1501-1511 Mission St – Responses to Community Questions

The below questions have been grouped into overall themes to provide responses. Please note that the applicant only submitted a preapplication and formal plans have not been submitted as of yet.

PROJECT STATUS, APPROVAL PROCESS, DENSITY AND STATE HOUSING LAWS

1. **Who is actually designated to approve or disapprove this project? Has the state removed local power to approve housing projects?**
2. **What effect does the RHNA mandate, AB 2097, SB 330 and SB 79 have on this and other projects?**
3. **According the RHNA, the building cycle that ended in April 2023 required 747 units to be built in Santa Cruz. During that time, 1664 were permitted. Why the discrepancy? We exceeded the requirement by 200%. Is this the city's future plan?**
4. **After fulfilling state requirements, can the City of Santa Cruz take back local control of the amount and type of housing built?**
5. **Can housing being built by UCSC be included in the state requirement?**
6. **Who is the property owner, the developer and architect-names?**
7. **Can the community have access to a state housing laws 'cheat sheet' that puts in laypersons terms the significant laws?**
    - **RHNA mandate and # of required units for SC**
    - **SB79**
    - **AB2097**
    - **SB330**
    - **The no required parking law**

The property owner is Opportunity Zone Properties LP. The architect is Kurt Anderson. At this early stage, it appears that a formal application would require approval by the Zoning Administrator at a public hearing. The proposal does not currently include the use of state laws that would render the project ministerial, or not subject to review. State laws limit a local jurisdiction's authority to deny a housing development project that complies with all objective standards (except for those objective standards that are altered by way of a density bonus incentive/concession or waiver) and that does not result in a specific, adverse impact upon the public health or safety that there is no feasible method to satisfactorily mitigate or avoid. A specific, adverse impact is defined as a significant, quantifiable, direct, and unavoidable impact based on objective, identified written public health or safety standards, policies, or conditions.

See above explanation and below link regarding SB330 requirements and the city's limited ability to deny housing development projects. See Parking section below for AB2097 and how those allowances were codified into the local ordinance to eliminate on-site parking for projects within a half-mile of a major transit stop. See also below link to an informational handout regarding the Housing Accountability Act and Housing Crisis Act:
https://www.santacruzca.gov/files/assets/city/v/1/pl/documents/sb330-informational-handout.pdf

Yes, the City met its 5th cycle RHNA (Regional Housing Needs Allocation) across all income categories. Because the City met those targets, it is not subject to certain permit streamlining requirements at this time.

However, RHNA is recalculated every cycle by AMBAG and this new cycle (6th) which runs 2023-2031, results in 3,736 units which are spread across different income categories. The City was then required to plan for this development by identifying potential areas for future development in the Housing Element. It has been noted that the City is "on track" to meet the Low Income and Very Low Income RHNA housing numbers but that is based on forecasting and may or may not come to fruition. The City is not on track to meet its share of moderate and market rate housing. The impact of not meeting RHNA could be that the State further reduces barriers to housing, requiring the City to allow for even more streamlining and even less discretion on projects. The City's streamlining exemption will be re-evaluated halfway through the current RHNA cycle, in early 2028.

Student housing cannot be counted towards the City's assigned RHNA numbers, but student family housing can be counted as those are different unit types. As such, some housing built by UCSC can be counted towards the RHNA numbers depending on what type of housing.

It is not an option provided by the State to allow the City to take back local control of the amount and type of housing built even if the state requirements are fulfilled. State laws will still require approval of housing development projects that meet objective standards, as described above.

PARKING, BICYCLE PARKING, LOADING AND PARKING MANAGEMENT

8. **42 stalls are proposed, but the plan does not show structural elements which will take up some of the space, eliminating some spaces.**
9. **Not enough room for bicycle parking or handicapped parking.**
10. **Space for EV plug-in, guest parking or employee parking.**
11. **How does AB 2097, SB 79 or SB 330 affect the number of parking spaces?**
12. **Car ownership cannot be mandated, so there might be cars not parked in the building.**
13. **How will neighborhood permit parking be enforced? Day and night?**
14. **How often do buses travel through Bay and Mission? Does this make it an eligible intersection?**
15. **What is the requirement that the transit system fulfills to reduce the amount of parking provided by the building by law?**
16. **Where is space for delivery trucks to access the building? Will the parking spaces next to the building on Trescony Street be converted to a loading zone for this purpose?**
17. **Can the city impose some designated fee that could be a deterrent to having a car**

Full structural engineering is not required at the Design Review phase. A modification of the permit may be required if changes are proposed at the building permit phase when structural plans are submitted, if the changes are not in substantial compliance with the approved plans.

