



7/23/2017

VIA EMAIL

Michael Hanebutt
City of Sacramento Community Development Department
300 Richards Boulevard, 3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: 65th Street Apartments (DR17-220)

Dear Mr. Hanebutt:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the routing for 65th Street Apartments (DR17-220) and we offer the following comments. The project consists of 90 market rate apartments with 5,000 square feet of outdoor community space, outdoor patio space behind the public sidewalk, 45 long-term and 10 short-term bike parking spaces, 46 vehicle parking spaces on the first floor with access from an alley, and approximately 2,800 square feet of retail. The project will require the demolition of two existing single-story existing commercial buildings.

The 65th Street Apartment project is proposed for a site within the 65th Street/University Transit Village plan area. The area is transforming into a mixed-use district with new restaurants, stores, services and housing filling vacant sites and replacing older buildings. In addition to being close to many walkable destinations, the project site is less than 600 feet north of the University/65th Street Station and about 300 feet south of the Hornet Crossing pedestrian and bicycle tunnel to Sacramento State.

WALKSacramento recommendations to improve the walking- and biking-supportive elements of 65th Street Apartments are summarized in the following bullet points.

- **Include Juliette balconies, built-in window seats or built-in window desks that might lead to more activity at the bedroom windows and provide more “eyes on the street.”**
- **Add a stairwell in the lobby, preferably with the landing between the street entrance and the elevators, to encourage use of the stairs for better health.**
- **Add stairwell doors within the garage to allow stairs at the rear of the building to be accessed without exiting the building to encourage use of the stairs for better health.**
- **Additional outdoor seating and bike racks should be installed near the commercial space without encroaching upon the pedestrian space to further activate the street.**
- **Retain or replace 65th Street pedestrian lights for pedestrian safety.**
- **Provide illumination on the alley for safer night-time walking.**
- **Mark a pedestrian crossing at the south leg of 65th Street at Elvas Avenue to safely accommodate future pedestrian demand.**

New development that facilitates, encourages and motivates people to walk and bike, combined with streets that are walkable and bikeable, is needed to improve the health of our residents.

Many people don't achieve the recommended minimal amount of daily physical activity, often due to the obstacles to walking and biking created by the built environment in which they live. 65th Street Apartments will be in a prime location, but there are a few elements of the site and building design that won't achieve the same level of support for daily physical activity. These elements involve natural surveillance, access, patio seating and bike parking, lighting, and street crossing.

Goal 15 of the 65th Street/University Transit Village Plan is to "Create a lively, pedestrian oriented public environment by clearly defining public areas, increasing safety, and adding interest to building frontage." The planters and low fencing around the residential patio area on the 65th Street side will help define public and private areas, and the building elevation will greatly improve the streetscape over what it is today. "Eyes on the street," a type of natural surveillance, is important because it not only helps people in the public space feel safer and therefore use the public space more, but it improves the sense of ownership and community membership of the people within the building, provided they have a view of the outdoor public space. It appears that more than half of the building's 65th Street and Elvas Ave Folsom Blvd Alley ground-level frontages will be windows and the lobby entrance will face the street. Therefore, the ground floor will provide some "eyes on the street and alley" that will increase safety, assuming the windows are sufficiently transparent to allow views both from within and from outside.

Floors 2-6 have primarily bedroom windows facing 65th Street, the two adjacent alleys, and the 2nd floor terrace. There are also windows between each floor in the stairwells at the rear of the building, and floor-to-ceiling windows in each apartment common room and the study alcove on each floor. Considering that these apartments are intended for Sac State students and the public, and that the apartments have up to four nearly equal-sized bedrooms and no master bedrooms, the bedrooms might be used for significantly more than just sleeping and dressing. In that case, the bedrooms contribution to "eyes on the street" could be enhanced by **including Juliette balconies, built-in window seats or built-in window desks that might lead to more activity at the bedroom windows.**

Stairwells can be an important element of the built environment that facilitates daily physical activity. Stair use can be encouraged by locating the stairs in a prominent position relative to the elevator. For stairs to support daily physical activity, residents must be able to easily access stairs both leaving and arriving. However, the 65th Street Apartments project doesn't include a stairwell in the lobby that could be conveniently used instead of the elevator. Although the stairwells at the rear of the building contain windows which encourage greater stair use by providing daylighting and views of the outside, the placement of the stairs at the alley discourages, or prevents, access from the lobby. Daily physical activity could be significantly increased by **adding a stairwell in the lobby, preferably with the landing between the street entrance and the elevators, and adding stairwell doors within the garage.**

The 65th Street sidewalk has adequate clear space for pedestrians while also providing sufficient space for shade trees and pedestrian lighting between the street and the walkway. Outdoor seating for apartment residents is behind the pedestrian walkway. The commercial space is lacking outdoor seating and bike racks, though. The street could be more activated if patrons of the commercial space were to occupy outdoor space. **Additional outdoor seating and bike racks**

should be installed near the commercial space without encroaching upon the pedestrian space.

Lighting is important to increase safety at night, from both a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) perspective and a mobility perspective. People walking at night should be able to see their surroundings and be seen by people in the area for personal safety. They should also be able to see the surface they are walking on to prevent falls. There appears to be three pedestrian lights along the project's 65th Street frontage. These lights provide illumination not only for pedestrians, but may also illuminate the bike lane between street lights.

