

**Report of Subcommittee
on Lake Merritt Boulevard “Remainder Parcel” to
Measure DD Community Coalition
21 July 2014**

Date of Meeting: Thursday, 17 July 2014, City Hall Annex

Attendees:

Urban Core Integral, Developer	City Staff	DD Subcommittee
Michael Johnson, UC Principal	Hui-Chang Li, Project Planner	Naomi Schiff, Chair
Merle Edwards, UC Principal	Ed Manase, Dir-Strategic Planning	Joel Peter
Michael Pyatok, Architect	Christina Ferracane, Sr Planner	James Vann
Dan Hogman, Arch Asst		Sandy Threlfall (unavailable)
Chris Kent, Landscape Architect		

Urban Core Principal Michael Johnson, opened with a brief summary of the status of and progress of development and design since the Development Team’s presentation at the December 2013 Coalition meeting. Architect M Pyatok & Landscape Architect C Kent followed with a PowerPoint presentation of plans, elevations, landscape, and perspective views of the present status of project design. Questions and discussion followed.

Major Project Changes (since Dec 2013 DD meeting):

1. **ENA.** The developer’s initial one-year ENA (exclusive negotiating agreement) which expired in mid-July, was recently granted a six-month extension to mid-January 2015. The extension included no changes in substance.
2. **Anticipated Development Schedule.** Per M Johnson: Adoption of Area Plans - September 2014; Execution of Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA) with City - December 2014 or January 2015; Start of Construction – July 2015.
3. **Number of Units & Parking.** The project initially proposed 247 apartments & 201 off-street parking (81%). Presently, the project is being planned for 298 apartments & 209 off-street parking (70%). Developer and City Planning staff are in consultation on the appropriate parking ratio for a “transit-oriented development (TOD)” at this location.
4. **No Extension Presently Proposed for the Underground Parking Garage.** The suggestion that the developer would seek extension of the underground garage into the subsurface of the reserved parkland area has been retracted.
5. **Unit Mix.** Presently, the mix of uses is: 113 Studios; 110-1BR; 60-2BR; 7-2Story Townhouses; 8-2Story Penthouses; underground parking accommodation for 209 vehicles.
6. **Bicycle Storage.** Space is provided in the underground garage for 100 bikes. It is assumed that at least the initially planned or increased space is provided for scooters & cycles and for electrical charging stations and zip cars.

7. **Building Massing.** Formerly, the main rectangular block appeared as two towers with upper floors of the North tower stepping down toward the Lake presenting a smaller tower mass at the Lake side.
Currently, the main block is planned as a single rectangular tower – appx 170 ft x 60 ft x 240 ft high. The height remains 24 stories, appx the same as the nearby 1200 Lakeshore Apartments. The block is minimized at the 12th St façade by recessing the central full-height elevator core appx 5 feet. Additionally, protruding balconies at the 2 BR and TH units add 3-dimensional interest to the flat façade of the tower.
A smaller 3-story block connects at the East side and relates to the scale of the existing 2nd Ave apartment complex. Similarly, a smaller 5 story block of gym and townhouses forms a westerly wing connecting to the North façade.
8. **Parking Entrance.** The entrance to parking is relocated to 2nd Avenue from the 12th St façade. A 12th St façade opening remains for moving access, however, the size of the opening is decreased. Moving vans would park in reserved space at the 12th St curb drop-off area. Given the geometry of the parcel, there is probably no other option for this necessary function.
9. **Bicycle Stalls.** The Coalition suggested in December that bicycle spaces should be significantly increased. Currently, an increase to 100 bicycle spaces are provided in the garage; it is assumed from typical practice that many bikes will also be kept in apartments.
10. **Roof Uses.** The low Easterly block has a bio roof. The low Northerly townhouse wing has a roof terrace overlooking the Lake at the 5th floor level, accessible to residents.
11. **Public Cafe.** A ground floor cafe – directly accessible to the public -- is planned on the first floor near the intersection of LM Blvd and E 12th St. Projecting from the cafe toward the Lake is a raised circular outdoor terrace that extends into the parkland reserve (by easement with the City). Comments were offered about possible improvement of access for disabled persons to the cafe.
12. **Exterior Lighting.** The former lighted “butterfly roofs” have been deleted. Designers were cautioned that exterior lighting, if any, should be planned in consideration of the city’s “dark sky” ordinance.
13. **Landscaping of the Adjacent Parkland Reserve.** A proposal for landscape treatment of the parkland reserve was presented and discussed. Initial planning respects the Coalition’s desire for a “passive,” non-active park, with status suitable as a Resource Conservation Area. A variety of plant types were shown along the perimeter and as a “screen” at the existing bio-swale. Low growing, low maintenance native grass (mowed once or twice a year) is proposed for the interior areas. Concerns were expressed about the density of trees and plantings adjacent to the North boundary of the development, and the desirability of some seating at the perimeter..
14. **Coordination with Oakland Unified School District (OUSD).** The Developer’s ENA lists coordination of “Remainder Parcel” development with the School District’s plans for Dewey School and the Administration Building property. The Developer Team will explore options with OUSD for a possible public walkway from E 12th St to the perimeter pathway at the Estuary Channel.

Post-Meeting Commentary of the Subcommittee and the Coalition:

- A. The Coalition's letter of 21 May 2014 stressed the need for a package of "community (public) benefits" due to the provision of publicly-owned land rezoned and infrastructure-prepared for development.
- B. Current proposed community benefits are: (a) the grant of landscaping of the parkland reserve parcel at LM Blvd and E 12th Street; and (b) cafe accessible to the public.
Developer's initial proposal also offered (c) gallery area where local artists could show artworks in rotating exhibitions; and (d) a generous meeting room available for reservation and use by community interests.
Other possible community benefits may include (e) some percentage of units designated as "permanently affordable" rental units; (f) long-term commitment to maintenance of the parkland reserve area; (g) some percentage of commitment to Oakland-based employment relating to both the construction phase of the development, and for ongoing operation of the completed development; (h) contribution to a non-fungible fund for ongoing maintenance of the Meas DD improvements at Lake Merritt Park; (i) offerings determined by the Developer.
- C. Developer should assemble its "package of community benefits" for incorporation into the Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA) to be executed with the City.
- D. Developer shall assure that litter relating to the café and its terrace is actively monitored, controlled, and removed from the premises and the adjacent park.
- E. The project will be a rental development. Developer indicated the intent that, although a rental, the development will be condo-mapped. This is questionable. Developments that have public assistance are not eligible to convert their rental developments to condominiums. The Coalition interprets this prohibition as equally applicable to development of the Remainder Parcel.
- F. The Coalition's request for a "shadow study" of the proposed development has been noticed. Per Developer, preparation of shadow, wind, and special studies are to be completed by a consultant engaged by the City. Developer will coordinate with the City to expedite this request as soon as possible.
- G. The Subcommittee was tasked to monitor the completion of "shadow and wind" studies for the "remainder parcel" development, and to report the findings of the studies to the Coalition.