



Venice Neighborhood Council

LAND USE AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

PO Box 550, Venice, CA 90294 www.VeniceNC.org

Email: Chair-LUPC@VeniceNC.org



REPORT DATE:	5/04/2021
STAFF:	CARLOS ZUBIETA MATTHEW ROYCE MICHAEL JENSEN
LUPC DATE:	5/06/2021
VNC DATE:	5/18/2021

STAFF REPORT

Address: 2102-2120 Pacific Ave, 116 302 E. North Venice Blvd,
2106-2126 S. Canal St and 319 E South Venice Blvd.
Venice CA 90291

Case: CPC-2018-7344-GPZJ-VZCJ-HD-SP-SPP-
CDP-MEL-WDI-SPR-PHP

Property Owner: City of Los Angeles

Representative: Sarah Letts-Hollywood Community Housing Corp. and
Rebecca Dennison-Venice Community Housing Corp

Project Description

- A General Plan Amendment to change the Project's Site's land use designation from Open Space to NeighborhoodCommercial;
- A vesting Zone Change and Height District Change from OS-1XL-O to (T)[Q]C2-1L-O.
- A Specific Plan Amendment to the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan to create a new subarea "Subarea A" to permit aPermanent Supportive Housing project and establish new land use regulations and development standards.
- A Project Permit Compliance Review for a project within the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan.
- A Coastal Development Permit for a project located in the Dual Permit Jurisdiction of the Coastal Zone.
- Mello Act Compliance Review for demolition of four Residential Units and the construction of 140 Residential Units inthe Coastal Zone.
- Site Plan Review for a mixed-use development that would consist of 140 residential units



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Community Outreach

The applicant has conducted several community outreach meetings, including previous presentations at LUPC and the VNC. The last community presentation was done via webinar at the VNC on April 20th, 2021.

Background

Existing Site information

- The Project Site is currently developed with a surface parking containing 196 vehicular parking spaces, the Pacific Electric Venice Short Line Bridge (Short Line Bridge), and a two-story, 1,970-square-foot residential building containing four dwelling units, located on the northern portion of the Project Site. The northernmost section of the Venice Canal system (also known as the Grand Canal), bisects the Project Site into two portions: The West Site and East Site. The West Site and East Site are connected by the Short Line Bridge, which provides vehicular access between the two bisected areas of the Project Site. The Short Line Bridge is considered a historical resource for purposes of CEQA as it was surveyed and identified as eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, and as a City of Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument (HCM) by SurveyLA, the City's citywide historic resources survey. The Short Line Bridge will remain as part of the Project and provide pedestrian access between the two bisected areas of the Project Site. The surface parking lot is currently operated by LADOT (Lot 731). Vehicular access to the Project Site is currently available at driveways along North Venice Boulevard, Dell Avenue, and South Venice Boulevard. The Project Site is relatively flat with limited ornamental landscaping that includes 24 non-protected trees onsite and 11 non-protected street trees (5 of which are dead). All 24 on-site trees will be removed and replaced at a 1:1 ratio as part of the Project's onsite landscaping. All 11 street trees will be removed.
- The proposed project is located in Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan- North Venice Subarea -Venice Canals Subarea. Coastal Transportation Corridor Specific Plan. Transit Priority Area.
- Property is zoned OS-1XL-O Zone
- Parcel Area 115,674 SQFT (2.65 Acres)- Building Coverage



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Proposed Project Information

- Project Floor Areas. 104,140 Sqft mixed-use supportive housing development. The total area is broken down in two building blocks.
- 36,340 SQFT West Site and 67,800 SQFT East Site.
- 35 FT height with a 59 FT Campanile (tower)
- 140 Residential Units: 136 restricted affordable dwelling units (supportive housing) 4 unrestricted manager units.
- AB 744 Special Needs Residential Units defined by California Health and Safety Code 51312.B.1

Special needs housing" means any housing, including supportive housing, intended to benefit, in whole or in part, persons identified as having special needs relating to any of the following: (A) Mental health. (B) Physical Disabilities. (C) Developmental disabilities, including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and autism. (D) The risk of homelessness."

