



January 14, 2015

Will Mollard, Principal  
Workshop1  
1030 Grayson Street  
Berkeley, CA 94710

**Ref: 750 Harrison Street – Residential Development**

Dear Mr. Mollard,

Thank you for bringing your proposal for 750 Harrison Street to the San Francisco Housing Action Coalition's (SFHAC's) Project Review Committee on November 12, 2014. Upon review, we conclude that 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. We endorse this project with the listed reservations and suggestions. Please review this letter, which explains how your project meets our guidelines as well as areas in which improvements are suggested. Also see our report card, which grades the proposed project according to each guideline. We have attached our guidelines for your reference.

**Project Description**

The project proposes the construction of 77 market-rate single-occupancy-room (SRO) units above 2,540 square feet of ground-floor retail, with one car share space.

**Land Use**

The project will replace an existing nightclub. The SFHAC believes this is an appropriate location for new housing, as it is within close proximity of the City's main job centers and to various transit options.

**Density**

The project maximizes the building envelope by providing 77 SROs. The average unit size is 323 square feet. The zoning at this site has no density limits.

**Affordability**

Fourteen of the units will be on-site below-market-rate, per the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance. This equates to 17.6 percent of the units, higher than most of the new developments in the City. In addition, the small size of these homes will bring them within financial reach of more residents. The SFHAC strongly supports adding housing that is affordable by design.

**Parking and Alternative Transportation**

This car-free project epitomizes transit-oriented development. In essence, it is dense, urban infill, located close to abundant transit and bicycle options. The project may offer one car share space, but there are already several car share pods in the area. The SFHAC encourages car-free design, which will encourage residents to use alternative modes of transportation and reduce private automobile use. It also improves the housing's affordability. There is a generous allotment of 90 bike parking spaces, which we applaud.

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**Preservation**

There are no structures of significant cultural or historic merit on or near the site that would be affected by the project.

**Urban Design**

This project has taken design inspiration from other developments in the neighborhood. The open space will be provided on the second floor and rooftop, both with extensive landscaping. Additionally, each unit offers a private balcony, though some members said they would be improved by making them deeper. The project will also improve the neighborhood's pedestrian realm by the addition of planting and street trees.

Our members did not encourage retail along Rizal Street. However, we are supportive of putting in a space that would encourage more pedestrian and community activity. Our members would also like to see a more prominent building entrance. As it is now, the building's entrance lacks definition.

Finally, we are pleased that the project will remove one curb cut.

**Environmental Features**

Since the project is still in its early stages, many of these features have not been finalized. However, one of our members noted this might be an excellent opportunity at which to pursue "passive house" certification. Part of the roof could be used to incorporate rooftop solar photovoltaic or thermal, since only a portion of it appears programmed for open space uses.

**Community Input**

There are not many neighborhood organizations or community groups to engage. However, you have been thorough in collaborating with TODCO on your project. Since you are still in the very early stages with your project, we encourage you to come back to us when the design is more finalized.

Thank you for bringing your project to the SFHAC for review. We are pleased to endorse it with the reservations and suggestions noted above. Please keep us abreast of any changes and let us know how we may be of assistance.

Sincerely,



Tim Colen, Executive Director

CC: City Planning Commission

## **SFHAC Project Review Guidelines**

**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.