

1337 Holly Development

7660 Fay Ave H-821
La Jolla CA 92037

September 23rd, 2024

Chair Bradley
Vice Chair Beltran
Member Grace
Member Rogers
Member Voronchihin
825 Imperial Beach Blvd
Imperial Beach, CA 91932

RE: DRB Meeting August 15th – Response to Recommendations

Dear Design Review Board Members,

We appreciate your consideration and approval. Please see our response to the following recommendations:

1. **The City should not grant any dedicated street parking spaces for the project.**
 - We understand the DRB is concerned about parking in the area. Please know that the current sites of the project have four driveway aprons, preventing any vehicles from parking in these areas. The new proposed site will only construct one apron, and the rest will be a curb and gutter. We have considered the DRB recommendations and reduced the street parking waiver to two spots. Per state law, we are entitled to three waivers by right, and this is our waiver.
2. **The project should designate off-street parking spaces to individual units and clearly label each space.**
 - We have numbered all the spaces, and our only intent is to use them for the apartments in the building. As we intend to provide parking for every apartment and others with two spots, it is not operationally effective to assign a parking spot to each unit until we complete the building and determine the best, most efficient way to assign parking.
3. **Enhance screening to reduce lighting impacts, especially to the northeast corner.**
 - We have considered the DRB comments and limited the light impact on the NE corner by only having balcony wall scones but no common area wall scones facing the NE Corner. Additionally, we've added Tecomaria Capensis "Yellow Cape Town" plants in the planter boxes on the courtyard level in the NE Corner. We will continue to review all areas in the NE Corner to use plants as screening material.

4. **Coordinate with neighbors to mitigate privacy concerns.**
 - As mentioned in the meeting by the neighbor, Mr. Jamie Zepeda, we have been in contact multiple times and will continue to work with him to support privacy concerns. Please note, currently, Mr. Zepeda has the property from the west, 1344-1348 Holly Ave, and the North West, 1355 Grove Ave, both 3-story buildings, which have clear views into Mr. Zepeda's backyard from both second-floor decks and third-floor windows. This project will have fewer neighbors and windows overlooking Mr. Zepeda's property, providing more privacy.
5. **Address concerns about building height and views**
 - After consideration, we have determined the project will prevent additional affordable housing from being built if the height is limited. After a review of the area, the West and Northwest corners will barely see over the ridge of the adjacent buildings, both 1344-1348 Holly Ave & 1355 Grove Ave. Their roof pitches are close to 36-38' after reviewing city records, impairing any views that the height of our building may have implied. Furthermore, with the addition of a park and the neighbor property, the setback from the east split between 100' & 55' creates a large enough buffer to keep privacy for the neighborhood. Also, after driving the neighborhood, the area comprises a healthy mix of multifamily buildings, overshadowing single-family homes in the south and north of the subject property as the area develops. This project falls within the neighborhood trend.
6. **Reduce the building to 3 stories or less.**
 - After consideration, we have determined height restrictions will prevent the building of additional affordable housing, which is, therefore, not feasible.
7. **Provide additional parking. Adequate parking is crucial for the project's viability.**
 - After consideration, the building is maxed out for parking. We are providing other solutions, such as bike racks, to encourage other means of transportation. Furthermore, due to the state regulations and density bonus law, we can provide very limited to no parking. However, we hope the board recognizes that we have provided 48 spots to continue supporting the neighborhood's parking concern and that it exceeds the number of apartments on-site.
8. **Require the developer to return to the DRB if the park is not dedicated to the City.**
 - As mentioned throughout the meeting, we intend to dedicate the park to the City. The planning department, park & rec department, and city manager continue healthy conversations to help make this possible.
9. **DRB recommends that the City Council carefully consider the waivers/concessions per state law, specifically those that would allow for height increases and reduced setbacks.**
 - We understand the DRB recommendations. Respectfully, we did not create nor pass state laws allowing these waivers and concessions. We are committed to building a staple project with a unique and charismatic design for the City of Imperial Beach that provides additional housing per the Housing Element produced by the City of Imperial Beach and approved by City Council.

10. Include one or more family-sized units with 2-3 bedrooms.

- After considering and reviewing our in-depth feasibility report, we found the City of the IB needs more one-bedrooms than two/three-bedroom. Therefore, we only focused on affordable units like one-bedrooms and studios.

11. Provide more certainty regarding the park's future status as a public park.

- As mentioned throughout the meeting, we intend to dedicate the park to the City. The planning department, park and rec, and city manager continue healthy conversations to help make this possible. Donating a piece of land with improvements takes much consideration, and we are committed to helping build Imperial Beach neighborhoods.

12. Consider alternative designs that may have less impact on neighbors.

- After reviewing the current design, we feel this is the least impactful design based on the number of apartments intended for construction. As mentioned above, the height is in line with other neighbors' prevent views of existing ridge lines in the North & East, the neighbor's properties to the west will have more screening prevention as many neighbors overlook their backyards, and the potential park provides a feeling of bringing the community together which is what any city needs.

Sincerely,



Aaron M. Anavim

Owner/Builder

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