The HAYES VALLEY Neighborhood Association | HVNA

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

RECEIVED
JUL 10 2012
CITY & COUNTY OF S.F.
PLANNING DEPARTMENT
RECEPTION DESK

July 9, 2012

Re: 8 Octavia Boulevard

Dear Commission President Fong and Planning Commissioners,

The Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association's Transportation & Planning Committee is pleased to enthusiastically support the proposed development at 8 Octavia Boulevard. We urge you to approve the project.

The project is fully in keeping with the spirit of the Market/Octavia Plan. We particularly applaud the developer's decision to build the inclusionary housing on-site. We feel the unit mix, the proposed retail on the corner of Market and Octavia with high ceilings and the engagement of Octavia Boulevard with townhouses and multiple entryways will be a great addition to the neighborhood. However we suggest the developer reconsider the decision not to include retail at the Haight/Octavia corner of the project. The vision for Octavia Boulevard and the new development that lines it is for residential over ground floor retail. Once the Haight Street buses are rerouted to continue eastbound past Laguna, there will be a bus stop at that corner, which until that development occurs may make retail there more workable.

We also welcome the developer's decision to limit parking to the amount permitted as-of-right under the Market/Octavia Plan. However we do have concerns about the location of the garage access off the Octavia Boulevard side lane and the potential conflict between motorists and bicyclists at that location. Therefore we urge the developer and the Commission to consider design modifications to Octavia Boulevard, such as a raised table where the side lane peels off from the center lanes just past Market to slow traffic entering it.

HVNA worked with the previous developer and current architect several years ago on an earlier iteration of this proposal, and we commend the overall quality of the architecture. The current design by Stanley Saitowitz/Natoma Architects is a bold, innovative interpretation of neighborhood context. It will serve as a very striking and interesting gateway to Hayes Valley, Upper Market and the City at this very prominent site. However we suggest the developer/architect consider some type of distinct vertical element at the Market/Octavia corner, as was proposed for this site by the winning entry in the 2005 San Francisco Prize Design Competition, that would reinforce its gateway role without compromising design integrity.

Again, the Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association's Transportation and Planning Committee is pleased to endorse this project and therefore urges Planning Commission approval. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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cc: Mark Leuellen, SF Planning Department