

Cathy Capriola

From: kipz@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, August 07, 2018 11:36 AM
To: Madolyn Agrimonti
Cc: Amy Harrington; David Cook; Gary Edwards; Rachel Hundley; Cathy Capriola
Subject: Response to Sonoma City Council's Hearing on 870 Broadway Project

Dear Madam Mayor,

I attended last night's Council meeting concerning the disposition of the parcel at 870 Broadway at MacArthur Place.

I did not offer a 'public comment' at the time but chose to 'sleep on it' and ponder exactly what I heard last night.

My conclusion is that the evidence presented supports approval of the 870 Broadway project.

Here are my observations:

- 1)) **David Goodison**, Sonoma City Planning Director, obviously commanded the respect of all parties at last night's meeting. His presentation was professional, compelling and in support of the project. His very detailed review of the developer's application left no doubt that all issues concerning the project had been considered...and approved.
- 2) **Disingenuous Architectural Standards of Applicants** - seems that Mr. Conforti, one of the two appellants, was involved in an abandoned prior project proposal to develop a much larger 3-story hotel on the same location - but now he is opposed to the current project which is smaller and far less intrusive to Broadway and MacArthur neighbors. His criticism seems hard to understand. Given the fact that he has been a resident of Sonoma for close to 50 years, his protective instincts are admirable. But his objections seem disingenuous and inconsistent, given his prior attempts to be involved in developing the property. In addition, the combination of the appellant's Friday 8-page lawyer letter (to which the developer responded on Monday) and of the appellant's 500-page Friday night 'document dump' into Council members' laps before Monday evening's meeting (to which Council Member Hundley referred last night), seems to be quite a calculated attempt to obfuscate and delay the Council's proceedings. Seems unfair that the tactic succeeded.
- 3) **Aesthetics** - the cluster and height of the affordable units seem to be an issue as does tree removal. These seem to be valid concerns which should be able to be addressed.
- 4) **Threat of Voter Retaliation** - I believe I heard a veiled threat of negative voter response if you were to vote in favor of this project. I would argue that you may indeed offend voters - but for the opposite of the reason offered: your inaction on this community opportunity.
 - a) all acknowledge that 870 Broadway is an eyesore and has been a blight to/on the town of Sonoma for the past 10 years
 - b) you have a 'bird in the hand' project which the planning department strongly supported in a super majority vote of 5-2
 - c) the project meets every variance and zoning requirement required by the City of Sonoma
 - d) the project clearly 'solves' the blight problem and simultaneously seeks to involve east side neighbors in its retail operations and newly landscaped grounds
 - e) your inaction may delay this project and/or even jeopardize its ability to be started in this 'building' year. The developers have complied with all demands made of them and seem still able to complete the project and make a profit. At some point, via delay, the economic feasibility of this project will dissipate and the project will be lost - the developers will walk away.

In summary, I heard much subjective objection last night to what the Planning Commission has already approved as a long-awaited community opportunity and resource. The project may need to be 'tweaked' a bit and the developers have

already demonstrated a willingness to be responsive to perceived improvements. But, Sonoma needs and deserves to have its 'face' improved after 10 years of scarring on Broadway. The community opportunity for that is right now. This matter, for the betterment of Sonoma, is in your hands.

Voltaire's admonition seems to apply in this matter: "The perfect is the enemy of the good". You have in front of you a good project.

Sincerely,

Richard M. Altman
8742 Summerhill Lane

Cathy Capriola

From: Robert Demler <robertcdemler@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 06, 2018 6:28 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Late Communication - City Council Meeting of August 8, 2018

RE:

6.2: Review, Discussion, and Possible Action to Uphold or Deny an Appeal of the Planning Commission's Approval of and Possibly Approve: 1) a Mitigated Negative Declaration; 2) a Tentative Map and Use Permit for the Gateway Mixed-Use Development, 870 Broadway (City Manager)

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the City Council direct staff to prepare resolutions denying the appeal and adopting the mitigated negative declaration and approving the Tentative Map and Use Permit for consideration at a subsequent meeting, scheduled for a date certain.

