



6/17/2021

VIA EMAIL

Armando Lopez, Assistant Planner
City of Sacramento Community Development Department
300 Richards Boulevard 3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: KIND Project (Z21-048)

Dear Mr. Lopez:

WALKSacramento has reviewed The KIND Project (Z21-048) and we offer the following comments.

The project proposes to develop a three-story mixed-use building with ground-floor commercial and 72 residential units in the parking lot where Insight Coffee is currently located, with the coffee shop remaining intact. The project features several elements of sustainable living and development, including a climate appropriate landscaping scheme, rooftop solar, minimal vehicle parking, and short- and long-term bicycle parking. The project also incorporates a number of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) elements, such as street-facing balconies and minimal setbacks, which help to provide “eyes on the street,” as well as a selection of plantings that preserve sightlines. Overall, WALKSacramento appreciates the project team’s efforts to incorporate the development within the neighborhood fabric of the South Side Historic District by preserving Insight Coffee and maintaining a low-to-midrise building height.

To further promote active transportation and healthy living among residents and patrons, the proposed bicycle facilities could be improved in a number of ways. First, there is a discrepancy between the Project Narrative and the Project Statistics with respect to residential long-term bicycle parking. The Narrative states “Long term bicycle parking for the residences will be provided within each unit,” while the Statistics state “1 space per 2 dwellings (if no dedicated storage is provided).” Dedicated storage space is also not included in the floor plans. Regardless, without an elevator in the residential sections of the building, it will likely be inconvenient or unrealistic for second and third floor residents to carry their bicycles up one to two flights of stairs, especially if they have “nontraditional” bicycles, such as cargo bikes or recumbent bikes, or if they have trailer attachments. Thus, we recommend finding space in the parking lot or retail space for a bike room or additional long-term bicycle parking. If elevators are included in a revised plan, we recommend installing a cargo-sized elevator so that residents can access it comfortably and easily with their bicycles. Second, as the project proposes to add only eight new short-term bicycle parking spaces, we recommend adding more short-term spaces wherever possible. With minimal parking on site, convenient bicycle facilities will be critical for residents and patrons to access the living and commercial spaces.

In addition to connecting the site to the surrounding neighborhood through design and bicycle facilities, there are ample opportunities for placemaking, outdoor space activation, and creative wayfinding. To encourage walking and attract prospective tenants, the project might engage in creative wayfinding strategies to highlight the several parks, healthy retail options, and cultural

points of interest within a mile of the site, including South Side Park, the Southside Farmers Market, and Verge Center for the Arts. Furthermore, to better reflect the cultural vibrancy of the surrounding neighborhood, there are several opportunities for art and placemaking on the site, such as painting murals on the South and East-facing elevations.

The interior of the site could be further activated by placing outdoor furniture under the trellises in the landscaped area west of the parking lot and by temporarily closing off Solons Alley between 8th Street and the parking lot entrance on the east end of the site for pop-ups and “block parties.” Shared outdoor spaces either in the landscaped areas or in Solons Alley will be particularly essential for tenants to gather outside and enjoy the outdoors as the rooftop patio above Insight Coffee is only accessible via the stairs or elevator located within the retail space.

Especially considering the existing retail, these placemaking and wayfinding strategies have the potential to position the project as a community focal point and destination in and of itself. Encouraging walking and cycling will also bring benefits for the larger neighborhood by improving physical fitness, reducing motor vehicle traffic congestion, and mitigating air pollution.

Lastly, to promote safety and accessibility throughout the site, we recommend adding lighting along all internal pathways and Solons Alley. Additionally, we suggest moving all existing utility poles along sidewalks below ground to ensure access for wheel chair and mobility device users as well as those who are blind or low vision.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and recommendations. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Jordan Grimaldi
Project Coordinator