We recommend that the 65th Street pedestrian lights remain or are replaced with new pedestrian lights. The plans don't seem to indicate locations for pedestrian lights in the alleys, but alley lighting will be very important for pedestrian and personal safety. **WALKSacramento recommends the project provide illumination sufficient for pedestrian travel on the alley for safer night-time walking.**

We are pleased to see that both alleys will have sidewalks. The Elvas Ave Folsom Blvd Alley has a sidewalk that is generously wide, narrowing to about 6 feet at the corner of the transition to the 65th St 66th St Alley sidewalk in the rear. We're also pleased to see that a sidewalk is on the project side of the rear alley. Unfortunately, its width is only four feet between the curb and the greenscreen planter. The vegetation covering the garage venting is a good pedestrian amenity and it will present a much more pleasant view than without the greenscreens. In consideration of the narrow alley sidewalk that provide access to the stairwells, **WALKSacramento recommends adding a stairwell to the lobby.**

The 65th Street Apartments project will increase pedestrian traffic along 65th Street, and there will be more people from west of 65th Street and south of Elvas Avenue. Pedestrians are currently prohibited from crossing 65th Street at the south side of Elvas Avenue. **WALKSacramento recommends allowing and marking a pedestrian crossing at the south leg of 65th Street at Elvas Avenue.**

WALKSacramento is working to support increased physical activity such as walking and bicycling in local neighborhoods as well as helping to create community environments that support walking and bicycling. The benefits include improved physical fitness, less motor vehicle traffic congestion, better air quality, and a stronger sense of cohesion and safety in local neighborhoods.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and recommendations. If you have questions or need additional information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Chris Holm
Project Manager

Attachment: Development Checklist for Biking and Walking

DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST for BIKING and WALKING

*Prepared by WALKSacramento and SABA (Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates)
September 2012*

This checklist is provided to give an indication of design, engineering, and policy elements that we consider when reviewing development projects.

POLICIES

- Walking and biking is a priority
- Adopted a policy to develop a full multi-modal and ADA accessible transportation system

Project Review and Comment

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- Pedestrian Master Plan
- Bicycle Master Plan
- Regional Blueprint
- Regional Blueprint Consistent General Plans
- Adopted Climate Action Plans
- Subdivision ordinances to support pedestrian and bicycle access and safety
- Zoning ordinance to support pedestrian and bicycle access and safety

ENGINEERING

- SIDEWALKS & BIKELANES ON BOTH SIDES OF MAJOR ROADWAYS
 - Pedestrian Level of Service "C" or better on arterials
 - Bicycle Level of Service "C" or better on arterials
- SAFE CROSSINGS FOR PEDESTRIANS
 - every 300-600 feet on major arterials
 - well lit, marked crosswalks
 - audible signals & count-down signals
 - median refuge islands
- SPEED MANAGEMENT
 - Speed limits based on safety of pedestrians and bicyclists
 - Implement "road diets" where there is excess lane capacity
- STREET DESIGN STANDARDS
 - Maximize pedestrian and bicyclist safety
 - Sidewalks buffered by trees and landscaping on major arterials
 - Vertical curbs
 - 5' minimum sidewalk widths, 8' in front of schools
 - 6' minimum bike lanes on busy streets

- ❑ **INTERSECTIONS**
 - Median refuge islands for pedestrians
 - Signal timing to enable safe passage
 - Signal detection for bicyclists
 - Crossings on all 4 legs of intersections

- ❑ **ELIMINATE BARRIERS**
 - Freeway, railroad, river and creek crossings
 - Obstructions in sidewalks and bike lanes

NEW DEVELOPMENT – REQUIRE

- ❑ Walking & bicycling circulation plans for all new development
- ❑ Direct and convenient connections to activity centers, including schools, stores, parks, transit
- ❑ Mixed uses and other transit supporting uses within ¼ mile of light rail stations or bus stops with frequent service
- ❑ Minimum width streets
- ❑ Maximum block length of 400'
- ❑ 4-lane maximum for arterials; Recommend 2 lanes wherever possible

NEW DEVELOPMENT – DISCOURAGE

- ❑ Cul-de-sacs (unless it includes bike/ped connections)
- ❑ Gated and/or walled communities
- ❑ Meandering sidewalks
- ❑ Inappropriate uses near transit (gas stations, drive-thru restaurants, mini storage and other auto dependent uses)

BUILDINGS – REQUIRE

- ❑ Direct access for pedestrians from the street
- ❑ Attractive and convenient stairways
- ❑ Bicycle parking – long & short term
- ❑ Shower & clothing lockers

OLDER NEIGHBORHOODS

- ❑ Improve street crossings
- ❑ Reduce speeds
- ❑ Provide new connections
- ❑ Create short cuts for walkers and bicyclists by purchase of properties or other means
- ❑ Provide sidewalks on both sides of major streets

Policy Review and Comment

ENFORCEMENT & MAINTENANCE

- ❑ Enforce speed limits
- ❑ Enforce crosswalk rules – conduct crosswalk sting operations
- ❑ Enforce restrictions against parking on sidewalks
- ❑ Enforce bicycle rules including riding with traffic, lights at night, stopping at red lights
- ❑ Implement CVC 267 setting speed limits based on pedestrian and bicyclist safety
- ❑ Sweep streets and fix hazards
- ❑ Repair and replace broken sidewalks

EDUCATION

- ❑ Train staff on pedestrian and bicycle facility design.
- ❑ Train development community about pedestrian and bicycle planning and safety issues
- ❑ Bicycle skills training

FUNDING

- ❑ Include pedestrian and bicycle facilities in capital improvement programs
- ❑ Include pedestrian and bicycle facilities as a part of roadway widening and improvement projects
- ❑ Support Measure A pedestrian and bicycle facility allocation
- ❑ Set priorities based on safety and latent demand
- ❑ SACOG Community Design grants & Bike/Ped grants
- ❑ California Bicycle transportation Account
- ❑ Safe Routes to School

www.walksacramento.org

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