Dear City Council:

I had planned to be at tonight's meeting to support the Gateway Project at 870 Broadway. I know some of you are always reachable at any time and I apologize for this late message but I am not feeling well tonight and am unable to be present.

I urge you to deny the appeal and approve the Tentative Map and Use Permit for this project,

Kind regards,

Robert Demler
649 1st Street West #8
Sonoma, CA 95476-7050
707-996-3432 [Home]
707-536-6788 [Mobile]

Cathy Capriola

From: Christopher Prete <cprete355@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 06, 2018 11:21 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Broadway Gateway appeal

Council Members,

I recommend that the City Council deny the appeal of the Planning Commission's approval of the Broadway / MacArthur "Gateway Project". The project requested no variances from existing code, is a very good mix of housing types and replaces a blighted property at the entryway to the City. This area is in dire need of additional housing. A growing number of workers already commute from Solano County to work in Sonoma Valley, and local merchants are having a difficult time staffing. Younger people I know tell me they plan on leaving Sonoma for other states due to the cost and lack of housing. If we can't allow a place for people to live, we'll lose the next generation of employees to places that will. And as the town becomes an enclave of wealthy second home owners, we'll also lose being a real community. Thank you for considering.

Christopher Prete
355 First St West

Cathy Capriola

From: Lou Braun <loubraun2003@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, August 04, 2018 5:50 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Madolyn Agrimonti; David Cook; Gary Edwards; Amy Harrington; Rachel Hundley
Subject: Comments RE Sonoma Gateway Appeal - Braun
Attachments: Gateway Project - Appeal Comment - Braun - 080418.pdf

Dear Mayor Agrimonti and Councilmembers,

I wish to urge you to uphold the appeal of the Gateway Project as it does not comply with the General Plan and Development Code and the applicant has not provided substantial reasons to justify its non-compliance.

I have spoken out against this project in previous meeting with the Planning Commission and wish to thank you in advance for considering my comments in the attached letter.

Your continued service to our community is much appreciated.

Sincerely,
Louis Braun
871 1st St W.
Sonoma, CA 95476
415.317.4337

Louis Braun
871 1st St West
Sonoma, CA 95476
August 4, 2018

Via E-Mail: CityCouncil@sonomacity.org

Mayor Madolyn Agrimonti and Members of the City Council
City of Sonoma, No. 1 The Plaza
Sonoma, CA 95476

RE: Gateway Project

Dear Mayor Agrimonti and Councilmembers,

I wish to urge you to uphold the appeal of the Gateway Project as it does not comply with the General Plan and Development Code and the applicant has not provided substantial reasons to justify its non-compliance.

I'm sure you agree that the Broadway corridor is an incredibly important resource which is our responsibility to protect. It's not just another street! It grandly announces our community to the visitor and, like our town square, is a source of pride for all who live here.

Therefore, our development code specifically states (19.32.010): *"Historic structures on Broadway will be preserved, restored and re-used, while new development will respect and contribute to the character of the area."* And goes on to state (19.32.020):

"New commercial and mixed use buildings and alterations to existing structures should contribute to the established Broadway streetscape."

If this project is built, you'll need to be able to answer a fundamental question that many in Sonoma will ask you: **How does this project respect and contribute to the character of the area?** If it is built, I can guarantee you that most people in this town will be saddened and outraged. It will be as if a Los Angeles condo park was suddenly dropped from the sky onto Broadway. They will wonder how in the world it ever came to be approved.

