



VIA E-Mail: JScott@SRCity.org

January 24, 2022

Ms. Jill Scott
Real Estate Manager
Real Estate Services
City of Santa Rosa
100 Santa Rosa Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

RE: City of Santa Rosa, City Council, Agenda Item #3.1 for Council Meeting of January 11, 2022 regarding Downtown City Asset Surplus Strategy recommending a Study Session (hereinafter referred to as the “Staff Request for Study Session”)
City of Santa Rosa, City Council, Downtown Asset Surplus Strategy - Study Session for the Council Meeting of January 25, 2022 (hereinafter referred to as the “Staff Study Session Report”)

Dear Ms. Scott:

Airport Business Center, a California limited partnership (hereinafter referred to as “ABC”) is the owner of the building located at 50 Old Courthouse Square, Santa Rosa, CA (hereinafter referred to as “50 OCS”), which is adjacent to the City of Santa Rosa Public Garage No. 5, located at 625 3rd Street, Santa Rosa, CA (hereinafter referred to as “Garage 5”).

ABC has reviewed the Staff Request for Study Session and the Staff Study Session Report.

ABC first wants to go on record as being extremely disappointed that no property owners adjacent to or near Garage 5 have been specifically notified of the City Staff’s desire to declare Garage 5 as “surplus property” under The Surplus Land Act (SLA), Government Code 54222. While such lack of notice is far from unusual, it is nevertheless not the way to build an effective consensus of stakeholders in the downtown area.

The Staff Request for Study Session makes the very bold and wholly unsubstantiated claim that: “This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378. Any future development proposals would be subject to CEQA review.” This is simply laughable. The sole purpose of the proposal suggested by the Staff Study Session Report is to result in a direct physical change of the environment, i.e. redevelopment of Garage 5 from parking to housing. If necessary, ABC will challenge any attempt of the City to move forward on such a project without thorough CEQA review.

Both the Staff Request for Study Session and the Staff Study Session Report repeat the same rationale for redevelopment of Garage 5: due to market conditions, lot size and specific needs of the

surrounding areas, staff believe that Garage 5 is currently the best opportunity to launch a market test for redevelopment of City assets in the downtown, replacement of public parking. California Government Code Section 54221(b)(1) defines “surplus land” to mean “land owned in fee simple by any local agency for which the local agency’s governing body takes formal action in a regular public meeting declaring that the land is surplus and is not necessary for the agency’s use”. ABC vehemently disagrees with staff on two primary grounds: (i) Garage 5 is NOT “surplus property” and (ii) Garage 5 is desperately needed by downtown Santa Rosa if the downtown core is to continue to have a viable business component.

ABC wants to go firmly on record opposing any City plan that would: (i) eliminate any public parking spaces at Garage 5 or (ii) add further development without commensurately adding additional public parking spaces. Garage 5 was built at the same time as 50 OCS and the parking provided by Garage 5 is not only critical to the health and well-being of downtown Santa Rosa, but also to the tenants, invitees and guests of 50 OCS.

The Walker Parking Consultants City of Santa Rosa Parking System Report dated January 22, 2004 specifically summarized: “In the core of the study area (around the intersection of 4th and D Streets) there were parking deficits on the survey day.” (Walker Report, Page 9) Elimination of any public parking at Garage 5, either through elimination of actual parking spaces or through the addition of further residential and/or retail space without additional parking, would merely exacerbate an already existing parking problem in the core of downtown Santa Rosa.

Please keep ABC advised of any proposals that affect Garage 5.

Sincerely:



Larry L. Wasem
Managing General Partner

cc:

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