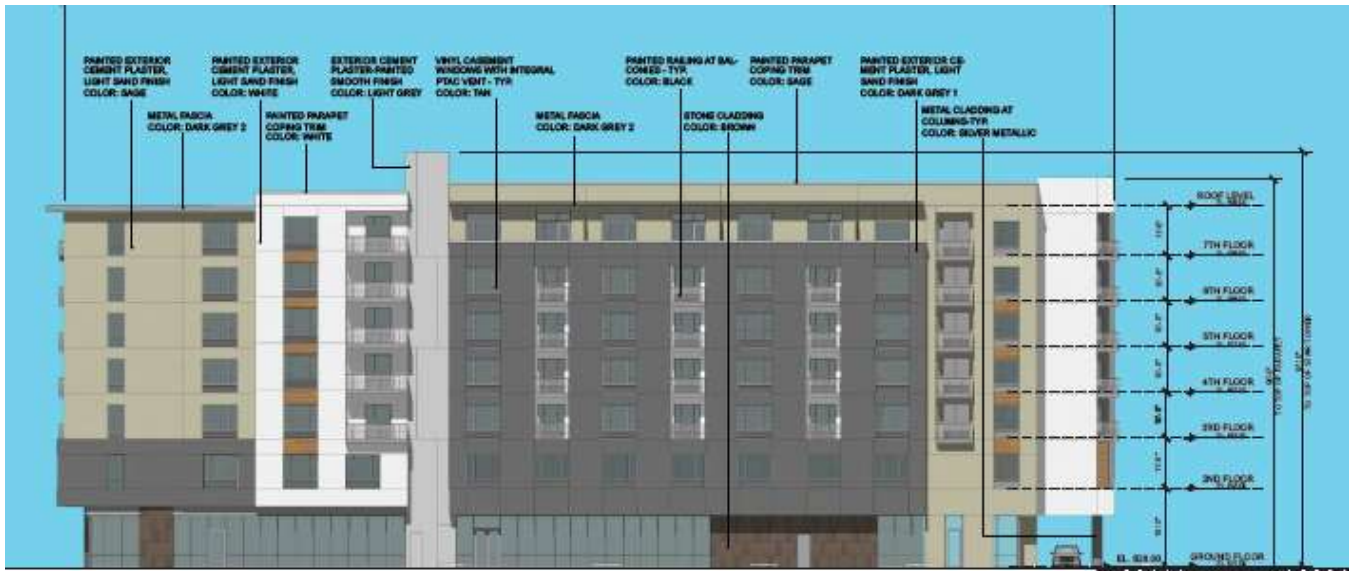
the overall esthetic of the College District, would fail to attract seniors, and would not offer the kind of lifestyle or amenities that are necessary to make today’s seniors happy.

**Revised Architectural and Site Plans for September 19 PLUM Presentation:**

Based on the feedback received during the August 1 PLUM presentation, and augmented by additional comments from his staff and project representatives, the Applicant has revised his project’s site and architectural plans and commissioned new perspectives that show a number of distinctive changes and improvements.

