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Ms. Kim Diamond, Development Director
Trumark Urban
90 New Montgomery Street, Suite 750
San Francisco, CA 94105

February 4, 2015

Ref: 1554 Market Street – Mixed-use Development

Dear Ms. Diamond,

Thank you for bringing your proposed mixed-use development at 1554 Market Street to the San Francisco Housing Action Coalition's (SFHAC) Project Review Committee on December 10, 2014. Following review and discussion, our Committee believes the project has merit and will make a substantial contribution to SFHAC's mission of increasing the supply of well-designed, well-located housing that meets the needs of both present and future San Franciscans. This letter reflects our endorsement of your project and includes recommendations made by our members for modest improvements. We believe, however, that in general this project embodies the best principals of urban design.

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

Project Description

The project proposes to demolish two under-utilized commercial buildings and replace them with two independent 120-foot-tall buildings, consisting of 109 for-sale homes, 4,760 square feet of ground-floor retail and subterranean parking.

Land Use

Two under-utilized commercial buildings currently occupy the site. This is an excellent site for new housing, as it is in close proximity to the City's jobs and is well served by transit and bike lanes.

Density

The project proposes a mix of junior-one-bedroom, one-bedroom and two-bedroom units. The SFHAC believes this is an appropriate location for a high-density project and conforms closely to the guidelines of the Market and Octavia Area Plan.

Affordability

The SFHAC supports the decision to provide the Inclusionary units on site. This will create 13 new below-market-rate homes, or 12 percent of the total unit count. Because the project is designed with fewer high-end amenities, this will help keep the homeowner's association fees within reach of the BMR owners, a strategy SFHAC applauds.



The San Francisco Housing Action Coalition advocates for the creation of well-designed, well-located housing, at ALL levels of affordability, to meet the needs of San Franciscans, present and future.

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Parking and Alternative Transportation

The site is adjacent to numerous Muni lines, is near the Civic Center BART station, and is located on the Market Street bicycle corridor, a major bike route. In addition, the neighborhood has high walkability scores. The project proposes a car-parking ratio of 0.25 spaces per residential unit, or 28 spaces. This ratio is appropriate for the location.

The project proposes 103 bicycle parking spaces, a less than a 1:1 parking ratio, as well as one car share space. We strongly encourage you to increase the amount of bike parking and explore options under a transportation demand management analysis.

Preservation

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

Urban Design

The project agrees well with the intent of the Market and Octavia Area Plan and will significantly improve the pedestrian experience along Market and Oak Streets with the addition of active ground-floor retail and extensive street landscaping. Open space will be provided on the roof and in a courtyard between the two buildings. Our members noted the tight space constraints your team faced in trying to accommodate two buildings, but encourage your exploring ways to maximize open space for the building's residents wherever possible.

Environmental Features

The project would comply with the City's Green Point rating. The SFHAC encourages you to consider ways to further reduce your proposal's environmental footprint. We also suggest you consider incorporating individual water sub-metering. It is likely that in the next year there will be local or statewide initiatives that mandate sub-metering in new multifamily residential projects.

Community Input

Trumark Urban has consistently excelled in effectively engaging the community in its proposed developments. This project is no exception. You have met with the Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association (HVNA) several times and incorporated their feedback into your development. This includes adding retail along Oak Street.

Thank you for submitting this project to the SFHAC Project Review Committee. We are pleased to endorse this project subject to our concerns about increasing bike parking. Please keep us abreast of any changes or updates and let us know how we may be of assistance.

Sincerely,



Tim Colen, Executive Director

CC: 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.