The formal plans submitted for Design Review must show compliance with the bicycle parking standards, which are 1 Class 1 space per unit and 1 Class II space per 4 units. This is an objective standard. Accessible parking and EV parking spaces must comply with California Building Code standards for number of spaces and design.

The parking requirements in the City's zoning ordinance do not apply to development within a half mile of a major transit stop (Section 24.12.220(1)(b)). This project is within a half mile of a major transit stop

so no on-site parking is required for the project. This code section was adopted to enable the local ordinance to be consistent with state law, specifically Section 65863.2 of the Government Code. While on-site parking is not required, if the applicant chooses to provide on-site parking voluntarily then it must comply with the objective design standards in the zoning ordinance including such standards as minimum length of back-out space, and minimum parking space dimensions.

The stop pair at Mission and Bay are major transit stops as defined by the State. Maps are available on the City GIS website. The City cannot enforce any costs of parking, but asks developers to consider separating the costs of rent and parking, incentivizing people to reduce car usage. Public street parking is open to the public. There is a residential parking permit program on Trescony Street that addresses on Mission Street are currently eligible to participate in. The City Council and Staff are working on policy changes that would prohibit large developments (such as this one) from participating in residential permit parking programs. By the time this project is built, the residents would not be allowed to participate in the residential parking district.

Section 24.12.220 requires a development within a half mile radius of a Major Transit Stop to provide an on-site loading space if they are voluntarily providing on-site parking. However, for projects proposing less than 50 units, no on-site loading space is required. The project could request an on-street loading stall which would be subject to staff review, they have been provided/allowed on previous projects depending on the context.

TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

18. **Bay and Mission is one of the most dangerous corners in Santa Cruz, where at least one fatality has occurred. With this building, many more cars, bicycles and people will be negotiating this intersection**
19. **Cars and bicycles parked under the building when leaving will be forced to meet Mission Street at Trescony. A left turn would be dangerous. Will there be traffic mitigation at this intersection to improve safety?**
20. **The builder proposes 12 studios, 23 1-bedroom apartments and 12 2-bedroom apartments. At the lowest capacity, this would add 59 people to the neighborhood, probably a lot more. The architect suggested there would not be a limit to the number of people allowed to live in the building. How will this building affect car, bicycle and foot traffic through the neighborhood?**
21. **Have they done their due diligence and walked the site to assess the traffic safety?**
22. **Is the city going to do anything to improve the intersection?**
23. **How will the city coordinate closely with CalTrans?**
24. **Could the City require sidewalks on one side of Seaside (parking on both sides)?**
25. **What oversight is there for the trip generation memo and what is the area they will be surveying? How can we ensure the trip generation was done correctly? Can we ensure that CalTrans right of way is included in the study?**
26. **Can we require right turn only on Mission Street?**
27. **How will the property owner/developer contribute to traffic, infrastructure/sewer upgrades?**
28. **Barrier on Seaside and Bay? To protect the bikers? Then Trescony is trapped**

The project will be required to provide a trip generation memo which will establish the number of trips generated by the proposed development. If it results in more than 50 net new trips, then a Traffic Study will be required which would include recommendations for improvements. If a traffic study is required, we can ask the applicant to study these community concerns in the report. Note that the reallocation of

commercial space to residential may actually reduce peak hour traffic. If a Traffic Study is determined to be required, new projects will be evaluated with the City's guidelines for Traffic Impact Studies which evaluates site access, parking and traffic impacts. The study will be prepared by qualified engineering professionals and reviewed by the City's Public Works Department and posted with other supporting documents during development approval. Access to the site evaluation of adjacent intersections is a fundamental part of the study. Findings from the study, if one is required, will be included in the project with approval from Public Works.