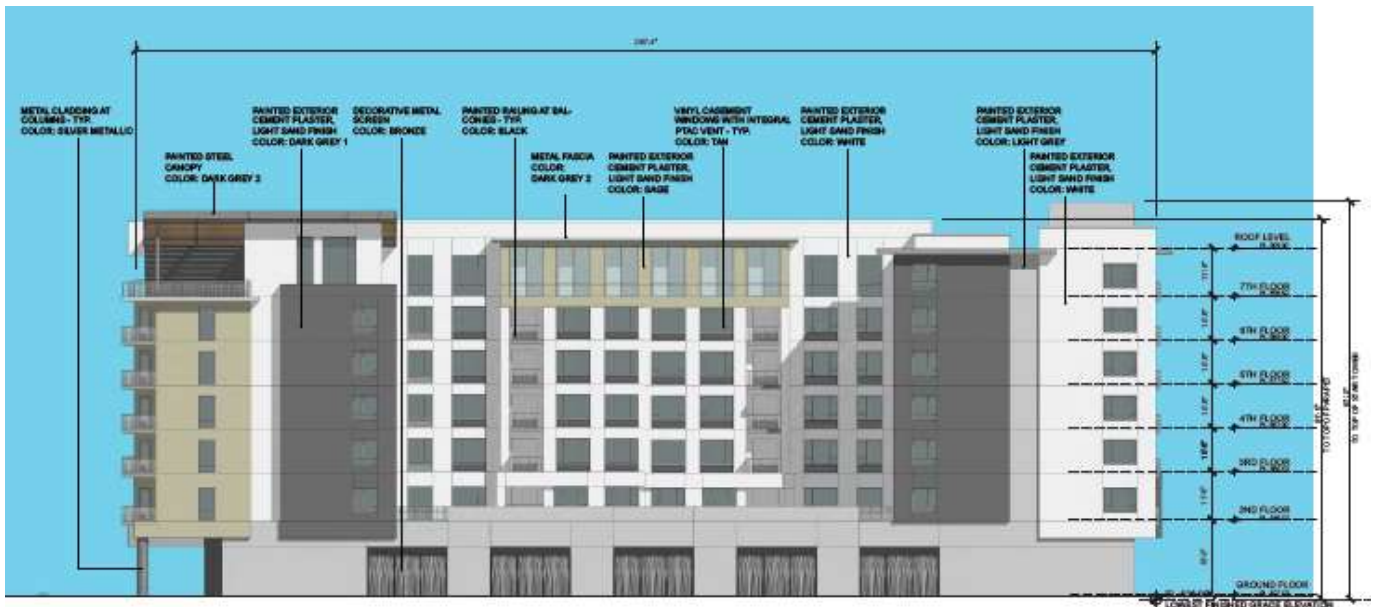


*Elevation along DeSoto showing roof articulation and first floor glass.*



*South elevation along Publically Accessible Open Space*

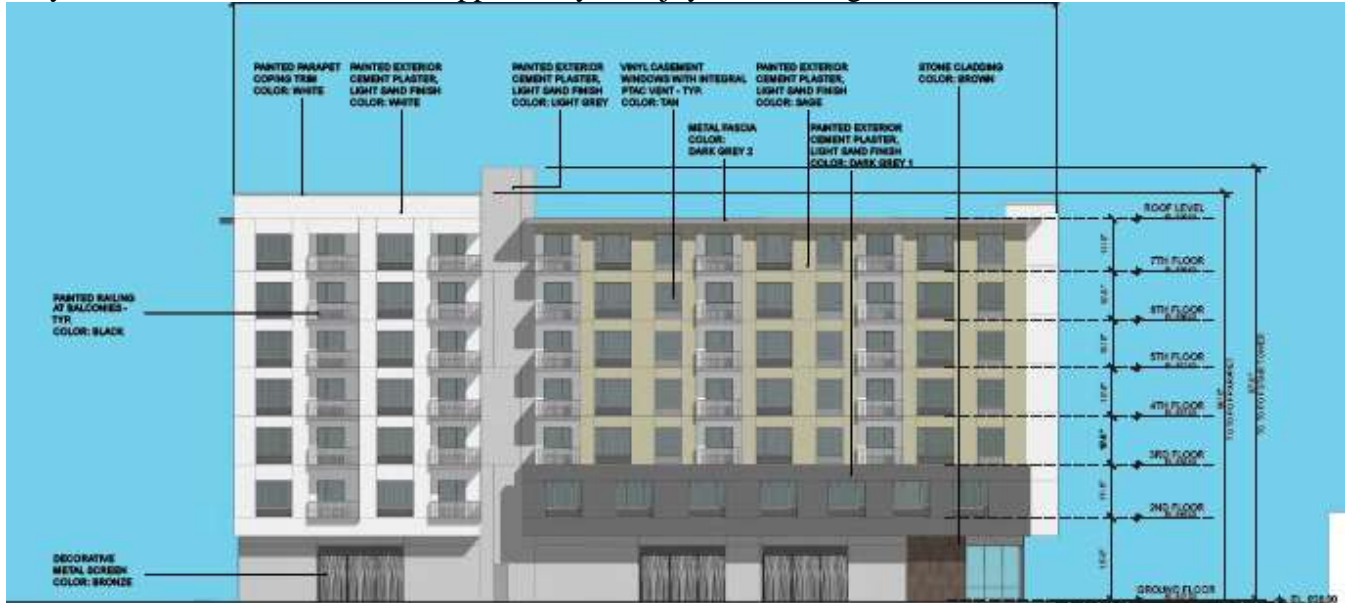
One of the most significant changes is that the building has been rotated so that the edge courtyard no longer faces toward the future “alley” and will now face north. The second most notable difference is the large gull-wing “lanai-type” structure added to the northeast corner over a proposed roof “sky garden” area. Additionally, sections of the roofline have been raised/lowered to break up the massing of the structure and add greater articulation to the project. The first floor along DeSoto is now mostly glass, creating a feeling that the building is “floating” above the ground.



