



August 10, 2019

Attn: Ms. Kym Dicome, Development Review Board Chair  
P.O. Box 1293  
Albuquerque, NM 87103  
kdicome@cabq.gov

**2019-20**  
**VENA Executive**  
**Board**

Re: Project #PR-2019-002496 for Southeast Corner of Alameda Blvd. NE & Barstow Street NE

Elizabeth Meek  
**President**  
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Dear Chairwoman Dicome,

Vineyard Estates Neighborhood Association is aware of the upcoming [re]hearing for an application by Consensus Planning for a site plan on behalf of Philip Lindborg and the Mantoni

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**Vice President**

Family Trust for development of 93 apartments on the southeast corner of Barstow Street NE and Alameda Blvd. NE on August 14, 2019. It is our continued understanding that the property zoning is MX-L under the current IDO and this application is a permissive use of the property. Additionally, it

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is very disappointing that NO NEW DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED TO THE VINEYARD ESTATES NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION WITH THE MODIFICATIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS ASKED FOR BY THE DRB from the July 11<sup>th</sup> hearing. How is the

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neighborhood supposed to know if the changes are an improvement to the project or not? It would seem that notification of the surrounding neighbors would be helpful in the continued application process of this project.

**The Vineyard Estates Neighborhood Association continues to oppose the placement of a 93-unit, 3-story apartment complex on this property location due to its high resident density per acre, lack of alignment with our surrounding residential neighborhoods, and poorly thought out design relative to surrounding neighborhood demographics.**

The original zoning of SU-2/C-1 under the Vineyard Sector Plan stated “*SU-2/C1 (neighborhood commercial) zoning is proposed at the southeast corner of Alameda and Barstow to provide neighborhood retail services that provide the day-to-day needs of nearby neighborhoods*” (Vineyard Sector Plan, p. 4.7). The spirit of the neighborhood plan was to create infill of valuable businesses and/or retail and “*ensure compatibility of higher density land uses within the lot configurations and ownership pattern of these areas*” (La Cueva Sector Plan, p. 26) to support our neighborhood.

While we welcome building and new construction within our Vineyard Estates neighborhood and surrounding areas, the plan for 93, 1-2 bedroom apartments with a stated target of single, young professionals, over ten miles from the downtown corridor is quite different than the family-centered and surrounding single family homes located steps away from top-rated public schools. Broadstone Heights apartment complex (Barstow St. NE & Holly NE), Arterra apartments (Wyoming NE & Holly NE), and Markana apartments (Alameda & San Pedro) all already offer a saturation of apartments to our local neighborhood. While the IDO does not define the volume relative to “high



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density” or “low density”, it can be clear that 30 dwelling units per acre of the proposed development is higher than the current area’s apartment du/acre density and more consistent with the downtown Albuquerque urban high-rise density, and not our single-family residential du/acre densities. The volume of 93 apartments on such a small plot of land (3.38 acres and less when the street and curb are developed along Barstow and Alameda) leaves little room for this complex to be “high-end” for either the tenants or neighborhood.

Two facilitated meetings have been held, and also the July 11th DRB hearing, resulting in a number of points brought up by the directly affected neighbors and surrounding neighborhood which continue to be inadequately addressed by the developer and continue to be of neighborhood concern even after these discussions:

- 1) ***Inadequate parking:*** Neighbors are very concerned where the overflow of parking will end up if and when tenants have more than one car or a visitor. While the complex satisfies the required IDO parking allotment, it is unreasonable to assume that this will accommodate these 93, 1-2 bedroom apartments. Alameda and Barstow offer no legal parking however side streets could fill in with parking creating jaywalking and disruption. Additionally, the parking lot is not secured with a gate comparable to other nearby apartment complexes.
- 2) ***Encroachment of rear wall of southward located properties:*** Homeowners directly affected by this development (to the south) have concerns over the location and height of the carport in relation to their rear wall height and may be looking into the carport as their “view.” Also, landscaping trees may uproot the rear privacy wall or grow into the homeowners yard uninvited, while also destroying the home owner’s property values by having their yard enveloped by both the carport and 3-story apartment complex. The 6’ gap/retaining wall is inadequate to maintain the space and safety for those property owners in Tierra Morena.
- 3) ***Traffic concerns:*** Our neighborhood has two large schools (800 + and 1750+ students each) located very nearby (0.2 miles), in addition to a grade school charter school (directly to east) that each add stress to the traffic flow along Barstow as well as the student-pedestrian traffic migrating daily to and from home. Adding 93-plus young professional auto commuters into the already stressed intersection of Alameda and Barstow has created sincere concern for the location of entrance/exits, increased left and right turning time, as well as those autos that may “cut the corner” of Alameda and Barstow to get through the intersection faster or avoid a long line of traffic. While a traffic study was apparently “not needed” due to the size of this project, the current neighbors and neighborhood know to avoid Barstow and Alameda area due to heavy traffic. The neighbors have repeatedly asked for a traffic study during school hours, to assess what volume of traffic actually travels through this area/intersection.
- 4) ***Urban Design Style:*** The design style of a 3-story, flat roof, brightly colored building (medium-grey, tan, red-orange, off-white, orange-yellow per Jeebs & Zuzu, Inc. June 2018



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provided documents) does not blend in with the surrounding earth tone homes (many of which have covenants clarifying appropriate paint color choices of which most of these colors would not be allowed) and gabled roofs of Tierra Morena (south-affected neighborhood), Pico la Cueva Place (north-affected neighborhood), and Tierra Montana Place NE (west-affected neighborhood). Using an example of an Italian design in a southwest style neighborhood, again does not blend in or enhance surrounding home values. Use of black chain-link fencing as the security surround also does not fit with the tasteful design required by the surrounding neighborhoods' covenants of stuccoed walls or wrought-iron gates/fencing to contain yards and pools. Additionally, there appears to be an inadequate amount of landscaped "green/open space" relative to the size of the property and amount of black asphalt parking surrounding the buildings.

- 5) ***Dumpster and Garbage Location:*** While it is noted that the developer has tried to accommodate garbage and recycling locations to help reduce smell, noise, and nuisance, there will still be a problem to the Tierra Morena neighbors due to the proximity of these dumpsters to their rear properties. Garbage trucks feet from the south property owner's rear walls, as well as sour odors radiating from week old garbage make it difficult to see how this accommodation solves this problem for the very near neighbors.
- 6) ***Development Plan Availability and Design:*** As stated in my first letter to the DRB for consideration at the first hearing, many documents were left out or not available in a timely fashion for the neighbors and neighborhood to evaluated and consider. This pattern has again continued with a lack of further documents showing the adjustments as requested by the DRB from the last hearing. By not providing documents reflecting the improvements to the property, neighbors continue to be left out of the loop and gravely concerned for their property's future appearance, integrity, views, and value.

In summary, while VENA understands that a multi-family complex is an allowable use of this land as zoned under the current IDO as MX-L, our board hopes that the Development Review Board will consider the above thoughts and comments and consider that if allowed, the size of this project be reduced, re-thought, and design modified to better blend with our neighborhood and become a desirable development, not one hated by the neighborhood as has been currently determined through both of the facilitated meetings.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth S. Meek  
President, Vineyard Estates Neighborhood Association