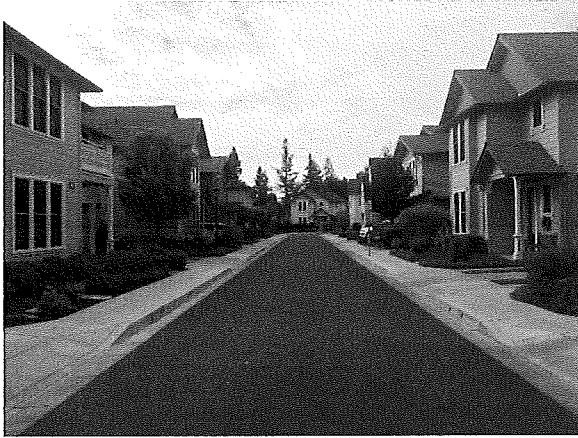
For instance, our Development Code requires that "mass, scale, proportion" must be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. And while most buildings on Broadway are no more than 30' wide, this project's commercial building on Broadway is twice that and it's 120' long. Being close to the street, you can count on it to dominate that corner. Granted, the old auto center unhappily dominates that area today. But do we really want to build a "new dominator" to replace the "old dominator?" Once built, it is going to be there a long time! Again, the development code (19.32.010) states that new mixed-use development *should enliven Broadway with small-scale retail, office, and residential uses*. Do you think this is small-scale?

I do not think it's "small scale" and so wondered how the staff report prepared by the City Planning Director did think so. The answer may be found in the "Findings" section of the "Supplemental Report" (p16) where we read:

(Below is the requirement)	Architectural Considerations	(Below is staff response)
<p>a. New infill structures should support the distinctive architectural characteristics of development in the surrounding neighborhood, including building mass, scale, proportion, decoration/detail, door and window spacing/rhythm, exterior materials, finished-floor height, porches, and roof pitch and style.</p>	<p>Each of the buildings adjoining the street features porches, entry walks, and low landscaping fences designed to engage the street, which is characteristic of older development along Broadway. The building elevations feature porches, eaves, and insets that help reduce their scale and incorporate traditional design elements.</p>	

I do not see how “porches, eaves, and insets” help to reduce the scale of buildings that are so much bigger than typical buildings on Broadway. To me, this explanation simply skirts the critical issue of “mass, scale, and proportion.” Do you think it is an acceptable explanation?

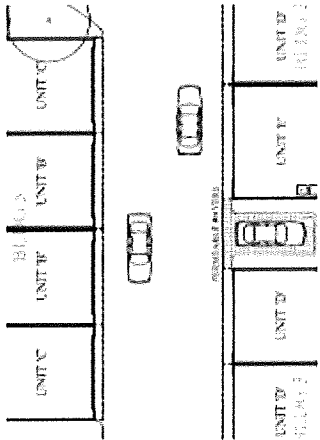
But how do we judge whether the development “*respects the character of the area?*” To me, the distinctive but obvious thing about Sonoma’s character is that people live in neighborhoods where our front doors face a street. Even in our lower cost neighborhoods, the designers do not cordon off residents into isolated compounds but have always incorporated a street metaphor to be compatible with the rest of the town. For instance, look at Steve Ledson’s development off MacArthur at First Steet West (top photo).



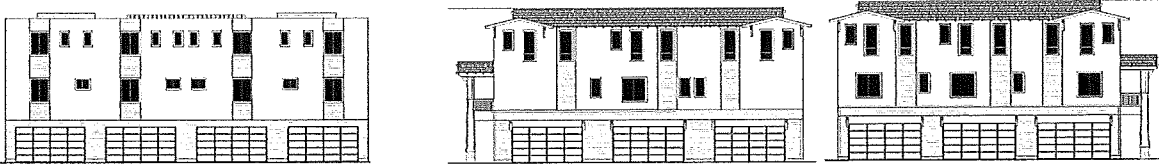
Notice how Ledson created a narrower street which allows the residents to actually see each other and creates a sense of neighborhood.

In contrast, note the photo below that shows a development approach that’s similar to the one the Gateway developer has incorporated for the Gateway Project.

