

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Date: May 30, 2021

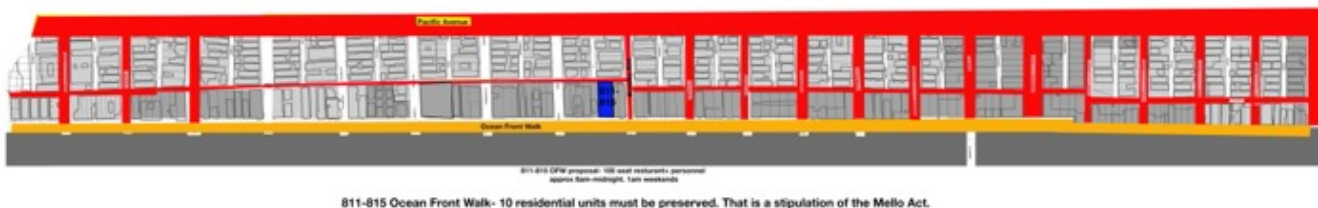
Attention: PLUM for CF 21-0013, Item 12 on June 1, 2021.

Subject: Support appeal of CPC-2019-2282-CDP-MEL-SPP-DB-CUB at 811-815 Ocean Front Walk due to an Unreasonable Public Safety Risk because of Inadequate Infrastructure.

INADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Venice is the most popular public visitor destination in California. For this reason, public health and safety must be a compelling government interest. Department of City Planning (DCP) approvals must consider adequate infrastructure, primarily adequate emergency service access, as the primary consideration of infrastructure.

The area between Ocean Front Walk to the west and Pacific Avenue to the east, Marine Street to the north and Washington Boulevard to the south, is the most densely populated residential area in Venice. Residential parcels on Ocean Front Walk are zoned R-3. Residential parcels between Speedway and Pacific Avenue are mostly R1.5. Ocean Front Walk is a pedestrian-only heavily trafficked public walkway providing access to the beach. Vehicular access is limited to police, ambulance and fire department emergency response vehicles, and Department of Sanitation services for the boardwalk and beach restrooms. Importantly, the Letter of Determination for CPC-2019-2282-CDP-MEL-SPP-DB-CUB-1A¹ does not appear to address the issue of the restricted emergency vehicular access at 811-815 Ocean Front Walk directly.



But the Letter of Determination for DIR-2016-1341-CDP-SPP-MEL² at 305 Ocean Front Walk, issued August 2, 2017, Page 6 of 25, Background, states:

Ocean Front Walk is a pedestrian right-of-way, designated as a Local Street, approximately 50 feet in width.

Speedway is an alley, designated as a Local Street, with a right-of-way width of approximately 20 feet with an asphalt/concrete roadway.

1. CPC-2019-2282-CDP-MEL-SPP-DB-CUB-1A <https://planning.lacity.org/pdiscaseinfo/search/encoded/Mjl4ODQ20>
2. DIR-2016-1341-CDP-SPP-MEL <https://planning.lacity.org/pdiscaseinfo/document/MTc4MTgx0/03b6cd7a-61f3-4d27-8bc5-9bb6e20119bc/pdd>

Speedway, at a 20ft. width, is a **one-way alley** traveling north to south between Marine Street, to the north, and Washington Boulevard. For the entire **seven blocks** between Rose Avenue and Brooks Avenue, Speedway is the only vehicular access for all residential, business, visitor, and emergency service vehicles. Emergency vehicles, LAPD and Department of Sanitation have limited access to the pedestrian-only walkway at Ocean Front Walk.

811-815 Ocean Front, the subject property (shown in blue on the illustration above), is located north of Brooks Avenue, on the last block of those seven blocks.

Captain Johnson, from Los Angeles Fire Department's Station 63 in Venice, has stated that LAFD does not consider the alleys in the area between Speedway and Pacific Avenue for emergency response purposes. Photos below show that these alleys are so narrow that a large truck or a fire engine cannot make a turn from any alley onto Speedway.

Page F-16 of the LOD states: "The Venice Beach Boardwalk has a long history as a commercial tourist attraction that draws over 18 million visitors annually."

For this reason, infrastructure, as well as Mello Act compliance, must be a primary consideration when DCP proposes to replace an entirely residential property with a mixed-use commercial project, an intensification of use of the property requiring with **parking for restaurant patrons** and residents. The conversion to a **commercial use of the property** violates the Mello Act, but also creates a potential problem from vehicles blocking Speedway, because cars, and Uber and Lyft rides will access from the alleys and Speedway, delivery trucks can only access from Speedway (not the alleys), emergency vehicles for the entire area need access on Speedway, and a vehicle queue for a restaurant at 811-815 Ocean Front Walk or delivery trucks for that business may block Speedway entirely, a 20ft-wide critical traffic artery.

INADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE – Parking and Access

The Letter of Determination for CPC-2019-2282-CDP-MEL-SPP-DB-CUB at 811-815 Ocean Front Walk issued December 15, 2020, approved:

Demolition of nine existing residential dwelling units within three buildings and the construction, use and maintenance of a three-story, 13,412 square foot mixed use building with nine dwelling units and a 1,568 square foot ground floor restaurant providing 574 square feet of Service Floor area and 50 seats requesting on-site sale of a full line of alcohol beverages, and 30 parking spaces on the ground floor and one subterranean level.

