

Public Comment #1

From: [Harry Bruell](#)
To: [Robert Dostalek](#); [Megan Arciniega](#); [Community Development ABRsecretary](#)
Cc: [Jennifer Bruell](#)
Subject: Story Poles at Mason Street at Wrong Heights
Date: Thursday, June 09, 2022 7:05:05 PM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

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EXTERNAL

Good evening,

We are concerned that the story poles for the huge proposed development in the Funk Zone are at the wrong height. The poles at the corner of Yanonali and Gray look to be at 30 feet tall (see below) rather than the 43 feet tall proposed in the drawings. Likewise, the large pole in the middle of the proposed development site looks to be significantly shorter than the 60' height proposed in the drawings.

We do not know if this was a deliberate effort to hide the huge bulk of the project or an honest mistake. Either way, we do not understand how this project can be heard in Monday's ABR hearing if the developers did not place the story poles at their correct heights to give the community an accurate picture of the project's bulk.

Thank you,
Harry and Jenny Bruell
127 Gray Ave.
805-749-3165



Public Comment #2

From: [david dart](#)
To: [Community Development ABRsecretary](#); [Megan Arciniega](#); [heidi@sepps.com](#); [david dart](#)
Subject: PLN2020-00139
Date: Friday, June 10, 2022 9:52:42 AM

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EXTERNAL

Please place me on "Interested Party List" to include all updates on PLN2020-00139.

RE:

121 E MASON ST Assessor's Parcel Number: 033-084-005 Zone: Application Number:
Owner: Applicant: OC/SD-3 PLN2020-00139 SOMO SB, LLC, Neil Dipaola, Managing
Member Heidi Jones, SEPPS Inc.

My partner and I own several businesses within or adjacent to the above proposed development (Dart Coffee Co @ 121 E Yanonali St & Green House Studios @ 136 E Yanonali St). We are watching the development of the above plan closely and noted the 'story boards' that were installed this past week.

Question #1: How tall are the story boards adjacent to E Yanonali St? They appear to be 30 feet tall but your plans show the proposed construction in this area to be over 38 feet? The reason for this discrepancy?

Question #2: The proposed parking appears deficient for the number of proposed rental and owner units. Can you define 'valet parking'? Where will these cars be parked? How can any proposed restaurant or retail commercial space with strict parking requirements per square footage or # tables acquire a permit without designated parking? There is no available parking today in the Funk Zone, yet your plan's impact on future parking is unsustainable.

Thanks,
David Dart

--

David Dart

Dart Coffee Co
121 E Yanonali St
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 452-6127
ddart@dartcoffeeco.com
www.dartcoffeeco.com

From: [Anne West](#)
To: [Community Development ABRsecretary](#); [Megan Arciniega](#)
Cc: [anne@sbdreamin.com](#); [Randy Ward](#); [Linda West](#)
Subject: Public Comments for SOMOFunk Project
Date: Sunday, June 12, 2022 3:33:42 PM

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EXTERNAL

To the members of the Santa Barbara ABR and other parties of interest in public comments regarding the SOMOFunk project.

We are residents of the Funk Zone, living at 231 Gray Ave. and would like to submit for consideration our concerns and comments about the proposed project known as SOMOFunk.

Affects on Vehicular Traffic:

Approach and Departure -

Normal - The Funk Zone is not a well accessed area, with really only one main way in from the freeway being the Garden Street northbound and southbound exits. On any given afternoon traffic exiting Garden Street backs up from Yanonali down Garden to the freeway over-crossing. There is room for perhaps 10 cars in this backup. At Garden and Yanonali there is a 4-way light. When the light is red, and a vehicle in the right lane of Garden (heading south) is not planning on turning right onto Yanonali, the traffic can back up to the point where there is not any more room for another car in that line without blocking the intersection of the southbound offramp, which backs cars up the southbound ramp, and into the small area under the freeway, potentially backing up traffic up the hill towards Gutierrez.