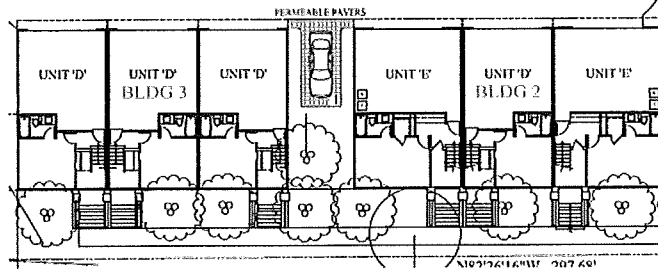
Like Los Angeles, this project is car-centric, not people-centric. The main way most residents will enter and leave their units will be via an automatic garage door opener. They will drive through a maze of garage doors, open one, drive in, and close it. The design cuts people off and reflects a soulless, anonymous world where no one sees each other. Does this reflect our town character?



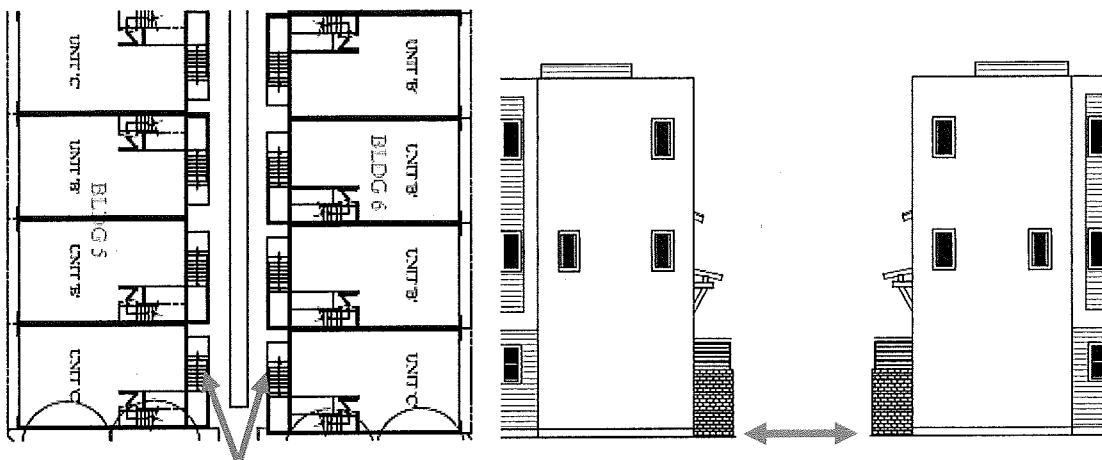
Below left are the four garages for Building 6. Directly across the street from them (below right) are the six garages for Buildings 2 & 3. Garages are everywhere to be seen but no front doors. Do you see how this cuts people off from each other? Does this approach support our community's values?



In sum, for most residents the "front door" will be the garage door. And, perhaps worse, the "front door" is not a very attractive place for most of these residents. For instance, the front doors of Buildings 2 & 3 (right) are just feet away from a fence on the north side of the property and residents will need to walk around the building to get to the front door. But no one will do that. Instead, they'll just drive into the garage and close the door.



The situation is actually worse for the residents of Building 5 & 6 as their front door landings (below left) are about 12" from each other. As designed, the primary walls are 20 feet apart but will tower straight up to 32 feet high, which will create a shadowy, largely sunless canyon between these buildings. We can do better than this!



These are "front door landings"

The front door landings are about 12' apart

In sum, this development does not respect and contribute to the character of the area. It is way out of whack in terms of mass, scale and proportion. For these reasons, I urge the city council to uphold the appeal.

Thank you for considering my comments and for your continued service to our community.

Sincerely,

Louis Braun

Cathy Capriola

From: David Eichar <eichar@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Saturday, August 04, 2018 2:16 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Gateway Project - August 6th meeting

Mayor and city council members;

Part of the state of California efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is to encourage reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The California Air Resources Board (CARB) and the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) includes *PDT-1 Limit Parking Supply* in their measures to reduce VMT. However, CAPCOA states, "Reduction can be counted only if spillover parking is controlled (via residential permits and on-street market rate parking)"

<http://www.capcoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/CAPCOA-Quantification-Report-9-14-Final.pdf>

The Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District includes the same restrictions for VMT reduction credit for PDT-1 in their guide for land use emission reductions.

