



Mr. Adam Tartakovsky
Crescent Heights Development
450 Sansome Street, Suite 750
San Francisco, CA 94111

July 15, 2014

Ref: 325 Fremont Street – Residential Development

Dear Mr. Tartakovsky,

Thank you for bringing your proposed mixed-use project at 325 Fremont Street to the San Francisco Housing Action Coalition's (SFHAC) Project Review Committee on March 12, 2014. Upon review, we believe your project has many merits and will contribute to SFHAC's mission of increasing the supply of well-designed, well-located housing in San Francisco. Please review this letter, as it explains how your project meets our guidelines. We have attached a copy of our project review guidelines for your reference.

Project Description:

The project consists of a 250-ft residential tower with two floors of below-grade parking. The project proposes 118 units, including 23 studios (19%), 47 one-bedrooms (40%) and 48 two-bedrooms (41%).

Land Use:

The SFHAC believes this is an entirely appropriate location for new housing. It makes effective use of a small (6,430 sf), constrained vacant lot in the rapidly evolving Rincon Hill neighborhood where many of the City's tallest buildings are being approved and built.

Density:

The project is in the Rincon Hill Plan Area, which has no Code density limits. It is of comparable density to the many new developments being built in the neighborhood. Because of its proximity to the urban core, it has been zoned for significant height and density. As proposed, we applaud its including the maximum height and bulk permitted and note that it replaces an earlier 70-unit project that was approved for this site.

Affordability:

At the time of your presentation, you had not decided on whether to provide the below-market-rate (BMR) units on site or pay the *in lieu* fee. The on-site option would equate to 14 BMR units. The amount of the *in lieu* fee would depend on the final unit count. All

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things being equal, the SFHAC's strong preference would be to provide BMR units on site.

Parking and Alternative Transportation:

The site is located near numerous transit Muni lines and is close to GG Transit, AC Transit, SamTrans and BART. Your proposal includes 41 car parking spaces, including two car share spaces, a total ratio of 0.35:1. The SFHAC supports your intent to achieve a 1:1 bike-parking ratio.

Preservation:

The proposed project is located adjacent to an older, two-story concrete building of possible historic merit on the corner of Folsom and Fremont Streets. Our members discussed how the proposed residential building related to the older structure, but did not reach any consensus. There are no structures of historical significance on the proposed site.

Urban Design:

The SFHAC believes that the steps you have taken to ensure your project reflects the character of the surrounding neighborhood are appropriate. In particular, this is to create a continuous pedestrian experience with the existing streetscape, including new street trees and expanded sidewalks.

There was extended discussion among our members about how the project's open space requirements were addressed, including the building's private balconies and improvements to Zeno Place at the rear of the project. We subsequently received a detailed analysis that itemizes the project's features showing how the Rincon Hill Area Plan open space requirements have been satisfied.

There was discussion among our members about whether the rooftop open space was adequately protected from strong prevailing winds and whether the balconies were analyzed for wind impacts. However, the Rincon Hill FEIR analyzed wind impacts and requires mitigations if a building causes impact to pedestrians, which this building does not.

Environmental Features:

Among other features, the proposal includes a high-performance glazing system as well as balcony design that shades the facade to reduce solar gain. The building design incorporates a storm-water management system and includes permeable paving zones on both Fremont Street and Zeno Place.

The final environmental rating is not known yet, but will target LEED Silver or higher.

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Community Input:

You have evidently worked with the surrounding community and held a Pre-Application meeting in April 2013. Subsequently, the project sponsor told SFHAC staff that your team has met with and gotten feedback from a variety of neighborhood representatives.

Thank you for bringing your project to SFHAC for review. We believe that this project makes a valuable contribution to helping satisfy the demand for housing that is close to the job centers of our urban core. We endorse it without reservation. Please keep us abreast of any changes and let us know how we may be of assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "T. Colen", is written on a light blue rectangular background.

Tim Colen, Executive Director

CC: SF Planning Commission

SFHAC Project Review Criteria

Land Use: Housing should be an appropriate use of the site given the context of the adjacent properties and the surrounding neighborhood and should enhance neighborhood livability.

Density: The project should take full advantage of the maximum unit density and/or building envelope, allowable under the zoning rules.

Affordability: The need for affordable housing, including middle income (120-150 of Area Median Income) housing, is a critical problem and SFHAC gives special support to projects that propose creative ways to expand or improve unit affordability beyond the legally mandated requirements.

Parking and Alternative Transportation: SFHAC expects the projects it endorses to include creative strategies to reduce the need for parking, such as ample bicycle storage, provision of space for car-share vehicles on-site or nearby, un-bundling parking cost from residential unit cost, and measures to incentivize transit use. Proximity to transit should result in less need for parking.

In districts with an as-of-right maximum and discretionary approval up to an absolute maximum, SFHAC will support parking exceeding the as-of-right maximum only to the extent the Code criteria for doing so are clearly met. In districts where the minimum parking requirement is one parking space per residential unit (1:1), the SFHAC will not, except in extraordinary circumstances, support a project with parking in excess of that amount.

Preservation: If there are structures of significant historic or cultural merit on the site, their retention and/or incorporation into the project consistent with historic preservation standards is encouraged. If such structures are to be demolished, there should be compelling reasons for doing so.

Urban Design: The project should promote principles of good urban design: Where appropriate, contextual design that is compatible with the adjacent streetscape and existing neighborhood character while at the same time utilizing allowable unit density: pleasant and functional private and/or common open space; pedestrian, bicycle and transit friendly site planning; and design treatments that protect and enhance the pedestrian realm, with curb cuts minimized and active ground floor uses provided.

Projects with a substantial number of multiple bedroom units should consider including features that will make the project friendly to families with children.

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Environmental Features: SFHAC is particularly supportive of projects that employ substantial and/or innovative measures that will enhance their sustainability and reduce their carbon footprint.

Community Input: Projects for which the developer has made a good faith effort to communicate to the community and to address legitimate neighborhood concerns, without sacrificing SFHAC's objectives, will receive more SFHAC support.