

Date: May 5, 2020
To: Balboa Reservoir Community Advisory Committee
From: Michael Ahrens, Member
Subject: City Responses to My Comments on DSG

The following are my comments on the responses provided by the Planning Department (“Department”) and Developer to my comments on the draft Design Guidelines and Standards (“DSG”) as presented at the April 8th BRCAC meeting, on behalf of the Westwood Park Association (“WPA”).

1. CCSF Parking Demand

On April 26, 2020 I sent to Leigh Lutenski of the City a comment as a member of the BRCAC entitled “Unresolved Parking Demand by City College.” That memorandum, together with my verbal comments at the April 27, 2020 meeting, constitute our comments on the severe parking problem that will face CCSF due to this development and the anticipated building of the Performing Arts Center and other structures on the CCSF East Lot. (Hereinafter the “CCSF Parking Memo”). We would like a response to those matters raised in the CCSF Parking Memo.

We thank Leigh and the City for uploading the CCSF Parking Memo on the BRCAC Website, but again request that the Fehr & Peers 2019 TDM be uploaded on the BRCAC Website so the public can review that document.

The Department responded to my comment regarding the anticipated amount of public parking to be provided at the project site by stating as follow:

"RCP is required to continue to collect data in the coming years prior to constructing the public parking to determine the actual

need, the city will review and approve the analysis determining the final size of the public parking."

The above response defies logic. According to DSEIR p.S-5, construction of Phase 1 for the approved project, is scheduled to begin in 2021. How can the developer make necessary changes to the project based on need once grading and excavation has begun while it continues to collect data in the coming years to determine the actual need? How can the City demand that the needed parking be added once the Project has been constructed? Please advise how the on-going collection of parking demand data is or will be structured, analyzed and how the additional parking demand beyond the current stated 220 spaces will be accommodated off site?

2. Affordable Housing:

The Department chose not to respond to the affordable housing unit mix issue. It has been documented for at least the last three decades that this City does not have sufficient dwelling units with 3 or more bedrooms and that low-income households live in overcrowded conditions at a greater percentage than households of above average means. The Department did not challenge the fact that rental housing is more likely to be overcrowded since in this City, larger households of all races and incomes have difficulty securing housing with three or more bedrooms at any price. Yet, the response states that:

". . . [B]efore affordable housing is developed, Bridge or Mission will conduct Market studies which helps inform the affordable family units that we build will be the rightsized for the families in San Francisco."

If market studies are needed, they should have been performed as part of the submission of the Response to the RFP and most certainly prior to the City's approval of the Development Agreement. This response demonstrates that the Department has not required essential design elements, such as analyzing the unit mix of the project, prior to approval of the zoning change, the Development Agreement or the project.

The Department rejected WPA's request to raise the unit mix for three bedroom units to be 30- 35%. The reasoning provided was because the mix is already higher than Planning Code requirements.

However, the current project is different because it is being constructed on 17 acres of land owned by the City. Thus additional units with three or more bedroom would be justified and needed.

3. Location of Affordable Housing

The response to our comment regarding the location of the proposed affordable housing is that Bridge Housing, Mission housing and Habitat for Humanity will be seeking Low Income Housing Tax Credits, State grants and philanthropic dollars, that do not allow for integration within market rate building. The response also states that Bridge, Mission Housing and Habitat's separate ownership is fundamental to the development team's approach to the affordable housing component.

Can the Department and MOHCD clarify if any of the various City and State philanthropic grants for the proposed affordable units provided by Bridge and Mission Housing are currently in place or will be in place by start of construction since it is City Policy that affordable housing and market rate housing be completed at the same time?