<http://www.airquality.org/LandUseTransportation/Documents/SMAQMD%20LU%20Measures%20V3.0.pdf>

In addition, good public transportation is also required to achieve VMT reduction. The bus schedule hours and time between buses in Sonoma must be greatly enhanced before limiting parking would encourage VMT reduction.

The Gateway Project is close to other residential areas where there are no such on-street parking restrictions. Therefore, the Gateway project should be required to provide adequate parking. By my calculations, which are included in the agenda packet, the project as approved by the Planning Commission is short 10 parking spaces.

Regards,
David Eichar

Cathy Capriola

From: Gary Edwards
Sent: Monday, August 06, 2018 9:31 AM
To: Cathy Capriola
Subject: Fwd: Appeal of Sonoma Gateway Project.

Gary Edwards, Council Member
City of Sonoma

Begin forwarded message:

From: Chickie Vella <chickievella@gmail.com>
Date: August 3, 2018 at 11:16:24 PM PDT
To: madolyn.agrimonti@sonomacity.org, david.cook@sonomacity.org,
gary.edwards@sonomacity.org, amy.harrington@sonomacity.org,
rachel.hundley@sonomacity.org
Subject: Re: Appeal of Sonoma Gateway Project.

Councilmembers; I write this email in support of the above mentioned project. I live on Austin Ave. and my property backs up to this. I have lived on this property for 40 years, many of which I had Bob Bona and the Truck and Auto as neighbors. Never once was there an issue with living with the car lot as a neighbor-and he was there first. In the winter when all the leaves were gone from the trees and I could see the traffic light change color from the kitchen window, I still had no issue because I always had the feeling of open space. I could see out over the car lot because it was so low, to both Broadway and East MacArthur. To me this was part of living so close to a mixed use designation. During the time I have owned the property MacArthur Place came into being, also a great neighbor and part of what my part of Austin was destined for. Now that this new project has proposed for this site I have many issues. This project is not in compliance with the City's General Plan or Development code, and it also exceeds building height limitations, as the block of building on the inside appears to be 37 feet tall which will loom over the front building which is 27 feet tall. It also seems as if one must drive through the whole project in order to find parking for the retail shops which makes it obvious that they intend for people to park on the street. Which leads to the problem of street parking. Being I live on one of the streets closest to the project it seems logical that I can figure that customers coming to the shops, people visiting the residents of the proposed houses and employees of said shops, will be parking in the neighborhood. This project is at the gateway to our city, but doesn't in any way fit in on Broadway which is a mix of two story and one story buildings with small front yards and driveways separating each lot. There have been a few projects on Broadway by this proposed project that have done a very nice job of remodeling an older home, or even adding to it while retaining its'

look. This is what I believe is referred to as Sonoma Mix. Please uphold this appeal and have the developer come up with something that doesn't remove trees and over build the lot. This is within the Broadway Historic District and looks to be completely incompatible with it. The people of Sonoma have a right to expect a good design that we can live with at the gateway to our city. I don't want to have to live for the next 40 years looking at an over built project every

time fall rolls around with a lot of cars parked for 8 hours a day on our residential streets. We do care about where we live. Chickie Vella. 845 Austin Ave.

On Aug 3, 2018 7:10 PM, "Chickie Vella" <chickie@vellacheese.com> wrote:

Vella Cheese Company of CA

315 Second St. East

Sonoma, CA 95476

(707) 938-3232

(707) 938-4307 FAX

www.vellacheese.com

Cathy Capriola

From: David Goodison
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2018 2:13 PM
To: Cathy Capriola; Veronica Nebb
Subject: FW: Victor Conforti - Architect
Attachments: Mayor and City Council Members.pdf; Conforti 870 Broadway.pdf

From: Owen Smith <owen.smith@sunlever.com>
Date: Sunday, August 5, 2018 at 2:12 PM
To: Madolyn Agrimonti <madolyn.agrimonti@sonomacity.org>, Amy Harrington <amy.harrington@sonomacity.org>, David Cook <david.cook@sonomacity.org>, Gary Edwards <gary.edwards@sonomacity.org>, Rachel Hundley <rachel.hundley@sonomacity.org>
Cc: David Goodison <davidg@sonomacity.org>
Subject: Victor Conforti - Architect

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

Attached please find my letter and supporting document that I think you may find to be critical in your decision on the appeal of the plans Broadway & MacArthur, LLC has put forward for 870 Broadway.

