February 19, 2014

VNC LUPC Staff: James.Murez@VeniceNC.org

Address: 1421 S ABBOT KINNEY BLVD 90291
Case No.: ZA-2013-1986-CDP-MEL-SPP

Zoned: C2-1-O-CA
Year Build 1991

Applied: 07/01/2013
First Contacted Applicant: 11/19/2013

Motion: Deny permit request for reasons of unmitigated adverse impacts to the community which will result if this project is allowed as presented.

Findings:

The proposed change of use from Artist-In-Residence to Commercial Office / Retail creates an intensification of use that cannot be mitigated by purchasing In-Lieu parking spaces for the two reasons below. The project was constructed under the code specification described in the Venice Interim Control Ordinance (ICO) in 1991 with the express understanding the project would be used residentially. This section of code allowed a commercial zoned (“C2-1”) parcel of land to be developed in restricted special locations throughout Venice with a significant reduction in parking to square footage ration as a result.

First, in 2012 the City contracted a transportation firm to perform a study to determine if In-Lieu parking made sense as it was defined in the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan (VSP). The VSP replaced the ICO in early 2000’s but adopted the parking standards that had been previously defined. Besides confirming the cost of $18,000 as called out in the VSP (and ICO) was a replacement cost to construct one stall and did not consider the cost of the land value, the study illustrated where five other cities around Los Angeles have not been able to show where it is financially feasible at a cost of $50,000 per stall.

Second, since 1988 when In-Lieu parking was first put onto effect under the ICO, the City has not demonstrated ever constructing one parking space with the funds collected.

For these two reasons the applicant should not be permitted to pay an in-lieu fee.

After recently purchasing the building the current owner hired an architect who applied for this permit to convert the building from Residential to Office commercial use. The owner was fully aware of the entitlements and restrictions of the site. In late 2013 the owner leased the building to Intel to use as retail store which included converting all of the required onsite parking into a popup high tech store. The current property owner has demonstrated to the community the rules as far as they are concerned do not apply to them and therefore should not be trusted.

Furthermore, after reaching out to the applicant of record on this permit on more than four occasions asking to share the details of how they will address the impacts of this proposed change of use, the applicant has expressed no interest in communicating with the VNC. No plans have been shared and the applicant of record has now expressed he is no longer representing the owner.

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