- Supportive Services: 3,565 SF Commercial Use, 2,255 SF Retail Use, 810 SF Restaurant use with 500 SF outdoor service floor area.
- Community Art Space 3,155 SF
- Open Space, 16,250 SF (4,930 landscape open)
- 360 Automobile Parking Spaces of which 196 public spaces (to replace existing at grade) 164 spaces (61 residential, 42 commercial spaces, 23 Beach Impact Zone spaces, and 38 non-required spaces) Bicycle Spaces 136 total spaces (19 short term and 117 long-term)
 - The applicant used AB 744 Special Needs Residential Unit Parking requirements defined by California Government Code 6591.5.O.3.C
- The applicant hired KOA to perform an extensive and detailed traffic impact study in November 13, 2019. In this study in Page 55 under Analysis Summary and Conclusions; "Based on LADOT transportation assessments guidelines, the proposed Project would be operating at acceptable LOS D or better at the study intersections under existing Project Conditions.
- The applicant hired GeoSoils Inc to analyze the project's exposure to ground water and impacts of future sea level rise and potential flooding. GeoSoils Inc report is dated December 28, 2020. The report states in page 10 under conclusions. " Using the latest SLR projections, the maximum (0.5%) SLR over the next 75 years is about 5.6 feet. It is possible, but not probable, that SLR could be 6.15 feet in 75 years. The site is not currently vulnerable to flooding. The vulnerability of the site to flooding will be increased with SLR. However, based upon the CoSMoS modeling SLR would need to be in excess of ~6.0 feet before the buildings (with the exception of the below grade improvements) may be subject to flooding. This is unlikely to occur during the project's 75 year design life under the Medium-High Risk Aversion scenario in the 2018 CCC SLR Guidance. The site is too far away from the ocean to be subject to direct marine inundation. There is no need for shore protection over the life of the development. In addition, there is no need for flood prevention measures for the development." GeoSoils outlines



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additional recommendations for further mitigations in their report.

Recommended Motion

LUPC recommends that the VNC recommend denial of the project due to the following:

1. Sea level rise

Housing a vulnerable population of residents in a known high risk flood zone due to sea level rise is extremely irresponsible and dangerous, analogous to building public housing in the lowest parts of New Orleans when a future hurricane storm surge is obviously inevitable. Moreover, this project relies heavily if not exclusively on public funding, meaning the taxpayer is underwriting the developers unsuitable site selection and resulting flood risk.



SLR Exposure

Current	50 cm/ 1.6 ft	100 cm/ 3.3 ft	150 cm/ 4.9 ft	200cm/ 6.6 ft
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Non-storm: (1.6 ft +)

With 1.6 ft SLR, parking lots may be flooded by tide gate failure.

Storm: (6.6 ft +)

The capacity of the stormwater and flood prevention systems will affect the potential for storm related flooding.

Source: LA City Planning Venice Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment 2018



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2. Open space

Per previous VNC motion, the proposed rezoning to accommodate the proposed project is a violation of the certified land use plan's requirement that this area be preserved as open space to benefit the local community. As such, this project is not compliant with the Venice Specific Plan.

3. Abuse of Taxpayer Funding

The estimated cost of this project is staggeringly over \$100 million--to create 136 low income units--a price tag of nearly \$750,000 per unit. At this rate, it would cost our city over \$22 trillion to house 30,000 people. When taxpayers authorized various tax increases and bond measures to solve the homeless crisis, this was surely not what they had in mind. Taxpayers deserve responsible spending of finite resources to alleviate this crisis.

Next, the underlying land for this project (currently owned by the city) is proposed to be donated to the developers, depriving Venice from large swaths of open space and an extremely high value asset, sale of which could directly benefit the community.

In sum, the project exemplifies a gross waste of taxpayer dollars that will not alleviate the immediate needs of relief for our unhoused. Per Judge David O. Carter's recent ruling in federal court, these funds could and should be used for immediate shelter of unhoused residents. The humanitarian crisis on the streets of Venice is neither alleviated nor who can't afford to wait for enough expensive to be built years late and millions of dollars over budget.

4. The Project Perpetuates an Unhoused Containment Zone Policy

The City of Los Angeles has systematically created a containment zone of homeless housing, service providers, and service infrastructure all within the Venice area, akin to a "Skid Row west." This crush of homeless services and housing has served as a magnet for more homelessness and crime to proliferate in this community disparately from others in the district. Clearly this policy is unlawfully discriminatory, unfair to Venetian residents, and exacerbates a humanitarian disaster rather than solves it.