



10/4/2019

VIA EMAIL

David Hung, Associate Planner
City of Sacramento Community Development Department
300 Richards Boulevard, 3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Willow Grove Apartments (DR19-245)

Dear Mr. Hung:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the Willow Grove Apartments project and we offer the following comments. The project will provide market-rate affordable housing that's needed in the community, and it proposes the required long-term bike parking and 50% more bike racks than required. The project will construct sidewalks on the parcels fronting and siding on Willow Street and Harris Avenue. It will also improve the adjacent segment of Willow Street Ivy Street Alley to provide vehicle access to the apartment's parking lot, thereby maintaining pedestrian safety by not adding driveways on Willow street and Harris Avenue.

The proposed apartments will have good "eyes on" Willow Street, Harris Avenue, and the common spaces between Buildings A and B and between Buildings C and D. Willow Street will be overlooked by the kitchens/dining rooms and bedrooms on both floors; Harris Avenue and the A-B and C-D common spaces will be overlooked by kitchens/dining rooms on both levels and the living room balconies on the second floor.

There are two elements of the buildings that might be improved to create more natural surveillance and enhance social connections. The first floor living rooms and patios facing the common space appear to be screened by plank fencing. We suggest reducing the height of the privacy fencing so that occupants of the living rooms and patios are able to see activity on the common space area.

The second improvement would be to increase the natural surveillance of the space between Buildings B and C. All of the windows facing the space are in bedrooms, so there may be little "eyes on" during the day and early evening. It may be difficult or infeasible to revise the buildings or minimize the space between the buildings, but improving the sightline from the parking area could help.

We suggest changing the short- and long-term bike parking locations and the trash enclosure for 3834 and 3836 Willow Street to open up a better sightline from the parking area. We suggest making three changes.

First, all of the short-term bike parking is effectively at the back of the site, so the use of the racks won't be convenient. Moving the bike racks to the Willow Street end of the buildings will allow visitors to park their bikes near the street and just as close to the building they're visiting.

Second, with the bike racks moved toward the street, the long-term bike lockers should be moved to the space previously occupied by the bike racks.

Third, provide separate trash enclosures for Buildings B and C located where the bike lockers and maneuvering space had been. This would provide a clear line of sight from Willow Street to the alley and between the rear elevations of the two buildings. It would also provide the opportunity to extend the east-west sidewalk that's between the two rows of four parking spaces to the sidewalk along the ends of all four buildings.

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.

Sincerely,

Chris Holm
Project Analyst