



**WENDY GREUEL**  
COUNCILMEMBER, SECOND DISTRICT  
CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

CITY HALL  
200 N. Spring STREET  
ROOM 475  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012  
(213) 473-7002  
FAX (213) 680-7895

NORTH HOLLYWOOD  
6350 LAUREL CANYON BLVD., #201  
NORTH HOLLYWOOD, CA 91606  
(818) 755-7676  
FAX (818) 755-7862

SUNLAND-TUJUNGA  
7747 FOOTHILL BOULEVARD  
TUJUNGA, CA 91042  
(818) 352-3287  
FAX (818) 352-8563

November 8, 2006

Ms. Gail Goldberg  
Director of City Planning  
200 North Spring Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**Re: DIR-2006-9072-BSA  
Home Depot – Appeal from Issuance of Building Permits**

Dear Ms. *Gail* Goldberg:

Thank you for providing two of your staff members for last Monday's community meeting about the proposed Sunland Home Depot store. Your staff and the LADBS representatives were very helpful, and they stayed until nearly midnight answering the community's questions.

During the meeting, the following issues arose which have a direct bearing on the referenced appeal that is currently under review in your office:

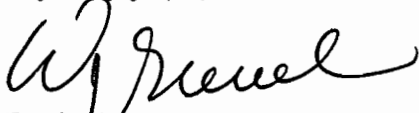
- Whether the auto-repair area of the store can be changed to any other use without triggering a Specific Plan review. When Dave Keim of LADBS learned about a possible change from K-Mart's auto-repair area to either retail or "no use" in the Home Depot store, he indicated that the department may have to take a closer look at the use issue. The issue is made even more complicated by the fact that there was a lengthy interruption of the auto-repair use while K-Mart occupied the building.
- Whether the fact that some of Home Depot's sales are wholesale affects the conclusion that Home Depot's use category is "retail." It was pointed out at the meeting that a significant part of Home Depot's sales is to contractors and that those sales are wholesale. The argument was made that a dual approach to sales (wholesale and retail) should be a change of use and should trigger a Specific Plan review.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS  
CHAIR: TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE  
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MEMBER: AUDITS & GOVERNMENTAL EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE  
MEMBER: ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

- Whether the community had access to the actual approved plans before it filed its appeal. From comments at the Monday night meeting, it appears that the appeal may have been based on a set of plans that was revised before permits were issued. I have arranged for the community to review the approved plans next week, and that review may cause a shift in some of the appeal issues.
- Whether structural calculations should have been required for the building's new floor slab. While I assume that LADBS required calculations to justify the slab's thickness and reinforcing, it appears that structural calculations were not required for the building as a whole because LADBS did not consider the slab to be an integral part of the building's structure. It would be helpful if your review of the appeal could consider whether overall structural calculations should have been required in this case.
- Whether the flood control easement on the property was properly relocated when the original K-Mart building was build. LADBS commented at the Monday night meeting that a 25 foot wide flood control easement was relocated to an area outside the K-Mart building and that the old easement was re-compacted to the satisfaction of the department. That was the first time anyone in the community heard of the relocation. I hope that your action on the appeal will deal with this issue in detail.
- Whether the cost of the remodeling work exceeded 50% of the building's replacement cost. Under the Foothill Specific Plan, if the remodeling of a building within the plan area costs more than 50% of the building's replacement cost, the remodel is characterized as a "Significant Project" and it requires a Specific Plan review. LADBS concluded that the remodel cost was less than half of the replacement cost and that no Specific Plan review was required. The issue gets more complicated if the cost of the work related to several other permits is included as part of the remodel cost. I would appreciate your efforts to clarify the cost issue as part of your action.

As you know, LADBS responded to the community's well-written 30 page appeal with a 3 page report. The lack of detail in that report created many more problems than it solved. In order to avoid a repeat of that situation, I urge you to deal with each and every point in the referenced appeal in detail so that the community will have the full benefit of your department's reasoning.

Very truly yours,



Wendy Greuel  
Councilmember, 2<sup>nd</sup> District  
Los Angeles City Council