

November 22, 2021

Dear Mayor Meyers and City Council,

First off, in the spirit of Thanksgiving, we would like to express our immense gratitude to you.

We thank you for standing for equity in building practices by saying no to segregated housing. Our City can say yes both to affordable housing and to upholding local ordinances that require that housing is dispersed and not segregated.

We thank you for standing up for protecting the public health and safety of our community and honoring Health in All Policies.

We thank you for holding a special Council meeting on SB 35 so that you and the public could better learn the process and regulations. We thank you for declaring yourselves as the decision-making body for SB 35 projects during that special meeting. These honorable, responsible, carefully considered actions have instilled trust that you take your elected positions very seriously. You listen carefully to both staff and your citizens and make decisions that reflect your unique position, responsibility, and power to do so.

We also wish to acknowledge the unusual situation for 831 Water Street and the tricky timeline the City is subject to. We are now aware that substantial new material has been received since the October 12 Public Oversight meeting. This includes many new documents and plans from the applicant but also a letter from HCD, "supporting" the project and encouraging its development.

As we have indicated throughout this process, we would love to see affordable housing built on this site. In that spirit, we support *temporarily* suspending Council's denial of the current version of the application and extending the review timeline, in alignment with the applicant's willingness to allow a December 14 Public Oversight meeting and a deadline of December 16 for final approval or denial of the SB 35 application. This would still give the Staff and public only 3 weeks to review all of the materials submitted subsequent to the denial of the previous version of the application.

Perhaps the applicant has corrected all of the delineated reasons for denial included in the City's October 14 letter. Perhaps affordable and equitable housing is now proposed for this project, in a design that no longer poses potential threats to the public health and safety of its new residents and their surrounding community, and instead respects and honors the valid interests of all members of our community.

Perhaps the project, as described in the current version of the application, also addresses the health, safety, slope, and density bonus issues that were also behind your decision to deny the last application.

We are ready and willing to review the new materials from this place of hope.

In closing, we stand with you. We stand behind and in support of the [City's October 14 letter](#) to the applicant and thank the City Council for your motion and vote initiating it. We also stand behind our previously submitted public correspondence on this proposed development. We encourage the City to stand firm on its principled position regarding the forced segregation proposed by this project's developer – separate is inherently unequal: that's both common sense and settled law in this country.

We also thank Staff for their detailed research and work substantiating Council's vote and dealing with the many different submissions from the applicant.

With continued gratitude for our honorable electeds,

The "831 Responsible Development" citizens group