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From: FLYNN, CLAIRE
Sent: Monday, July 14, 2008 8:10 AM
To: FOLCIK, JULIE
Cc: BRANDT, KIMBERLY; LAMM, DONALD
Subject: FW: City Council Review of Planning Commission Decision re ZA-08-17 Amendment to Conditions of Approval for Westside Lofts, 1640 Monrovia

2008 JUL 14 AM 8:48

CITY OF COSTA MESA
BY _____

From: Michael R. Harrison [mailto:MRH@TricoRealty.com]
Sent: Saturday, July 12, 2008 4:26 PM
To: FLYNN, CLAIRE
Subject: City Council Review of Planning Commission Decision re ZA-08-17 Amendment to Conditions of Approval for Westside Lofts, 1640 Monrovia

Dear Claire,

Please forward this correspondence to appropriate staff and all members of the City Council.

I have just reviewed the staff report dated June 30, 2008. I am not sure why all other parties on the distribution list for the last report to the Planning Commission dated June 17, 2008 were on the distribution list for this report except Trico Realty, however I was able to access it on the City's website.

I agreed with Commissioners Egan's reasoning in opposing amendment of ZA-08-17. I agree with the concepts for additional conditions (#57 and 58), should the Council decide to approve the requested amendment. However, I would suggest shortening the time frame for demolition. Why wait 2 years? I would think a demolition permit could be obtained within 6 months, even if DTSC approval of a remediation plan is required. I would also suggest that the amendment to the original conditions of approval be conditioned to expire unless development moves along at a reasonable pace - perhaps if building is not started within 2 years, or if certificates of occupancy are not obtained within 3 years.

However, with or without any of these modifications, I remain concerned about the potential for this project to become another white elephant - another Triangle Square. While I believe Nexus has the best of intentions, I simply do not think that this product will ever sell well in this location. If a lender takes over the property after it is built, they may well sell it to a buyer with intentions that are not in sync with the City's vision for the property. It could remain rental units appealing only to the lower income market under the presently proposed conditional approval. I am anxious to see the Westside improve, but I think the risks inherent in approving this project as it is proposed are too great. I do not think this is just a matter of ups and downs in the market. Even if the project is eventually successful, I do not see it spurring a rapid conversion of surrounding uses without major infrastructure changes in the area. If the Westside is to be redeveloped with this type of high density urban housing, the process needs to begin with a commitment by the City to provide for the increased traffic and utility demands implicit in such a plan.

Best Regards,

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