Best,
Owen

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Owen Smith
President, Sunlever Corporation
CA BRE 01939847
PO Box 2369
Del Mar, CA 92014
owen.smith@sunlever.com
858 242 2462

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5 August 2018

To: Mayor and City Council, City of Sonoma, CA with a copy to local media
Subject: Victor Conforti, Architect

VIA EMAIL

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

As an introduction for those of you I have not met, I came to our great State of California on Marine Corps orders. When I completed my last active duty assignment in 2012 I had a unique opportunity to get back into the profession that I had left 11 years earlier: I formed my own company to work for a client interested in building on sites in Sonoma County. That work brought me to your beautiful city and the site at 870 Broadway.

When my client decided to concentrate their efforts elsewhere, I took a disproportionate personal financial risk to buy out of the contract I had negotiated on their behalf and acquired their option to purchase the site. While holding preliminary public meetings to determine the best use for the site, I was able to close the purchase of the property with a group of like-minded partners who acted very quickly. Had they not stepped up I would likely have been forced to sell the site to a used car dealer.

Since then our partnership has been through an iterative process to find the right builder to develop the site.

We were all excited to have finally found the right fit with Broadway & MacArthur, LLC. This proposed use is loyal to our original purpose: to balance the needs of the community with the right plan to bring out the property's value.

I was saddened to hear of Victor Conforti's appeal of this application and quite frankly totally taken aback. Victor was hired by my former client to develop preliminary plans for a hotel on the site.

The plan Victor and his office came up with, which is attached for your reference, was an 81,000 square foot, 3-story building on the corner backed by a massive parking lot with room for more than 90 cars - roughly double the square footage of the project he now opposes. There was no arm-twisting involved. In other words, he suggested that some version of that design would be doable on the site.

At the very least it seems that Victor is conflicted based on his involvement in previous efforts to develop the site. I hope you will consider his objections tainted due to his representation (via design) to his client that the site could be developed in a much more intense manner than is currently proposed.

