



NEAR NORTH VALLEY NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

VOLUNTEERS WORKING INCLUSIVELY TO PROTECT,
PRESERVE, AND ENHANCE THE COMMUNITY

NNVNA
PO Box 6953
ALBUQUERQUE, NM
87197

HEATHER NORFLEET
VICE-PRESIDENT
(505) 620-4368

JOE SABATINI
SECRETARY
(505) 344-9212

NEARNORTHVALLEYNA
@GMAIL.COM
WWW>NNVNA.ORG

December 15, 2021

Jolene Wolfley
Chair, Development Review Board
c/o jrodenbeck@cabq.gov

Re: Brown Property (Calle Cuarta) redevelopment
PR-2020-003847; site plan for the East Parcel

Dear Chair Wolfley,

I'm writing on behalf of the Near North Valley Neighborhood Association (NNVNA) Board.

For several years now, NNVNA has been actively involved in the redevelopment of the Brown Property at 4th Street and Fitzgerald Rd NW—encouraging the City's purchase of the land, participating in the City's Brown Property Working Group, public meetings and workshops, helping draft the City's Brown Property Public Process Report (Brown Property Report), and providing representatives to serve on the City's RFP scoring committee.

There's no question that the association supports redevelopment of the property as a mixed-use project, with commercial uses and apartments on the East Parcel and single-family homes on the West Parcel.

The Brown Property Report is the result of hundreds of hours of community, City and County staff, and consultant time, and public funding. The report includes goals and objectives intended to integrate the project into the existing neighborhood and make it a model for a vibrant and sustainable infill development with affordable housing as a key component. The report was referenced in the RFP and was integral to the RFP evaluation and selection process. We attach it as an important reference for evaluating this site plan.

Over the past few months, since YES Housing, Inc., was awarded the contract to develop the property, we have met with various members of the development team to review and provide input on their plans. We participated in last month's facilitated meeting as well. We have worked to

Copy:

Thaddeus Lucero
YES Housing, Inc

Will Gleason
Dekker/Perich/Sabatini

Peggy Norton
North Valley Coalition

thoughtfully explain our concerns and encourage changes we believe are crucial for public safety, economic viability, and successful integration with the existing neighborhood, and that comport with the goals and objectives in the Brown Property Report.

Here are our current concerns and questions.

1. **Protected left turn lane on 4th Street.** A left turn from northbound 4th Street onto westbound Fitzgerald Road will be the primary route for tenants and customers to access the parking lot for this high-density housing and commercial project. In the current roadway configuration, there is no safe and efficient way to turn left off 4th onto Fitzgerald. Because turning left off 4th is a necessary traffic movement for the success of this project, it is essential that a safe and efficient left turn lane is provided. If restriping does not resolve the issue, then it must be resolved by moving the curb and adjusting the site plan.
2. **Vehicle barrier between East Parcel and West Parcel.** From the outset of planning for this project, it has been understood that only emergency traffic would be allowed between the East and West Parcels. The RFP explicitly stated that a vehicular connection between the high-density East Parcel and low-density West Parcel should be avoided (Brown Property RFP, page 5, attached). Based on our review of the proposed site plan, it does not appear that an emergency gate blocking traffic between the two parcels has been included. This must be addressed.
3. **Streetscapes.** The details for the streetscapes along 4th Street and Fitzgerald Road are not clear from the site plan or the landscaping plan. How do these streetscapes satisfy the Main Street requirements, the Street Tree ordinance, and the IDO/DPM profiles? How wide is the sidewalk? How wide is the planting area? How is the planting area configured? Is it wide enough to support healthy tree growth? Will there be intermittent hardscape connections between the street and sidewalk in the event that on-street parking is added? It does not appear from the site plan that the streetscape follows the required curb/tree-lined buffer/sidewalk profile, although illustrations presented to the community in August do indicate this profile. (See attached 8-18-2021 PowerPoint presented at NNVNA's Annual Meeting.) Detailed profiles of the streetscapes on both 4th Street and Fitzgerald Road should be provided to the DRB to evaluate.