On Yanonali heading west into the Funk zone, before the Santa Barbara street 4-way stop, there is room for perhaps 12 cars backed up. This intersection was greatly improved recently with a 4-way stop sign and well-marked cross-walks, however, it can become a very busy intersection on weekend days and nights making crossing hazardous with pedestrians crossing both ways at the same time while impatient (usually out of town) drivers try to get through the intersection without running anyone over. Parking in this block is negligible with large bulb outs, long red zones, and commercial driveways on the south side of the street.

Montecito Street becomes the favored thorough fair for local traffic, with many people speeding trying to get through the neighborhood as quickly as possible. With the section of street from State to Santa Barbara holding the highest number of on-street parking spaces, it is already hazardous for drivers attempting to parallel park as 'Speed Racer' zips through there. We frequently hear cars and motorcycles racing late at night on Montecito St.

Yanonali, where most of the action is, is very busy on weekends, making it dangerous

for the many (drunk) pedestrians to cross, often in the middle of the road. They step off into the road wherever they want, and into crosswalks without looking. We are surprised no one has been run over already. Add to that bikes, motorized scooter, one-wheels, and skateboards, and you have a very hazardous, narrow street with too much traffic.

Regarding the SOMOFunk project specifically with traffic, this very large development will have really one way in and out, that being Yanonali. On the Yanonali/Gray intersection there is not a stop sign for traffic on Yanonali, making it difficult for cars on Gray to either cross or join traffic on Yanonali during high traffic times. I can't imagine what is going to happen when 300+ vehicles belonging to the 300+ residents of the project are trying to get in and out of their residential parking during high traffic times.

Approach and Departure -

Emergency - Based on our observations above, emergency access and egress of this area would already be a nightmare. The 200 block of Gray hosts a creative display of mixed use parking, with some cars nosing in, and others parking parallel. In many instances, there is not the requisite space between parked cars on either side for emergency equipment. In the entire neighborhood, due to lack of parking, fire hydrants are frequently blocked. Red zones are parked in. Driveways are blocked. And cars double park. The COVID parklets don't help and really should be removed. As it is, there is already a lot of traffic down here, and parking is extremely limited, with a lot of creative (illegal) parking happening.

SOMOFunk Project Parking:

Normal - We are estimating that the 150ish apartments/condos will house an average of 2 adults per unit, making the total residency around 300. We are also estimating (realistically) that each adult will own one vehicle. (There are 3 of us in our home. Between us we own 3 cars and one motorcycle)

45,000 sq ft of parking space planned for the project may provide parking for around 150 cars (based on some research into parking lot design that we did) We have heard that 'stacked' parking might be part of this plan, but we can't see how this is going to work for several reasons:

1. We don't have a history in our culture in California of stacked parking.
2. It sounds like stacked parking will take more time than traditional parking.
3. It sounds like traffic will back up out of the single planned entrance of the parking garage, out onto the street, and down the block to Yanonali while people are waiting to park. Causing a further backup onto Yanonali both ways.
4. It also sounds like stacked parking, which is inconvenient, may be used by tenants to store that one car that they are willing to leave idle daily, leaving fewer and fewer active parking spaces for the active tenants.
5. The backup caused by lack of parking lot space, and drivers waiting to enter, will affect the 100 block of Gray, making it hard for existing tenants to enter and exit their properties.

This leaves at least 150 extra vehicles every single day driving around trying to find a place to park. On weekends, there literally is not an extra 10 parking spaces, much less 150, in this neighborhood. The Garden Street and Cabrillo public lots are often quite full in the afternoon/evenings Thursday - Saturday, so they can't be counted on to provide over-flow parking for a project that has not provide enough parking. And we haven't even considered the business spaces planned for the project. Where will their owners and employees park? Making things inconvenient will not force people out of their cars and onto bikes, which we know some leaders in this town would love. It will just cause traffic jams, angry residents, and frustrated visitors. It might actually kill the Funk Zone's popularity with out of town tourists who start bitching on Yelp that they drove all the way to Santa Barbara for wine tasting and couldn't find a place to park.