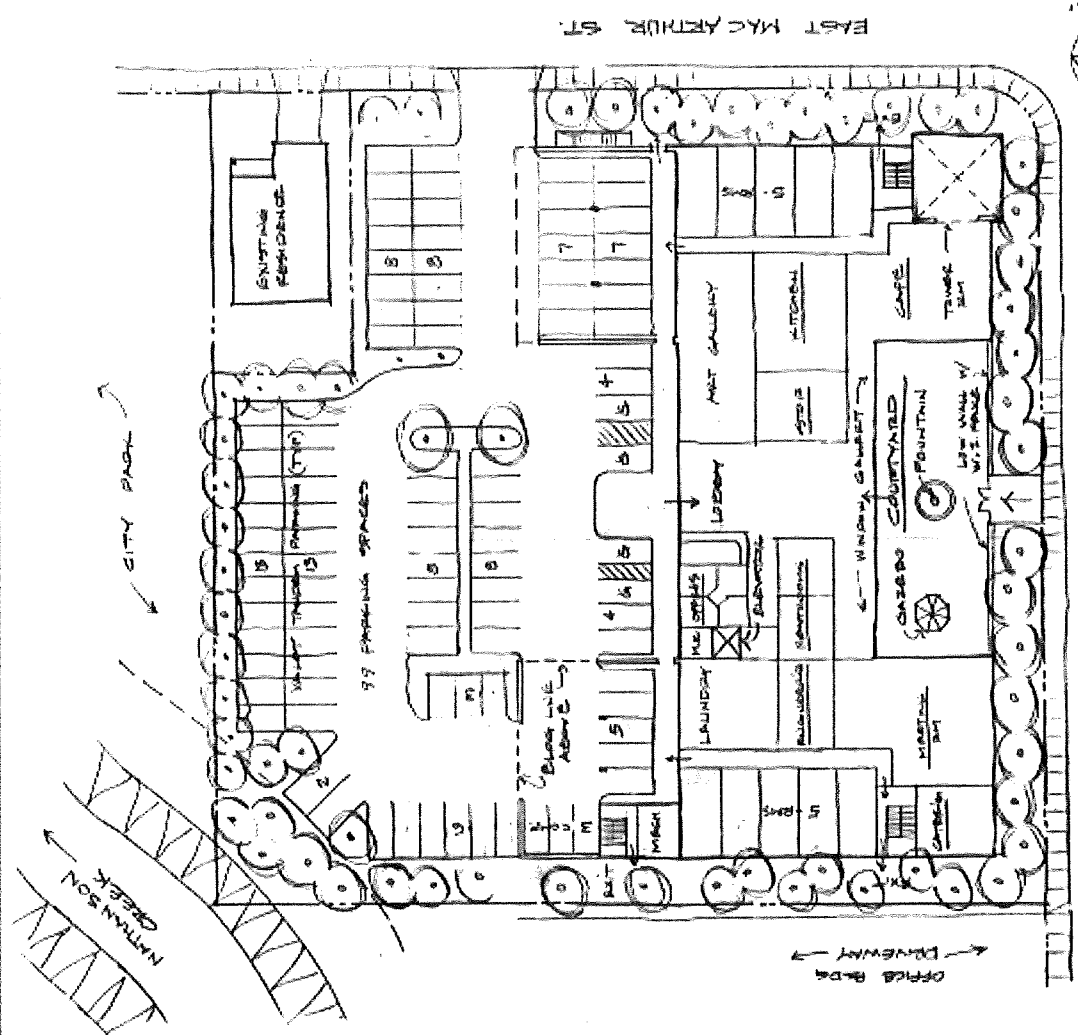
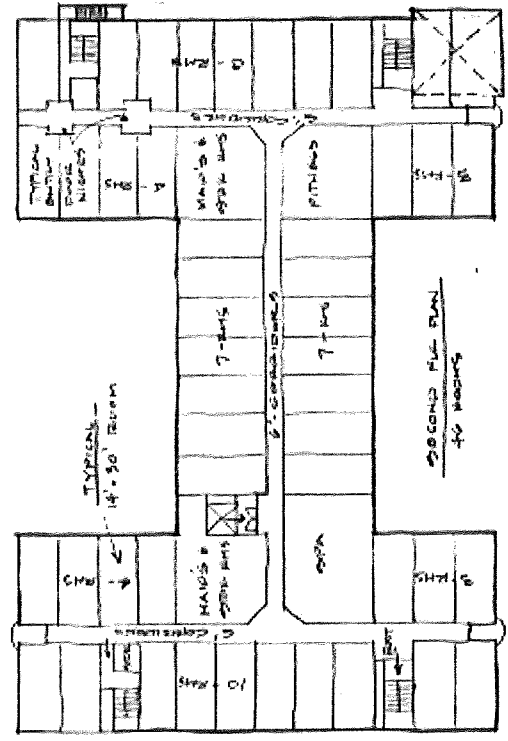
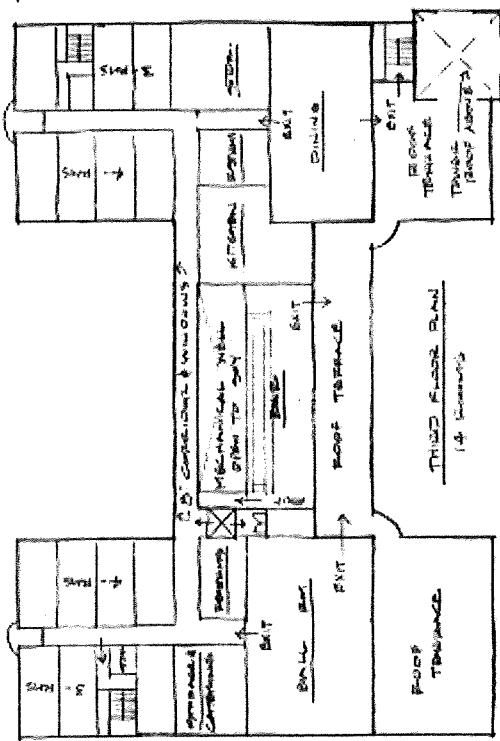
I hope that you will reject the appeal, approve this great project, and in so doing provide a small win for a veteran-owned enterprise and a big win for your beautiful city.