*New North elevation (Courtyard is open area in center of illustration).*

An assessment of the architectural changes, new site orientation and additional improvements being presented in this revised project plan go a long way to making the proposed structure more dramatic, more distinctive and far more inviting than the previous iteration. The “sky garden” open-beam gull-

wing roof helps to set the structure off from surrounding College District buildings, and by rotating the inner courtyards, offers residents a better opportunity to enjoy more sunlight.



*New West elevation along connectivity corridor/drive*

**Proposed Materials, and Architectural Styling and Design**



The initial architect’s materials palette calls for an exterior aggregation of: stucco, wood patterned cladding, stone cladding, metal clad supports and bronze colored windows and doors for the ground

level. The stucco and cement areas will be painted in dark and light grey, sage and white. Balconies are proposed to be finished in black iron railings.



**Proposed garage door treatment uses iron slat styling similar to style of balconies.**

### **Project landscaping:**

The developer submitted a landscape plan in his initial proposal and intends to maintain the same plant palette for the revised proposed structure. The palette shows California Sycamore, Olive and Ginkgo as the primary trees that will be planted for shade and decoration around the property and in the two inner courtyards.

Smaller, more colorful trees – Acacia Golden Wattle, Crape Myrtle, Redbud and Strawberry trees—will be used as accents to the drought-resistant shrubs and ground cover that is also proposed for the landscape palette.

Additionally, the landscape plan call for numerous benches, planters, tables, and an active play zone to be part of the project. A dog facility will also be included.

### **Case Leader Assessment:**

The Developer and the architect have made a number of substantial changes to the project which elevates it from what was initially proposed. There is now more articulation to break up massing. There is a major architectural addition to break the “boxiness” and density of the initial concept. And the overall design of the project seems less institutional.



Yet, with even the new design elements and site changes that have been made, this reviewer has to question if it is enough to truly make the project a building that so many of today's seniors will want to claim as "home." The overall design is still very similar to the other two senior living projects planned for Warner Center—one even featuring similar gull-wing roof designs that look just like the newly proposed structure. Also, the building still depends on the "elevated box-within-a-box" treatments for most of its design, which is the architectural design now being put forward for almost every new project in Warner Center. One has to question if all this architectural replication will make Warner Center look like a cookie-cutter offering of "me too" building design that is already quickly going out of style.

Overall, the new design is acceptable—but it isn't outstanding. And as it stands, it misses a real opportunity to create a project that will not only get talked about and admired, but which will continue to draw more and more seniors as residents because they want to make their final home in a building that's distinct and envied by their peers.