Project Parking, Emergency -

We pity anyone who decides that they need to use their car to exit the project parking in case of an emergency such as earthquake, fire, flood or tsunami. Even if there were 2 entrance/exits from the project, all traffic is still dumping onto Yanonali, with its limitations to handle traffic due to stop signs, stop lights, and traffic. Things would be a lot safer if Mason St continued East to Garden St, taking the place of the current walk-through there. Trapped between the freeway and the railroad tracks, the entire project should be a concern for all potential emergencies. This neighborhood is not designed to handle the current level of traffic. Adding more to it is not going to help matters in the case of a serious emergency.

Effects on Existing Businesses -

It's difficult to ascertain the potential effects that this project will have on local businesses. We have spoken to the Action Tree guys, and it's going to be a nightmare for them each morning. They typically stage their vehicles each morning on what is now a very quiet semi-industrial street (lower Santa Barbara) and get their crews and equipment organized for the day. Once demolition and construction starts, they are going to have some issues. As for other businesses in the area, patron parking will be their worst problem. The restaurant/bars immediately across the street to the east of the project may benefit from the influx of new resident patrons (once the project is complete), but they may lose current, local regulars during construction, and after, due to lack of anywhere for them to park. This last Friday, one of us walked down Gray and turned left on Mason. There was literally nowhere to park at 6pm; all available spaces were full with more cars driving around looking.

Added traffic to the entire neighborhood will affect all businesses equally; their patrons will complain that there is nowhere to park. There is no parking on State Street. There are few public lots nearby. Street parking is grossly limited already. Many businesses, such as Shalhoob's, and Pali Winery, have taken advantage of lax enforcement of on-site parking requirements due to COVID and have turned their required on-site parking spaces into dining areas. Pali went to great lengths to create a semi-permanent outdoor patio with a raised decomposed granite platform, taking up at least 6 of their required parking spaces. Mony's taco place built a parklet that takes up 4 street parking spots even though they probably had only about 4 seats of indoor dining, expanding their indoor dining from 4 to a bunch.

Existing Businesses and leases:

Existing businesses in the proposed project block will be displaced permanently as we are sure that the currently inexpensive rents will skyrocket, leaving numerous local businesses out of luck, including several that need outdoor lot space, not some fancy boutique space. Leases in Santa Barbara are already ridiculously inflated. The project will no doubt lead other land owners to feel that their properties are worth more and we predict that leases will go up throughout the neighborhood. For years now, the Funk Zone has relied on Beer and Wine to drive the tourism, but is it possible to sell enough drinks to pay \$8 sq ft plus triple net for space? And do we want to be known as the Funk Zone, or the Drunk Zone?

Demolition/Construction:

We have no idea how long this project will last, which will affect property values and access during the demolition and construction. Traffic due to construction vehicles will impact the area negatively, as has the ongoing construction of a new brewery on the corner of Anacapa and Yanonali. They frequently block Yanonali for hours on end with large trucks unloading equipment and construction supplies. Debris and dust from the demolition of that block may create a health hazards as that entire area is polluted with petro-chemicals from the early days of Santa Barbara rail businesses. Is there asbestos in any of the buildings planned for demolition? There are restaurants and bars downwind of the project. How will they be protected from demolition and construction dust?

We are confident that there are many more concerns than this regarding this project and assume some of our neighbors will be also contacting you. Please take under advisement that this project will not benefit Santa Barbara in the long run. It will benefit its developers and that's about it. We believe the Funk Zone will be negatively impacted by this project due to poorly managed traffic and parking, affecting residents and businesses alike.