Thank you for your hard work in service of your community.

Best,



Owen Smith
President, Sunlever Companies



SITE DATA
 SITE AREA = 80,520 SQ
 COVERAGE = 29,165 SF = 0.36 COVER MAX
 TOTAL BUILD = 80,784 SF = 3 FLOORS (INCLUDES ROOF TERRACES)
 P.A.F. = 1.00 S.I.B. MAX
 PROGRAM = 99 CARS

SITE PLAN & 1" = 1' FUR
 SCALE 1" = 20'

Cathy Capriola

From: Cathy Capriola
Sent: Friday, August 10, 2018 10:19 AM
To: victor@victorconforti.com
Cc: City Council; bill@marcuswillers.com; carol@marcuswillers.com; Jim Moore; Wendy Atkins
Subject: FW: Late mail - Correction to the record
Attachments: Broadway Letter from Applicant Attorney to City Council.pdf; Mayor and City Council Members.pdf; Conforti 870 Broadway.pdf

Dear Vic:

I have received your email and am copying the entire City Council as a means to forward your response to them directly.

Planning staff will also add this to the record and our correspondence file for the project.

Thank you,

Cathy

From: Victor Conforti [mailto:victor@victorconforti.com]
Sent: Friday, August 10, 2018 10:05 AM
To: Cathy Capriola <ccapriola@sonomacity.org>
Cc: Madolyn Agrimonti <madolyn.agrimonti@sonomacity.org>; Bill Willers <bill@marcuswillers.com>; Carol Marcus <carol@marcuswillers.com>
Subject: Fwd: Late mail - Correction to the record

Begin forwarded message:

Cathy,

I would like to correct the record regarding the late mail from Owen Smith presented at the August 6 public hearing, on the Appeal to the City Council of the Gateway Mixed Use project at 870 Broadway.

The letter states... "The plan Victor and his office came up with, which is attached for your reference, was an 81,000 square foot, 3-story building on the corner backed by a massive parking lot with room for more than 90 cars - roughly double the square footage of the project he now opposes. There was no arm-twisting involved. In other words, he suggested that some version of that design would be doable on the site."

On the contrary, after doing this preliminary study I told the project developer Mr Kessler, president of The Kessler Collection a hotel development company from Georgia, that a three story development in that location would be difficult to get approved by the Sonoma Planning Commission. I recommended to Mr. Kessler that he use an underground parking structure to allow the design to be a two story building, if he wanted to get an

approval. Following this, Mr. Kessler had his designer Georgia Reese-Vanderbilt and Associates from Atlanta, take over the design and prepare other several other proposals.

Please place this in the record of the Appeal hearing proceedings. Also please forward this to the Mayor and the other City Council members.

Thank You,

Victor Conforti - Architect
755 Broadway
Sonoma, CA 95476
707-996-7923
victor@victorconforti.com

From: David Goodison <davidg@sonomacity.org>
Subject: Late mail
Date: August 6, 2018 at 3:33:16 PM PDT
To: Victor Conforti <victor@victorconforti.com>, Bill Willers <bill@marcuswillers.com>

Hello—The following late mail has been received over the weekend and late this afternoon.

David