



420 E St Suite 105
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

(707) 900-4364
info@generationhousing.org

December 10, 2020

City of Santa Rosa
Planning & Economic Development Department
Susie Murray, Senior Planner
Via email to smurray@srcity.org

Re: Letter of Support for The Flats at 528 B Street

Dear Ms. Murray,

Generation Housing **proudly endorses** The Flats development proposed at 528 B Street. Generation Housing conducted a thorough review and analysis of the project, which has met and exceeded our criteria in several important areas.

The Flats mixed-use development proposed by ArchiLOGIX & MKG would provide local and future residents an exciting new housing option in the downtown city core. Along with location, The Flats proposes a 5-story, residential mixed-use building comprised of 24 one-, and two-bedroom apartments that offer an opportunity to bridge the gap between living near employment and abundant amenities often attractive to young professionals who are more likely to seek a fresh and vibrant urban space.

The Flats offers a new housing product of which there is not enough in our existing housing stock and creates new housing options for residents near a bevy of transit options while increasing foot traffic for downtown businesses. The project receives a terrific walk score for the number of nearby amenities that would allow a resident to run daily errands without requiring a car – an important asset needed to help meet our climate action goals.¹

Generation Housing is a strong supporter of the City's Downtown Station Area Plan and we're pleased that the Flats aligns superbly well with the City of Santa Rosa's vision for an invigorated downtown area. The project meets the maximum allowable zoning capacity coupled with efficient usage of the adjacent city-owned and often under-utilized parking garage. We find that the project's height meets the City's objective requirements and would encourage the City to prioritize its existing and explicitly stated goals and objectives for housing in downtown, which The Flats thoughtfully meets with excellent design.

We urge you to support the Flats at 528 B Street and fulfill the vision of transforming downtown Santa Rosa.

Respectfully,
Jen Klöse

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jen Klöse", written over a light blue circular background.

Executive Director, Generation Housing

cc: City Manager Sean McGlynn

¹ <https://www.walkscore.com>





SONOMA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION & LAND-USE COALITION

December 11, 2020

To: Susie Murray, Senior Planner, smurray@srcity.org
Cc: Mayor Chris Rogers and the Santa Rosa City Council, citycouncil@srcity.org
From: Willard Richards, SCTLC Chair, willard@sonic.net
Re: Approve the appeal by the Flats at 528 B St.

The Sonoma County Transportation and Land-Use Coalition advocates concentrating growth in dense city centers to promote walkable communities. This is essential if we are to achieve our goals of preserving the rural areas in Sonoma County and decreasing vehicle miles traveled, which decreases traffic congestion and addresses the need to decrease GHG emissions from transportation.

The SCTLC recommends that the City Council grant the appeal by the applicants for the Flats at 528 B St. by approving Resolutions 3 and 4 in Tuesdays' Agenda Item 15.1. The Staff Report supports these actions. It discusses each of the issues raised in the appeal and in general agrees with them. It finds that the project complies with all of the applicable planning requirements, which include the General Plan, the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan (DSASP), the Zoning Code, the Design Guidelines, and the Processing Review Procedures. The Staff report also indicates that had the votes by the DRB and CHB on November 23 occurred after this coming January 1, the project would have been approved because of the new voting rules in the new DSASP.

The focus of the SCTLC is on transportation and land use. This development is a short walk from the Santa Rosa Plaza, near restaurants and other services, near a stop for buses headed to the Transit Mall, and a 12-minute 0.6 mile walk to the Downtown Santa Rosa SMART station.

528 B Street is adjacent to the under-utilized City of Santa Rosa 7th St. parking garage. Parking studies have shown that Santa Rosa has more parking spaces than it needs. Therefore, the proposed development has no on-site parking. Renters can obtain parking permits in the adjacent garage. It is recommended that these permits be unbundled from the rent.

The SCTLC recommends that the City Council grant the appeal submitted by the applicants for the Flats at 528 B Street by adopting Resolutions 3 and 4. It will help Santa Rosa meet its objective of increasing residential units downtown.

From: [Steve Birdlebough](#)
To: [_CityCouncilListPublic](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item 15.1 - Grant the Appeal Regarding the Flats, 528 B St.
Date: Sunday, December 13, 2020 7:13:01 PM

Greetings Mayor Schwedhelm and Council Members—

I urge that the City Council grant the appeal from the Cultural Heritage Board's decision regarding the application for a Landmark Alteration Permit for the Flats located at 528 B Street, and approve both the Preliminary Design Review and the Landmark Alteration Permit.

The City recently completed a revision of its Downtown Station Area Specific Plan, which calls for more compact development that will create a more vibrant community. This project is consistent with that plan and furthers its objectives. It is time to give the green light to taller buildings and to send a clear message to other potential developers that the City intends to implement its plan.

Steve Birdlebough
576-6632

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To: [CityCouncilListPublic](#)
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Steve Birdlebough





December 13, 2020

Re: 528 B Street Proposal

Dear Council Member:

I am writing to adamantly oppose the appeal and approval of the project at 528 B Street as is currently designed and proposed. The building is too large for the neighborhood, and will have deleterious effect on B Street. The current design of five stories built all the way to the sidewalk is imposing, will cause traffic problems on an already hazardous street, and does not fit into the historic neighborhood. I understand the need for more housing downtown, but the size of this building in the Saint Rose Historic District is not the answer as it is proposed.

Below I will outline the objections, not to the look of the building, but to the size of the building and the effect it will have on the Santa Rosa neighborhood. I know these issues as I am the Clinical Director of the Lomi Psychotherapy Clinic which resides at 534 B Street, and I know the problems that already exist in this location.