4. DSG 6.1 and 6.16 (San Ramon)

We reserve all of our rights with respect to San Ramon and its use for the reasons set forth in prior documents. However, with that reservation in mind, we make the following additional observations:

We were concerned with the lack of an enforceable "slow bike lane" that will be shared with pedestrians using San Ramon Way to access the public Reservoir Park, the SFPUC public open space and Ocean Avenue businesses. Our comment to the "*slow bike path only*" response is two-fold. First, the 10' wide dimension is based on definition of shared use lane by AASHTO. Anyone who has walked on the Embarcadero sidewalk or any sidewalk in the City for that matter, knows that there is not such thing as "*slow bike path only*". In this City, pedestrians while walking in sidewalks and crosswalks are forced to regularly dodge speeding bicycles, rental scooters, skate boarders etc even though the City has spent millions of dollars on creating and improving dedicated bike lanes on City streets. If the Department cannot come up with a solution, WPA suggests a DSG that requires speed bumps be installed as

part of the San Ramon shared *slow bike path* within the Project site to protect pedestrians.

5. DSG Section 7.2 (Height Exceptions)

Please confirm that the Department rejected incorporation of Sections 260(b)(2)(A) through 260(b)(2)(e) of the Planning Code into the DSG. If the Department in fact chose not to incorporate these Sections, please justify why these long standing exceptions should not be included.

6. DSG Section 7.20 and 7.21 (Private and Public Parking Garages)

We requested that the location and number of the parking spaces for SFCC and the public be identified. Inasmuch as the demand for parking currently available on the project site by SFCC and the public will continue, we request a clarification on how the concept of shared residential/CCSF parking spaces will work. As part of the on-line administrative record provided on-line, there is an e-mail dated April 11, 2020 responding to a question from Jennie Poling, from the Project attorney stating:

*" I wanted to respond to your question of whether Block A & B **could** contain a mixed residential/public garage. The answer is yes. If a large public garage is not constructed at Blocks A & B (as is now unlikely), Block A & B would contain a smaller garage with both residential and public parking in a configuration similar to DSEIR Figure 2-11 (Additional Housing Option parking plan)".*

Based on this email, and the newly released draft Development Agreement, it appears that the project is not likely to provide a large public parking garage.

The Department response also points to a 2019 Fehr & Peer parking study, as follows:

- *". . . public parking requirement will be to provide + 220 public spaces for use between 9 am-5 pm. This is based on the analysis conducted by the Fehr & Peers (2019). . . . RCP is required to continue to collect data in the coming years prior to constructing*

the public parking to determine the actual need, the city will review and approved the analysis determining the final size of the public parking".

- *"The parking spaces are intended to be public parking, and we are interested in working with CCSF to establish a college specific parking".*
- *The above referenced parking study completed by Fehr and Peers indicated that the lower lot was primarily use between 9-5 pm. However, the final parking requirement will be informed by ongoing data collection".*

City College classes begin at 8 a.m. with many classes starting at 9 a.m. How many of the 220 shared residential/public spaces will be available to SFCC students, faculty and staff before 9 a.m. and after 5 p.m.? How can the project guarantee that students, faculty and staff will have the parking spaces available to them? Please also see our comments on CCSF parking demand, as noted in Section 1 above.

7. DSG Section 7.22 (On-Site Bicycle Parking)

The language in Section 7.22.3 related to class II bicycle parking spaces is vague. Section 155.1 Planning Code defines Class 2 Bicycle Parking Space(s) as "Bicycle racks located in a publicly-accessible, highly visible location intended for transient or short-term use by visitors, guests, and patrons to the building or use." The Project includes a new 2-acre Reservoir Park and the 1-acre SFPUC Open Space that are publicly accessible. With the planned "slow bike path" and the public using these two new public open spaces, the number of planned Class II bicycle spaces is insufficient. We suggest that the City study whether the DSG should increase the amount of Class II bicycle spaces.

8. DSG Section 7.9 and 7.27 (Open Space)

The intent of the comment provided refers to setting back roof decks 5'-10' from the edge of the buildings fronting on West Street and Lee Street to eliminate the visibility of the 42" high parapets, the much higher windscreens and other allowable rooftop exemptions from the height limit under the DSG.