

Ross, Adam

From: Denise Hill <faire@sonic.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 2:41 PM
To: _DRB - Design Review Board
Cc: Ross, Adam
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments re: Item 8.1 - Avenue 320 Apartments

Design Review Board Chair and Members:

We are writing to you in regards to the 320 Apartment project you will be reviewing at your Jan 21st meeting. We are extremely concerned that the new building proposed as part of this project is out of scale compared to the mostly 1-story residential homes on this block of our historic district.

From the staff report included in your packet:

- Design new development in and adjacent to historic preservation districts to be compatible with existing structures.
- Building heights greater than 35 feet or two-stories in a Preservation District is permissible provided that the review authority finds that the increased height **does not** detract from the character of the preservation district or any adjacent contributing properties 2.5.1

Clearly, this architectural rendering of the Avenue 320 Apartments new development shows a building that overwhelms the adjacent and nearby residential properties.



There are many specific zoning guidelines and design guidelines written to protect historic districts:

- The newly approved Downtown Station Area Plan for 2020 includes height restrictions to protect historic districts.
- Zoning guidelines for historic districts state that height limits within the combining district are more restrictive than in other zones.
- The guidelines state that height limits are to be no more than 35 feet and 2 stories.
- The guidelines also state that buildings must be sensitive to the neighborhood with regard to scale, architectural style, and bulk.

Finally, the City's **Design Guidelines** states that new development in and adjacent to historic districts must be *compatible* with existing structures.

Here are some examples of apartments and townhouses in our neighborhood that were designed to be compatible with both historic structures and our historic streetscape:





What is currently being proposed would fit in on the College side of the property, but not the Lincoln Street side. The only way to reduce the impact of the size and scale on the Lincoln Street side and keep the height would be to position the new build in a different place on the lot (see image below) If it remains in the current location, it should be no more than two stories high.



Best,
Denise Hill
Joe Lilienthal
707-332-1966

Ross, Adam

From: Thomas Karsten <tk@mkgrp.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 2:06 PM
To: Ross, Adam
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 320 College Ave.

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Adam,

As part of the development team for The Flats @ 528 B St, I am writing to voice our support for the Avenue 320 Apartments projects located at 320 College Ave.

This project takes on the difficult task of fashioning an appropriate adaptive reuse of a commercial office building that has out lived its initial intended use by modifying it, with a view to mesh it as part of a new residential development. Furthermore, combining these two distinctly different buildings in a residential historic district is no easy feat, one the development team has thoughtfully done given how the new addition is set back off the street and at the upper floors. In doing so it helps to address a pressing community need for more residential apartments in the greater downtown core.

With that in mind, we lend our support to this project and encourage that it be approved.

Thank you,

Thomas L. Karsten, Jr.
Morrison Karsten Group
528 B Street
Santa Rosa, CA 95401-5211
707.484.4545
tk@mkgrp.com



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Ross, Adam

From: Howard, Brett <Brett.Howard@ampf.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 8:25 AM
To: Ross, Adam
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 320 College Avenue

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hello Adam,

My business partner and I recently purchased the mixed use property located at 528 A Street in the St. Rose neighborhood. We operate our wealth management business out of the office space on the first floor of the building and lease the two 1-bedroom apartments above us. Under normal circumstances, we would have lots of foot traffic with client visits. Many of our clients would be coming from the surrounding Sonoma County cities. We look forward to post-COVID times where we can get back to that routine. The tasteful revitalization and continued investment in this neighborhood is extremely important to us. That said, I'm writing to you in support of the proposed apartment housing project at 320 College Avenue. The architectural style, in my opinion, fits well with the area as does the building height. With adequate parking for each unit, it seems like it would limit most neighborhood street parking. I'm in full support of more housing options within the downtown radius.

I appreciate your listening and feel free to reach out for any further comments.

Kind regards, Brett

Brett Howard, CTFA, AAMS®, APMA®, CRPC®

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Ross, Adam

From: Denise Hill <faire@sonic.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 1:14 PM
To: Ross, Adam
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Question re: The Avenue 320 Apartments project

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Hi, Adam,

I live in the St. Rose Neighborhood. I have a question regarding the Avenue 320 Apartments project and it's current layout on the parcel that abuts Lincoln Street. The current proposal is to have the building running north south so that it creates an L shape with the existing building that faces College Avenue. Can you tell me if there is any reason (fire codes, etc.) that the buildings couldn't be built side by side? In other words, instead of the current proposed L shape it would look like this:



There's a lot of concern by neighbors (and rightfully so) about a 4-story building looming over the 1.5 story home to the east and overwhelming a small historic neighborhood streetscape of 1 to 1.5 story homes. Placing the building as far north on the property as possible and rotating it to an east-west direction would help mitigate these concerns.

I look forward to your response.

Best,
Denise Hill

Ross, Adam

From: Roy Loessin <rolinyes@att.net>
Sent: Sunday, January 17, 2021 5:15 PM
To: Kincaid, Scott; Wix, Henry; Parker Sharron, Adam
Cc: Ross, Adam
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 320 Ave project Jan 21 meeting

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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I had some difficulty mailing this, so if you have received my letter before, I apologize for that.

Dear Design Review Board Member,

With so much going wrong in the world it seems almost frivolous to bring up my concerns about the 320 Ave apartment project. But active engagement on a local level is the true heartbeat of a democracy, and we need to keep that pulse strong.

I have voiced my opposition to inappropriate development in the St. Rose Historic District at many meetings in 2020, and I am more convinced more than ever that the proposed 320 Ave project just does not work on Lincoln Street. One of the architectural renderings of the project speaks volumes, with neighboring homes overwhelmed by a four-story structure.

And this time my opposition is personal. I know people who will be negatively, permanently affected by this project. And Lincoln Street, a street of mostly one-story bungalows, will lose its character, which is what historic preservation districts were instituted to guard against.

I will only mention in passing the untoward effects of this project on traffic patterns and the destruction of heritage redwoods, and haven't we lost enough?

I did not think badly of the original project, the adaptive reuse of the structure at 320 College Avenue. It made perfect sense and would cause no harm to the neighborhood, as far as I could see. However, with the extension of this project to include the 4-story apartment, that is no longer the case.

We in the St. Rose neighborhood have been accused of being against change. In this world there are only two forms of change, for the better or for the worse. I truly believe the 320 Ave four-story apartment project will be a change for the worse for both Lincoln Street and the historic district as a whole.

Sincerely,

Roy Loessin
615 B Street

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