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February 21, 2012

Los Angeles City Planning Department
200 N. Spring Street, Room 621
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Case No. DIR 2011-3197
16304 S. Vermont Avenue

Dear City Planning Department:

After holding a Planning and Land Use Committee meeting on February 7, 2012, with Affirmed Housing Group and Path Ventures, and also a Board meeting on February 14, 2012, at which Affirmed Housing Group and Path Ventures were also present, our Board voted 9-0 to make the following provisional comments on the proposed 81 senior apartment project at 16304 S. Vermont Avenue in the C2-1 zone. Until we have definite financial details of Affirmed Housing Group's costs and financing in building this project and receiving subsidies, then we cannot assess their need for the density bonus incentive which they are requesting and therefore cannot take a definite position on a number of details of this project. We understand that this property is currently in escrow and will not be developed by the current property owner.

We do note that this is an attractively designed project with appropriate landscaping and setbacks on both Vermont Avenue and also Ainsworth. We support the project providing housing to those 62 and older, with a deed restriction to that effect. We understand that these residents will be living on fixed incomes. We feel reassured knowing that besides the on-site manager, the Vermont Villas is partnering with Path Ventures to have a case manager present to assist residents with their social service needs.

However, because of our concerns for the height of the proposed building, in relation to most buildings in the existing neighborhood and our concern that 43 parking spaces is not sufficient for 81 leasees and their potential roommates and caregivers and guests, we ask that the following be included in this project:

- Either three levels of residential apartments with below grade (underground) parking or two levels of residential apartments with at grade parking, either of which would lower the height of the project and also add more parking spaces on site

- The lowest possible height for the elevator (5 feet) and other mechanical equipment structures
- An entrance on Vermont Avenue which is the major street and more traveled than the 163rd Street entrance; this would be for safety reasons, especially after dark
- More than two stairways for emergency exit; we support four, with two on the north side of the building and two on the south side of the building
- At least one elevator on both the west side and the east side of the building for closer access to individual apartment units
- Construction of sidewalks on the Vermont Avenue, 163rd Street, and Ainsworth Street sides of the building
- Undergrounding of utility poles along Vermont Avenue between Gardena Blvd. and 163rd Street
- Local hiring for construction
- Deed restriction of leasing to those 62 years of age or older
- Deed restriction of affordability of the housing for a period of at least thirty years from the date of the first leases for residents

We ask that another public hearing be scheduled once Affirmed Housing's application and financing documents are complete. At that time we and others of the community will then be able to thoroughly review its design, FAR (floor to area ratio), and evaluate whether this density bonus is necessary for the economic feasibility of this project. We also ask that while this project is in escrow that the Purchase Transaction be part of the public record so that the economics of the project can be more easily analyzed in the context of the pending purchase and the concessions sought by Affirmed Housing Group for this SB1818 project.

Sincerely,



Neodros Bridgeforth, Corresponding Secretary
Harbor Gateway North Neighborhood Council

cc: Councilman Joe Buscaino – Council District 15
Quincy O'Neal, Field Deputy – Council District 15
Anna Scott, Senior Project Manager – Affirmed Housing Group