



95 Brady Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
415 541 9001
info@sfnac.org
www.sfnac.org

Mr. Joe Peters, Senior Development Manager
Build Inc.
315 Linden Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

July 23, 2015

Dear Mr. Peters,

Thank you for presenting your plans for 1532 Harrison Street to our Project Review Committee on July 15th, 2015. After thorough review and discussion, we are pleased to endorse your project. We believe it has merit and aligns with our mission of increasing the supply of well-designed, well-located housing in San Francisco.

Please review our letter, which explains how your project meets our guidelines as well as areas suggested for improvement. Also, see our report card, which grades your project according to each guideline. We have attached a copy of our project review guidelines for your reference.

Project Description: The project proposes to build approximately 142 rental homes with one space for ground-floor retail and one level of subterranean parking.

Land Use: The site is currently used as a parking lot by a nearby auto dealership. Housing is a much better use, as there are numerous job centers, neighborhood amenities and transit options nearby.

Density: The project takes full advantage of the building envelope and proposes a mix of unit types. Under the Western SoMa Area Plan, 40 percent of the units must be two-bedrooms. The project meets that code. Our members are particularly supportive of your plans to add an extra floor of housing by taking advantage of the required excavation of contaminated soil. This increases the density and number of units for your project.

Our members would have been interested to see how your earlier group housing proposal would have turned out. We were quite enthusiastic about it and believe it's unfortunate that plan could not be pursued.

Affordability: Your project will include approximately 23 below-market-rate units (BMRs) on site, 16 percent of the total unit count. By increasing the project's density you were able to increase the number of BMRs. These units are also relatively smaller, which will bring them within financial reach of more residents.

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Parking and Alternative Transportation: The site is well served by transit, with both the Civic Center and 16th Street BART Stations within walking distance of the project. The neighborhood is also pedestrian- and bike-friendly. We're very supportive of your plans to make your project GreenTRIP Certified, an initiative of Transform. Some of the innovative measures proposed to improve transportation options for the building's residents are subsidizing their BikeShare and car share memberships and providing discounted Muni transit passes.

We'd ideally prefer one bike parking space per bedroom, with at least one bike space per unit. For car parking, we urge you to not exceed the as-of-right ratio of 0.5 spaces per unit and instead provide more car share spaces. We rarely support a Conditional Use (CU) for parking. We routinely hear from project sponsors that they have over-estimated the need for car parking and under-estimated the need for bike parking.

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: We're very encouraged by your plans for Eagle Plaza and the building's laneways. These laneways will break up the massing of your project and add well-designed pedestrian pathways for the building's residents. The homes along the laneways and sidewalks will also include stoops. The project proposes helping fund Eagle Plaza through an in-kind payment. Since this project falls under the rules of the Western SoMa Plan, the rooftop cannot contribute to the project's open space requirements, a policy that never made sense to us. Some of our members noted that the laneways may feel a little narrow, but we understand widening them would sacrifice units.

Environmental Features: Our members support the steps you took to make your project greener. Some of these measures include pursuing GreenTRIP Certification and voluntarily adding solar thermal on the rooftop. We hope you will pursue at least a LEED Gold rating or greater for the building.

Community Input: You have conducted extensive outreach to the surrounding community and informed them about the plans for the project. You have held several community meetings and numerous private meetings with other groups in the neighborhood. We're particularly supportive of the level of engagement you've achieved with Eagle Bar.

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Thank you for presenting your plans for 1532 Harrison Street to our Project Review Committee. We are pleased to endorse it, with the one reservation about parking. 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 "Tim Colen", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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.