



May 25, 2022

Councilmember Joe Buscaino
VIA EMAIL
councilmember.buscaino@lacity.org

RE: Council File Nos. 22-0496, VTT-82288; ENV-2018-6667-SE; CPC-2018-7344-GPAJ-VZCJ-HD-SP-SPP-CDP-MEL-SPR-PHP; Related Council File Nos. 21-0829 and 21-0829-S1

Dear Councilman Buscaino,

I am writing regarding the above-referenced Council Files, which relate to the development formerly known as the Reese Davidson Project, now called the "Venice Median" or "Venice Dell" Project (after the living family members of Arthur Reese and Gregory Hines have demanded their family names be removed from it). This project is scheduled to come before you in the Homelessness & Poverty Committee **tomorrow** (Agenda Item #2).

Councilmember Bonin is asking you to prematurely authorize the Housing Department General Manager to sign the City into an irrevocable Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA) with the private real estate developers to turn control of about 40 taxpayer-owned lots/parcels at Venice Beach, with an estimated fair market value of \$60 million, so they can evict four low-income families and start demolition of the public parking lot to make this project a fait accompli before the entitlements even have been obtained.

Including the fair market value of the City's land, cost of LADOT parking garage (\$25 million), and cost of west parking garage (\$3 million), the total price tag per door comes in at a whopping \$1.24M per 460 square foot unit). This is an egregious waste of taxpayer dollars, and overall, the proposed mixed-use development does little or nothing to address either the homelessness or affordability crisis in our City or the Westside of LA.

Further, this project is opposed by the vast majority of Venice residents, and has repeatedly been voted down by the Venice Land Use and Planning Committee and the Venice Neighborhood Council. Due to repeated procedural flaws, it has now made its way back and forth between PLUM and the City Council. This project will forever change the character of the historic Venice Canal community. Six of the eight candidates running for the CD-11 seat openly oppose this project, which is also the subject of an ongoing lawsuit alleging serious legal and environmental issues. I am thus writing to ask that you please defer any further action on this project until after our new Councilmember takes office in January 2023 and all outstanding community concerns have been addressed.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ira Park".

Committee to elect Traci Park for City Council 2022
2554 Lincoln Blvd. #158, Venice, CA 90291 email: info@tracipark.com
Additional Information is available at ethics.lacity.org

Reese Davidson/Venice Median Affordable Housing Project Current Cost Estimates Per Unit	
Per the developer's pro forma in Council File No. 22-0496	\$620,497 per unit
Including FMV of City Land (\$60 million), undisclosed cost of LADOT parking garage (\$25 million), and cost of west parking garage (\$3 million)	\$1.24 million per unit

Based upon true market value of lot sales nearby, the actual value of the land Mr. Bonin asks this Council to immediately sign away is conservatively \$60 million. This \$60 million estimate is based upon recent sales of lots nearby for much more. For instance, in December 2021, a lot on Linnie Canal nearby sold for \$1,750,000 which pencils out to about \$70 million. (40 lots X \$1,750,000 = \$70 million.) Even more recently, three lots sold for \$6.4 million for an average lot cost of \$2.13 million. That would yield an approximate fair market value of the 40 Project lots of \$85.2 million. Thus, our \$60 million assumption is very conservative.

When that market value land cost of \$60 million, the municipally budgeted cost of the LADOT replacement parking garage disclosed in the staff report (\$25 million), and the cost of the west residential/commercial parking garage (\$3 million) is factored into the Project pro forma, the total cost of public contributions to build these particular units rises to \$1.24 million per 460 square foot unit. Mr. Bonin will not be around to try to justify such an outrageous unit cost, **but members of this Council will be when they face re-election.**

The Homelessness and Poverty Committee, and indeed, all City Councilmembers must ask questions and take public testimony to understand the concerns about this Project. A recent conversation between a community resident in Venice and a Councilmember revealed he was unaware of basic aspects of this Project and its costs – and when he became aware, he had important questions about this taxpayer expenditure. That concern ought to be shared by all City Council members as Mr. Bonin seeks to impose on this City Council a boondoggle and land grab that they will need to explain to taxpayers and implement in his absence.

We object to the Project. Moreover, we hereby adopt all project objections, comments, and all evidence/studies submitted in support of project objections, and specifically requests that the City print out or attach to the Council file every hyperlinked document cited in all comment letters in the administrative record for this Project. Additionally, please confirm that the City Clerk has placed an accurate and complete copy of all of our correspondence, including this letter, in each of the following City Council Files: Council File Nos. 22-0496, 21-0829, and 21-0829-S1. We request an email confirmation that the City Clerk has placed our correspondence into these City Council files.

Sincerely,

Coalition for Safe Coastal Development