Sincerely,
Linda West, Anne West, & Randy Ward
231 Gray Ave.
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Public Comment #4

From: [James Rogers](#)
To: [Community Development ABRsecretary](#)
Subject: Public Comment: SOMO Funk - 6/13
Date: Sunday, June 12, 2022 10:25:17 PM
Attachments: [121_E_Mason_ARB_Comments_JTR_2022.pdf](#)

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EXTERNAL

Dear ABR Secretary, my neighbors shared that tomorrow's hearing will be postponed since the story poles for the project were set below the proposed height for the development, I'm glad to hear that. I am attaching my comments now, in case this information was provided in error, so that they can be entered into public record.

Thank you.

All the best,
James



Dear City of Santa Barbara Architectural Board of Review,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the “SOMO Funk” proposed development located at 121 E Mason Street. I own the two properties directly across the street from the development on Gray Ave., the condo at 125 Gray Ave as well as the adjacent property at 123 Gray Ave.

I continue to be surprised to hear the project is being positioned as a bringing housing to an otherwise industrial area. There are more than 50 residential units located within one block of the proposed development. I believe the fact that the neighborhood is viewed as a commercial space testifies to the unique architectural style of the area that is worth preserving. Unfortunately, since neither I nor my neighbors have been contacted by the developer for constructive feedback on the proposed development, I am offering some of my comments below for consideration by the architectural board of review:

1. Size, Bulk, and Scale

I think it is great that the proposal includes accommodations for low income housing, but I am concerned about the height, bulk, and scale of the proposed development. Visitors to the area today are greeted with an eclectic mix of structures which give the neighborhood it’s character. The sheer size, lack of setback, and absence of open space is an extreme departure from the style of the rest of the neighborhood and permanent departure from the public views which many believe gives the Funk Zone it’s charm. I am also skeptical that these units would ultimately serve as affordable housing as they are likely to end up as short-term rentals.

2. Architectural Style

From an architectural style perspective, the proposed development feels a lot more like a college dormitory than a mixed-use development that would add character to the Funk Zone. Furthermore, I am concerned about the large number of units in the proposed development and how that number of people and particularly vehicles will impact an already crowded part of the Funk Zone.

3. Elimination of Unique Elements

I was very happy to see that the proposed development would retain the **grain silo**, but was disappointed to see that they would remove the ground level of the silo as the ground floor of the silo is one of the most photographed areas of the funk zone. I am particularly saddened that **The Garden** on the corner of Yanonali St. and Santa Barbara St., which is one of a kind in the Funk Zone, would also be destroyed by the proposed development.

4. Flora and Fauna

The proposed development will require the removal of over two dozen trees, many of which are more than 80 years old and home to a diversity of wildlife including sea birds. The land is also home to local fauna including rabbits which create a unique feel within a downtown setting.



5. Public Garage Access via Gray Ave

The proposed plan has a second entrance to the public garage on Gray Avenue, directly across the only entrance to the Pali Wine building's garage as well as the garages of 125 and 127 Gray. I'm concerned with all of these garages opening to the same tight space. It also doesn't seem to make sense to have the public garage opening onto a residential area rather than the more commercial Santa Barbara Street. It would seem to make more sense to have the public garage open up to Santa Barbara Street, which is closer to the freeway entrance and would keep traffic more towards to perimeter of the highly foot trafficked area of the funk zone.

6. Privacy

Every structure on the northern half of the 100 block of Gray Ave is either set back at least 25 feet from the street or has a single-story garage at street level. The proposed development plans to rise up three stories directly from the street, which will undoubtedly create a 'cavernous' effect in an otherwise spacious neighborhood. The homeowners and residents of Gray Ave would be disproportionately impacted by the proposed height and lack of setback as the windows of the structure would look directly into our living rooms.

7. Loss of Mixed Use and Elimination of Outdoor Space

It is sad to see the low percentage of costal-related commercial use and the low percentage of outdoor space in the proposed plan. Our eclectic mix of property uses bring a diverse group of artists, tradespeople, merchants, and working professionals together in one area which is what gives the Funk Zone it's unique character.

My neighbors and I look forward to staying highly engaged in this process as it evolves and expect to have additional comments as we learn more about the plans.

Sincerely,

James Rogers

CEO
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