**Questions for PLUM:**

- Are 120 spaces sufficient parking for residents, guests plus staff? How many staff will be on-site at peak times? Where will they park?
- Can anything else be done architecturally to "plus" this design? How can this project be made to look truly unique?
- Will the building provide busses/cars to ferry residents around WC?
- Will there be electric hook-ups for cars in the garage? How many?
- Are the dog facilities for a large amount of live-in pets?
- Will there be connectivity on both the north and south in addition to the west?
- Is the proposed materials palette too much like all of the other projects we are seeing in WC? Are the colors too "me too?"
- The building contains no "extra storage" Is that a problem?
- Is the balcony material of black iron bars the right choice for this project? Or are there better options?

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## **Submission of PLUM Motion with conditions**

### **Case No. DIR-2019-3481-SPP-DI**

As pertains to Case DIR-2019-3481-SPP-DI, having held two public meetings for the application filed by CA Senior Living Holdings to construct a 189,211 SF 7-story senior living facility with a total of 190 units and guest rooms for Independent Living, Assisted Living and Memory Care residents with 120 parking spaces for guests and residents, to replace a 1.5 story commercial structure at 6033 DeSoto Ave. in the College District of Warner Center, the Planning, Land Use and Mobility Committee hereby finds that:

WHEREAS, the Applicant has designed and submitted a proposed senior living facility with a total of 190 units and guest rooms that complies with the existing WC 2035 Specific Plan guidelines and is seeking a determination to clarify the required parking; and

WHEREAS, the Applicant is asking for a Director's Interpretation to determine that the reduced parking requirements under the LA Municipal Code for a senior care facility apply; and

WHEREAS, the project meets all other requirements for the College District of the WC 2035 Plan including a 3.14:1 FAR and all landscape and setback requirements; and

WHEREAS, the developer has addressed and resolved a number of the key issues originally raised to the first design of this project;

WHEREAS the applicant has agreed to bring the final garage door design for PLUM approval prior to the WHWCNC Board meeting on October, 16, 2019;

THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Planning, Land Use and Mobility Committee, for the findings and conditions stated herein, finds that the submitted application and plans for the proposed project at 6033 DeSoto Avenue, Woodland Hills, 91367, receive the support of the Board of the Woodland Hills-Warner Center Neighborhood Council to APPROVE the requested actions contingent upon the following conditions:

**Conditions:**

1. All plans presented on October 16, 2019 at the Board Meeting of the Woodland Hills – Warner Center Neighborhood Council (WHWCNC) shall be dated as such and re-submitted to Planning as an (updated) project application submittal.
2. The applicant will not submit any significant, further updated plans without first presenting them to the WHWCNC for support.
3. Any further modifications to the site plan and elevation(s)/architecture will be presented first to the WHWCNC for support before submitting them to City Planning.
4. The Applicant will place a project information sign on the project at the beginning of construction of sufficient size that is clearly visible to the street showing a rendering of the proposed/approved project building, plus specifics as to the building size, ownership and contact information. The sign shall be removed upon receipt of the Certificate of Occupancy.
5. All conditions herein shall be printed on one of the Project Summary pages as a commitment to and acceptance of these conditions
6. No temporary banners or signs shall be displayed on the exterior of the building or on the property grounds shall be displayed except for the single construction sign as noted in Condition #4.
7. All current and future property owner(s) accept the responsibility to provide reasonable accommodations (including grade adjustments) to adjacent property owners to facilitate the integration of Pedestrian Adapted Pathways along and between projects.
8. A “Right Turn Only” sign shall be erected at the southern exit of the front driveway.
9. No satellite dishes shall be allowed to be attached to any/all balcony or walkway railings.

The PLUM Committee recommends that the City of Los Angeles Planning Department and Council District 3 Councilmember Bob Blumenfield be notified by the Woodland Hills – Warner Center Neighborhood Council Board of its findings to support this application and its subsequent conditions.

Motion: August Steurer      Second: Sean McCarthy

**Vote:    Aye: 4      Nay: 3      Abstain: 0      Recused: 0**