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June 4, 2015

## **2000-2070 Bryant Street – Mixed-Use Development**

Dear Mr. Podell,

Thank you for bringing your proposed project for 2000-2070 Bryant Street to the San Francisco Housing Action Coalition's (SFHAC) Project Review Committee on May 13, 2015. Following review and thorough discussion with our members, we endorse the project. Although our members expressed some reservations about the plans, we feel the project aligns well with the objectives of the Eastern Neighborhoods Plan and meets our goals of increasing the supply of well-designed, well-located housing in San Francisco. Please review our letter, which reflects these views and includes other recommendations made by our members for improvements.

Please see our report card, which grades your proposal according to our guidelines. We have attached a copy of our project review guidelines for your reference.

**Project Description:** The project proposes 274 new homes in a 68-foot tall building with 5,400 square feet of retail and 160 off-street parking spaces located in a podium.

**Land Use:** This is an excellent location for new housing. The site is located in a pedestrian and bike friendly neighborhood with numerous amenities nearby. Various retail, office, automotive and entertainments spaces currently occupy the site. Three residential units also occupy the site. All three units are vacant, so no residents will be displaced. The project aligns with the objectives of the Eastern Neighborhoods Area Plan. The neighborhood will be improved by infill housing of the type proposed.

**Density:** The proposed project takes advantage of the building envelope and includes a mix of unit types, including studios, one- and two-bedroom homes. The surrounding neighborhood is relatively low density and the project would increase it.

**Affordability:** The project will include 44 below-market-rate (BMR) homes on site at 55 percent of the area median income. This equates to 16 percent of the total units, per Urban Mixed-Use zoning.

While we understand it is very difficult and expensive to provide more BMRs than required, we strongly encourage you to explore possible solutions that would enable your project to deliver more affordable housing. These could include implementing the Inclusionary "dial" which could allow more BMRs for a wider range of incomes. Another would be taking advantage of a density bonus, which could include more units, as well as more BMRs.

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**Parking and Alternative Transportation:** The site is located in pedestrian and bicycle-friendly neighborhood, near multiple transit options. The 16<sup>th</sup> Street and 24<sup>th</sup> Street BART stations are both within walking distance and several Muni bus stops are close by.

We appreciate you responding to our feedback about the bicycling parking and increasing the number of spaces from 165, as proposed at your presentation, to 274. This includes 248 Class I stalls and 26 Class II stalls, resulting in a 1:1 bike parking space to unit ratio. We are comfortable with the amount of car parking proposed, 160 spaces. However, we encourage you to bring down the total number of spaces if possible, in accordance with the City's transit-first policy. You also indicated the project would include two car share spaces.

Our members support your decision to complete a Trip Demand Management (TDM) Plan. One of the programs you stated you would pursue includes subsidizing memberships for a car share program. We are very supportive of pursuing innovative solutions that enable residents to get around without the use of a private automobile.

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

**Urban Design:** Our members felt strongly that this project too closely mimics the look and feel of the industrial buildings that are already present in the neighborhood, as opposed to reflecting the coming transformation of the neighborhood. The brick building appears too industrial and the other wood building would benefit from more breaking up of its massing. Our members were also disappointed there is no mid-block passage.

However, we do feel the pedestrian bulb-outs along Florida, 18<sup>th</sup> and Bryant Streets, as well as the landscaping and streetscape improvements, will improve the pedestrian experience for the neighborhood.

**Environmental Features:** We are pleased that you plan to implement individual water metering the units. You indicated this project would be Green Point certified. We encourage you to explore new methods to help "green" the project and conserve and reuse water.

**Community Input:** Our members believe you have made a good faith effort to reach out to and engage the surrounding community on your project. You acknowledged the reception to your plans has been mixed. You've responded to concerns from the arts community by removing two units from your project and adding a retail space that could hopefully be used for the arts.

We understand some trade union members of SFHAC tried to reach out to you over the course of the past several months and that you had not responded. We would prefer that coming into the presentation you had more information regarding your plans for first source hiring.

Thank you for presenting your plans for 2000-2070 Bryant Street to our Project Review Committee. Our members expressed regret the project's urban design may set an unwelcome

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precedent for the neighborhood. However, it does align with the goal of the Eastern Neighborhoods Plan, a plan we strongly supports, and meets our organization's goals. For these reasons, we endorse the project, with the reservations noted above. Please keep us abreast of any changed and let us know how we may be of assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim Colen", is centered below the word "Sincerely,". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Tim Colen  
Executive Director

## **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.