- 1.) The Cultural Heritage Board warned last year that the building would not be approved as designed as a five-story building built all the way to the sidewalk. The imposing nature is problematic to the neighbors, and will stick out as an imposing structure like a sore thumb. The developers listened to the Design Review Board regarding design issues, but did not address the size factor. This structure will not integrate into the neighborhood. Ideas presented for scaling down the front part of the design to two stories were rejected.
- 2.) All the public comments at the latest meeting were negative about the proposal based on the imposing and out of place nature of this design.
- 3.) The designed building will over-shadow the properties to the north and south of it, depending on the season. Those properties will be very dark at certain times of year, especially the building to the north in the winter time (534 B Street). The parking garage already has its shadow factor in the morning. With five stories built all the way to the side walk to the south of 534 B Street, it will completely shadow our property in the winter months.
- 4.) **There is an extreme safety and liability issue that this building will create.** There is no driveway for this building. B Street is already dangerous with increased traffic flow due to the closure of Mendocino Avenue at Courthouse Square. Cars speed on B Street, and the curve at the B Street/Healdsburg Avenue merge creates serious problems. Already this street is dangerous. Accidents occur, and near misses have been almost fatal for pedestrians at the crosswalk, and for cars. I know this situation as I hear the squeal of brakes and skidding cars often, have almost been hit myself in the crosswalk between our property and Brew, and have seen accidents. The proposed building will have to block traffic for move-in/out, and for delivery trucks. Cars traveling north on B Street will have to go around delivery trucks, moving into the south-bound lane. Cars

move fast on B Street. The sight-line due to the curve will cause drivers to move around the trucks not knowing if cars are coming or not. And for cars traveling south, because of the curve, drivers will not know that a car is about to cross into their lane. This building will cause accidents, and the City of Santa Rosa could be held liable for allowing this situation to be created. **This situation is very serious and was not adequately addressed in the prior meetings. I know this situation as I work at that B Street/Healdsburg Avenue curve.**

- 5.) Some members of the Cultural Heritage Board commented that the zoning variance should be approved because the building to the north (534 B Street) has the right to build a three-story building without a zoning variance, and therefore a five-story building should be approved at 528 B Street. This logic makes no sense. As the owner of 534 B Street, the Lomi Psychotherapy Clinic, which has occupied and owned the property for fourteen years, has no plans, needs, nor the means to tear down part of our current building and build a three-story building. Nor to build another building in our lot.
- 6.) If the developers want to build a five-story building that will fit into the neighborhood, and not cause traffic hazards, they could negotiate to buy 534 B Street. They can leave the front, historically significant building, tear down the back one, build a five-story building running North to South, and have a drive way with an entrance and exits for drop-offs, move-in/out, deliveries, and adequate space for trash. The Lomi Psychotherapy Clinic does not want to move, but we don't want to live in the shadow of a five-story building which has all the balconies looking down on our site. This building as designed creates a major privacy issue for us, or for any occupant of 534 B Street. The Design Review Board and Cultural Heritage Boards were concerned with privacy issue for the apartment building to the south of 528 B Street, but weren't concerned with privacy issues with 534 B Street.

We hope that you will consider the above issues, and will understand that there are serious issues with the approval of this building. It will not integrate with the neighborhood, will cause issues for neighbors to the north and south, and will create a hazardous situation on B Street. As designed, this building should be rejected.

Sincerely,

Thomas Pope, LMFT
Clinical Director

From: [Katy Higgins Lee, MFT](#)
To: [_CityCouncilListPublic](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 528 B Street proposed building
Date: Monday, December 14, 2020 11:13:50 AM

I am writing to express my objection to the proposed building of a five-story building at 528 B Street. It does not fit into the Saint Rose Historic Neighborhood, is too large, creates problems for neighbors, and will cause safety issues on B Street. Please do not let this building be built as designed.

**Thank you,
Katy Higgins Lee, Mft**

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Katy Higgins Lee, MA, MFT #82430
(She,Her)
(707) 787-7465
www.katyhigginslee.com

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From: [Annelise Landry Scellier](#)
To: [_CityCouncilListPublic](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Construction of new building on 528B street
Date: Monday, December 14, 2020 11:20:42 AM

To all members of the city council,

I object to the building of a five-story building at 528 B Street. It does not fit into the Saint Rose Historic Neighborhood, is too large, creates problems for neighbors, and will cause safety issues on B Street. Please do not let this building be built as designed.

Thanks,

Annelise



December 14, 2020

Santa Rosa City Council
City Hall
100 Santa Rosa Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

RE: Letter of Support for 528 B Street

Mayor Rogers and Council Members:

On behalf of the Santa Rosa Metro Chamber, I am writing to express our support for the 528 B Street project, The Flats.

Santa Rosa's housing shortage is impeding business growth and causing economic and environmental damage, as our residents are forced to commute long distances to find housing. These extra-long commutes result in increased air pollution, traffic congestion, growing inequity, and stressed employees resulting in reduced workforce productivity. Housing is one of the largest challenges for local employers who need to recruit and retain employees in order to stay and grow in Santa Rosa. More residents within walking distance of downtown shops and businesses means a larger customer base and increased economic activity, bringing tremendous returns to Santa Rosa, economic and environmental alike.

The proposed development of this site aligns with the City's Downtown Station Area Specific Plan and the City's goals and vision for downtown Santa Rosa. We urge you to support this proposed project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Rumble", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Peter Rumble
CEO
Santa Rosa Metro Chamber