All new projects contribute to the Traffic Impact Fee which primarily funds projects citywide to reduce traffic congestion. The project will contribute based on the number of car trips it adds to city streets. Access changes or prohibitions to adjacent local streets are not contemplated in adopted planning documents and would not be required of the development.

Separate from this development project, the City is currently working with Caltrans on multimodal improvements at the Mission and Bay Intersection. More information is available on the city website.

Regarding prior questions related to access to the site from Trescony, Public Works weighed in on these concerns and provided the following responses:

1) Trescony is already improved to discourage through traffic. There is a "Not a Through Street" sign at Mission, and landscape islands with "Do Not Enter" signage at the end of the block where the residential portion begins. Automated enforcement would require a change in state law.
2) In response to concerns of cut-through traffic, there are already traffic calming features on Laurent and Acadia (speed humps) which will help even if additional traffic occurred. Additional features may be something that can be addressed in the traffic study, if one is required.
3) There is no room on Mission Street to add a middle left turn lane without widening the roadway to the north.
4) The project will be required to install an 8' wide sidewalk on Trescony and include a pedestrian warning device on the side of the building. If there is a gate at the garage entrance, then it will be required to be set back inside of the parking structure to allow a vehicle to queue within the garage.

COMMERCIAL

29. We are concerned about the loss of local businesses that would occur with this building. The Office of Economic Development can work with them, but the commercial rents will increase significantly and it seems unlikely these businesses will be able to afford those

30. The plan calls for the first floor, the floor on which the commercial space is located, to be 5 feet off the ground. This means the podium of the building would basically be at or above people's heads. There would be stairs to the commercial area, but this seems like a deterrent to commercial activity and an eyesore. This 5 foot requirement is necessary to accommodate the number of parking spaces planned under the building. If the building were at ground level, the ramp to the parking area would be much longer and eliminate some of the parking.

These comments are noted. Regarding the existing businesses at the site, the City's regulations do not require replacement or relocation assistance for demolished commercial buildings. City staff will encourage the applicant to work with the tenants and will offer assistance through the City's Economic

Development Department. Additionally, conditions of approval would be included that require noticing to commercial tenants at least 6 months in advance of demolition or eviction.

UTILITIES

31. **We are concerned about the amount of water this building will use**
32. **Where will the sewer connection be located? Will this building impact the sewer on Trescony Street? The city sewer on Trescony is old and made of terra cotta and had an actual hole in it where it connected to one of the residence's sewer line. It is also unstable in another area. Will this line be upgraded?**
33. **The lack of water-how do we account for the water? What city documents can point to water not being an issue?**
34. **City of Santa Cruz Sewer had a whole in it; Can the building handle the sewer? We constantly have the sewer truck out here**
35. **What green/solar requirements are they required to do?**
36. **Are they required to put solar?**

The building will be required to meet the water conservation standards required as per the Building Code. These conservation methods (ex. low flow toilets and fixtures) have actually resulted in a reduction of water usage. Therefore, population has not shown to be an impact but there are challenges to water storage during drought years.

The Public Works Department will need to analyze the data through the modeling software and review of existing pipe conditions to determine the impacts to sewer system, upgrades if required, and the connection point. The sewer line on Mission is bigger in diameter, but will need to be analyzed to locate the best connection point. Depending on the results, the applicant could be required to upsize the existing pipe diameter on either Mission Street or Trescony Street.

The project will be required to comply with the California Building Standards Code in effect at the building permit stage, including requirements for solar. This information is determined at the building permit stage of the project.

NEIGHBORHOOD

37. **Who actually benefits from this project?**

    Economists and the vast majority of recent studies conclude that an increase in market rate housing can increase affordability of the overall housing market by increasing the total supply which relieves price pressure. Studies have shown this in a variety of housing markets, including high-demand markets in the US (e.g., Honolulu) and internationally. Additionally, the increase in buying options would allow for wealthy buyers to move into newer buildings and empty nesters to move into smaller housing options, opening older homes (which have aged to become less expensive) to others. The benefit is for those residents who are currently struggling with rent or home ownership.

38. **The style of the building needs to fit into the neighborhood and the feel of the city of Santa Cruz. This project would better serve Santa Cruz as a much smaller development with ground floor commercial space.**

A community meeting was held on August 18th to gather community input. Please contact the project planner to provide input on architectural design.