

June 3, 2019

Supervisor Catherine Stefani
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
City Hall, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

RE: SPUR Endorsement of 3333 California Street

Dear Supervisor Stefani and Planning Commissioners:

Laurel Heights Partners, LLC presented the 3333 California Street project in Laurel Heights to SPUR's Project Review Advisory Board at our May 2019 meeting for review and consideration. **The SPUR Project Review Advisory Board finds this development to be an appropriate and welcome use for this site and endorses 3333 California Street.**

SPUR is generally focused on policies, plans and codes rather than on individual projects. In order to make infill development easier, we prefer to help set good rules around zoning, fees, housing affordability, sustainability, etc. However, on occasion, SPUR's Project Review Advisory Board will review and endorse development proposals of citywide or regional importance, evaluating their potential to enhance the vitality of the city and region according to the policy priorities and principles of good placemaking supported by SPUR.

3333 California Street is a major mixed-use development project planned for a 10.25-acre parcel in the Presidio Heights neighborhood. The site is currently occupied by UCSF's Laurel Heights campus. The proposed project will transform the site from a corporate campus with office, research, child care and parking uses into an mixed-use neighborhood with residential, retail, office, child care and parking uses. 3333 California Street will include 13 new buildings and the adaptive reuse of the existing office building, which would be split into two residential buildings.

Laurel Heights Partners is considering two variations on the project, one of which includes more housing units instead of office space. The project will include between 558 and 743 residential units, up to 49,999 square feet of office space, 34,000 to 40,000 square feet of retail and 13,000-15,000 square feet of child

care space. **The SPUR Project Review Advisory Board prefers the proposal with higher residential density.**

3333 California Street in Laurel Heights:

- ✓ **Is located at an appropriate location for development**, near transit and infrastructure and not on a greenfield site. This site is located near the future Geary bus rapid transit (BRT) line and several other good bus lines that run frequently. The site has been underutilized to date, with buildings on only 3 of its 10 acres, in spite of being located at the intersection of many neighborhoods and close to many amenities.
- ✓ **Provides an appropriate mix of land uses** of residential and retail, contributing to diverse stock of housing, fostering economic development, providing amenities and services to the surrounding community. The proposed project would bring new housing to a part of the city that has seen little new residential development, and it includes a significant retail component that ties into the existing Laurel Village corridor.
- ✓ **Provides sufficient density at the site** at 54 to 72 dwelling units per acre, supporting adjacent transit and prevents underutilization of land, serving the future needs of Bay Area residents. This project makes good use of this key site, which has been until now a suburban campus walled off from the adjacent neighborhoods.
- ✓ **Creates a good place for people and contributes to a walkable environment** with active ground floor uses. The plan for the site integrates the proposed buildings into the neighborhood, connecting to cross streets and breaking up the superblock into more appropriately scaled street blocks. The retail uses along California Street connect visually and functionally to the existing Laurel Village retail corridor, and the other street frontages have designed to be porous and pedestrian-friendly. The public realm plan, which includes several different kinds of public and open spaces, brings the public into and across the project site.

The SPUR Project Review Advisory Board finds this development to be an appropriate and welcome use for this site and endorses 3333 California Street. The urban design and site plan are particularly thoughtful, especially in dealing with the major grade changes at this location. The quantity, quality and variety of open space are excellent, and we appreciate the project team's decision to protect some of the older trees onsite as well as adapt the existing building to a new use. We also appreciate that the project team includes several different architects and landscape architects, helping to foster the feeling of a neighborhood built over time rather than a single master-planned project.

The potential partnership with the Jewish Community Center is an excellent idea that could help fill retail spaces if there is not sufficient retail demand in the neighborhood. We are also impressed with the neighborhood outreach given the sensitivity and location of this site.

Our only concern with this plan is the amount of parking. While we appreciate that all parking will be tucked out of sight in underground parking garages in order to maximize the useable open space, we feel that the project parking could be further reduced. Given the project's transit-oriented location near many bus lines, the Geary BRT line currently underway, and our city's evolving transportation options, SPUR recommends that the project sponsor consider reducing the number of parking spaces.

Please do not hesitate to contact us or Kristy Wang, SPUR's Community Planning Policy Director, with any questions or clarifications.

Sincerely,

Charmaine Curtis
Co-Chairs, SPUR Project Review Advisory Board

Diane Filippi

cc: SPUR Board of Directors