4. **4th Street Breezeway.** We appreciate that the breezeway for residents and customers to access the 4th Street businesses is wider than earlier iterations of the site plan, but as currently designed it still does not comport with CPTED principles. It appears there are two back doors that open onto the space, but there are no windows shown or anything else to make the passageway safe, much less inviting. This lack of “eyes-on-the-street” could bring criminal activity to this critical space.
5. **ADA Parking.** It appears there are only six handicapped parking spaces. Is this enough for an apartment complex expected to attract low-income seniors? There’s also no covered ADA parking and no ADA parking near the community open space/play area.
6. **Compactor/refuse areas.** We very much appreciate that the compactor and the accompanying refuse enclosure were moved away from the play area.
7. **Pedestrian/bike path along the south.** Pedestrian/bicycle connectivity through the new development to 4th Street was identified as an important community objective. The sidewalk/bike path along the southern boundary of the property is meant to accommodate various pedestrians—couples, groups of school children, parents with strollers, people in wheelchairs, etc.—and bicyclists coming to and from the surrounding homes, the school, the expected restaurant, and other businesses. It’s the primary link integrating the existing neighborhood with the new development. The sidewalk/path appears to be five or six feet wide. That’s not wide enough. It should be a minimum of eight feet wide to comfortably serve its purpose; 10 feet in width is preferable. In addition, there is no buffer nor landscaping between the sidewalk/path and the street/parking, and few trees. With careful adjustment of the covered parking area, enough space could be captured to provide adequate sidewalk/path width, a narrow planter along the property wall and buffer planting between the sidewalk/path and the parking creating a path that is clearly perceived and functions as a public way. A detailed profile of the pedestrian/bicycle path should be provided.
8. **Pedestrian path/bridge over the drainage areas along the covered parking.** The site plan indicates drainage areas at both ends of the

covered parking, with a pedestrian path over the drainage areas on the south end. What are the details for these pedestrian “bridges?” How will they be made safe and accessible for all persons, including children and the elderly? Details should be provided. As an aside: it may make more sense to place this pedestrian crossing at the north end of the covered parking. That would better keep people, especially children, from cutting across the parking lot to the community space/play area.

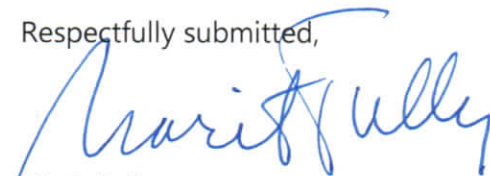
9. **Live/Work access.** The westside entries to the live/work units raise CPTED and ADA issues. These entries are located in a narrow space between the back side of the buildings and an existing high property wall. As a consequence, the entries are hidden from public view and pose a potential safety risk. The entries could be moved to the north and south sides of the buildings where they would be visible from public parking areas.
10. **Step-back/facades/articulation, along Fitzgerald Road.** Are step-backs required along Fitzgerald Road as they are along 4th Street? The north face of the building would appear much less massive and hulking with a third-floor step-back. And, whether or not it meets the technical articulation requirements, the northern façade in particular lacks sufficient articulation to be visually pleasant and to reduce its massive look. The last block of apartments—going west—is particularly plain, both on its north and west faces.
11. **Ground-floor privacy, west side apartments.** The windows and doors for the west-facing ground-floor apartments open directly onto the public sidewalk and face the public parking area. There are planting beds but they appear to be landscaped with low vegetation and thus will not provide any screening.
12. **Private outdoor space/balconies.** Where is the private outdoor space? Many of the apartments have “Juliet-type” balconies but these do not provide private outdoor space. This will be particularly problematic for families with children. There is public outdoor space, but it is remote, across the parking lot. Could the balconies be enlarged to provide private outdoor space?
13. **Landscaping.** Generally, there are not enough trees, especially along the sidewalks that circle the parking area. This came up in one of our previous

meetings and we were assured that there would be a ring of trees along the sidewalks. This would be especially important in providing visual respite for the apartments and live/work spaces facing the internal parking areas.

14. **Community spaces & play area.** There are no details for the community spaces & play area. The play area needs to meet ADA requirements and needs to be shaded, as is typically done now in public parks to keep the play structures cool and keep children protected from the sun. What age group is expected to be served by the play structure? Details for this important amenity need to be provided. Also, there appear to be two gazebos on the site plan—one near the play area and one near the breezeway. Where are the details for these structures? How is the East Parcel section of the community space/play area going to be integrated with the West Parcel section?
15. **Note errors?** On the first sheet under "Amenities," a clubhouse, swimming pool, and spa are mentioned. Have these features been added to the project? Also on the first sheet, under "Project Data," the bus routes mentioned do not appear to be relevant to this project.

We appreciate your consideration of our concerns and questions. We support this redevelopment project, but the site plan needs more detail and improvements.

Respectfully submitted,



Marit Tully
Brown Project Ad Hoc Committee
Past President, Near North Valley Neighborhood Association