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Sent: Friday, November 17, 2017 3:33 PM
To: 'Karen Murray' (karen@vmwp.com); Peter Waller; Joe Kirchofer (Joe_Kirchofer@avalonbay.com); Kevin Griffith (kgriffith@bridgehousing.com); Scott Falcone
Cc: Hong, Seung Yen (CPC); Albericci, Allison (CPC); Exline, Susan (susan.exline@sfgov.org); Small, Maia (CPC) (maia.small@sfgov.org); Lesk, Emily (MYR)
Subject: Balboa Reservoir: Initial Urban Design Feedback on Proposal

Hi Karen,

Below is a summary of our initial urban design feedback on the team's Balboa Reservoir proposal. We see it as a place to start the conversation and evolve the major elements of the plan enough for the EE/PPA submittal by the end of February, while setting the direction for programmatic conversations that can take place after February. One overarching theme is the activation of the significant amount of open space, as included in the RFP parameters. We should pick up that topic in general and the specific comments below next time we meet or talk.

With that in mind, I am presuming you'll be on the call Monday 2:30pm? If that's a problem please let me know.

thanks
Jeremy

- **Integrating with Existing Urban Fabric.** The site tends to look inward toward the major open space elements and at times reads as its own campus. The plan, public realm and street network should be better integrated into the surrounding neighborhood, open spaces should read as more accessible and inviting to neighboring residents, visitors, students and employees. The designers are encouraged to work with City College to complement this effort on college property.
- **Lack of Continuous Street Wall.** Planning staff would like to explore ways to reduce the fragmentation of the street wall. At times buildings read as objects in a greenfield, rather than part of an urban street network. While we acknowledge the challenge of the RFP's open space requirements, we'd like to increase the feeling of walkable urban blocks connected to the neighborhood around it.
- **Street network.** Understanding that all four sides of the property present unique constraints, Planning staff recommend the street network and block pattern relate more to the existing urban fabric and neighborhood street pattern. As the concept evolves, the sponsor team should be prepared to consider additional vehicular access to the site and determine what the tradeoffs of that access might be.
- **Public Realm and Open Space Network.**
 - o To ensure the active use of the many proposed open spaces, they must be more inviting to surrounding residents and visitors, and integrated with the most significant paths of travel.
 - o Staff is concerned that there will not be enough active users of the open space if the open space only draws from the site and the immediate neighbors. As the plan evolves, the designers should demonstrate how current and future programming and the arrangement of open spaces are appropriate
 - o The hierarchy of spaces and pedestrian pathways should be clarified, and pedestrian travel should be more strongly encouraged on fewer routes in an effort to activate them.
 - o It is recommended to locate programmed spaces in ways that help activate unprogrammed spaces and streets.

- The car-free Brighton Greenway and community gardens are creative solutions to fulfilling a demanding open space requirement in the RFP. Gardens have been included as public benefits in other development agreements, such as 55 Laguna and Parkmerced. However, Planning staff remain concerned about the level of activity on the greenway without it being a significant pedestrian path of travel and without major attractions or parking/loading along the corridor. It is unlikely that there will be enough demand for community gardens to fill and activate the entire greenway as shown. Additionally, staff is aware that emergency vehicle access will be necessary and would like to coordinate an initial meeting with you and the fire department to discuss EV access at a conceptual level.

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