

Communication from Public

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Comments for Public Posting: As a resident of Venice, I am writing to express my opposition to the Lincoln Apartments project and my support for the appeals filed against it for the following reasons: 1) The Specific Adverse Impacts that preclude the necessary findings for a density bonus. VCH and SPY have well documented safety issues that were buried in the CPC report. 2) The Planning Commission's failure to provide a fair hearing due to conflicts of interest held by commissioners participating in the vote 3) The Violation of Open Meeting Laws 4) Inadequate parking 5) The project is out of scale and "monolithic" Critically, the proposed project shares a property line with an elementary school. I am therefore particularly concerned by the City Planning Commission's disregard for documentation provided showing Specific Adverse Impact based on the track record of Safe Place for Youth (SPY) and Venice Community Housing (VCH). The developer, Venice Community Housing, has a terrible safety record with its other buildings. Its Gateway Apartments supportive housing project (with only 20 units) generates more than 11 times as many police and fire responses as a market-rate building of comparable size on the same street (calls for Assaults with a Deadly Weapon, Batteries, Burglaries, and Thefts). VCH's Horizon Apartments has similar egregious calls. Records showing this were submitted to the CPC but were buried in the staff report. There is zero accountability. Prop 2 funding will be used for this project and will mandate the inclusion of "adults with serious mental illness...with symptoms of psychosis or violence," and VCH has refused to provide a security guard. These facts and records are not irrelevant to a project with two elementary schools and a nursery school within a two-block radius. Safe Place for Youth currently operates drop-in services for clients three days a week. Over the last three years, police and fire departments have been called to SPY 117 times, for incidents ranging from Assault with a Deadly Weapon to Violent Mentally Ill, Burglary and Battery. A chain-wielding man from SPY caused a lockdown of St. Mark school in January. Over 1,000 letters from both nearby businesses and area residents were submitted detailing these concerns. These are not hypotheticals. The adverse impact is real and predictable and it is the reason the Venice Neighborhood Council voted unanimously to oppose this project. The CPC's disinclination to consider these factors might

be related to conflicts of interest held by two of the members, including President Millman. The specifics of these conflicts are laid out in the neighborhood appeal. That appeal also addresses the fact that the hearing violated Open Meeting Laws under the Brown Act. The public could not fully participate — many neighbors could not speak — because of busy signals, the lack of a local call number to join the meeting, or the fact that when people hung up after speaking, as President Millman directed them to, they could not get back into the meeting as it was full, at that point. As for the building itself: it will not be “visually compatible” with its surroundings but rather, at four stories, loom over the surrounding one- and two-story homes, as well as the play yard of the school next door. It will have only six parking spaces for some 98 residents, 25 staff, and 20 volunteers. According to the Venice Specific Plan, it should have 104. Increased density is meant to be self-sufficient, not a burden on the surrounding community. Finally, spending \$20 million to get little more than one tenth of one percent of the Los Angeles homeless off the streets is an unconscionable use of public funds. It lines developers’ pockets while leaving the vast majority on the streets. It is not compassion, it is corruption. Indeed, the office of Mike Bonin, the councilman for district 11, has declined to turn over communication related to the project, despite a California Public Records Act request. For all of these reasons, I urge you to take a closer look at this project, and not allow it to move forward where and as proposed. Thank you, Kathryn Arend Venice Resident