Entitlement Conditions, includes:

11. Parking and Access. Based upon the number of dwelling units, Service Floor area, Ground Floor area proposed, 30 parking spaces shall be provided; all vehicle access shall be from Speedway.

1. Residential Use – A minimum of 17 unbundled parking spaces shall be provided.
 - i. Residential Parking (Affordable Housing Unit) – Vehicle parking for the Affordable Housing Unit shall be provided consistent with LAMC Section 12.22-A.25, Parking Option 1 providing one (1) parking space.
 - ii. Residential Parking (Market Rate Housing Unit) – A minimum of 16 parking spaces shall be provided.
 - iii. Notwithstanding the above subparagraphs i. and ii, required parking in a Housing Development Project that qualifies for a Density Bonus may be rented separately from the dwelling units, so that tenants have the option of renting a unit without a parking space. The separate rental of a dwelling unit and a parking space shall not cause the rent of a Restricted Affordable Unit (or the parking space) to be greater than it would otherwise have been.
2. Restaurant Use – The proposed 1,568 square foot restaurant is limited to 574 square foot of Service Floor area. Eleven parking spaces are required (one space for each 50 square feet of Service Floor area). Pursuant to LAMC Section 12.21-A.4, a maximum 30% of the required commercial vehicle parking may be replaced with bicycle parking. Eight vehicle parking spaces are provided, and three spaces will be replaced with 12 bicycle parking spaces.
3. Beach Impact Zone (BIZ) – A minimum of two parking spaces are required, one space for each 640 square feet of Ground Floor area.

12. Adjustment of Parking. In the event that the number of Restricted Affordable Units should increase, or the composition of such units should change (i.e. the number of bedrooms, or the number of units made available to Senior Citizens and/or Disabled Persons), or the applicant selects another Parking Option (including Bicycle Parking Ordinance) and no other Condition of Approval or incentive is affected, then no modification of this determination shall be necessary, and the number of parking spaces shall be re-calculated by the Department of Building and Safety based upon the ratios set forth above.

36. Parking for the restaurant use shall be provided in compliance with the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan, Municipal Code and to the satisfaction of the Department of Building and Safety. No variance from the commercial use parking requirements has been requested or granted herein.

And, **Entitlement Findings**, F-3 states:

The subject property is located along a commercial strip fronting on Ocean Front Walk, a pedestrian walkway that fronts on Venice Beach. This commercial

strip is part of the larger Venice Boardwalk, which is a regional and international tourist attraction. Surrounding properties include a mix of residential and commercial uses. The northwestern adjoining property, fronting on Ocean Front Walk, Speedway, and Park Avenue, is zoned C1-1 and developed with a one- and two-story multi-tenant commercial retail building. The northeastern and eastern adjoining properties, across Speedway, are zoned RD1.5, and developed with a two- and three-story residential duplex and a three-story single-family dwelling. The southeastern adjoining property, fronting Ocean Front Walk, Speedway, and Brooks Avenue is zoned C1-1 and developed with a two-story-over-garage multi-unit residential building fronting on Speedway and Brooks Avenue and a one-story multi-tenant commercial building fronting on Ocean Front Walk.

As established here, there is a mix of entirely residential as well as commercial uses in the C-1 zone. The Mello Act is a state law that supersedes local ordinances, code or zoning. A continued residential use of this property is feasible. Allowing a conversion to commercial use violates the Mello Act and creates a challenge for the existing infrastructure.

In 4D (4). Section 11 – Commercial and Industrial Design Standards, page 21/22, states:

4. Access. Driveways and vehicular access to Venice Coastal Development Projects shall be provided from alleys, unless the Department of Transportation determines that it is not Feasible. As shown in “Exhibit A”, the proposed project maintains vehicle access to from the alley and Speedway, which functions like an alley.

As established, there is a mix of entirely residential and commercial uses in the C-1 zone. The statement **“the proposed project maintains vehicle access to from the alley and Speedway, which functions like an alley,”** does not address the inadequate existing infrastructure including the potential for the commercial project to cause blockage of Speedway with vehicles using the alleys and Speedway to get into the proposed restaurant parking lot, the potential for cars queuing for the parking lot, Lyft and Uber drop-offs and pick-ups for a restaurant, and delivery trucks that can “only” use Speedway because the surrounding alleys are inadequate for larger vehicles. ALL **emergency vehicle access** is on Speedway for the entire seven blocks from Rose Avenue to Brooks Avenue in an unusually-densely populated residential and visitor-serving area. This is a critical consideration.

Additionally, 5(b) and 5(c) in the approval grant LAMC Section 12.22.A25 exceptions for reduced passageways and setbacks:

- b. A Waiver of Development Standards to permit a six-foot in width passageway in lieu of a 12-foot passageway, as otherwise required by LAMC Section 12.21.C(2)(b);
- c. A Waiver of Development Standards to permit a two-foot nine-inch by two-foot five-inch triangular portion of the upper portion of the building to encroach into the 45 degree step-back plane, as otherwise required by the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan Section 10.F(3)(a); and

Approval of CPC-2019-2282-CDP-MEL-SPP-DB-CUB grants a significant intensification of use of the property with zero open-green-space on a three-lot development combined with passageways reduced to six-feet from the required from 12-feet. All of this increases the potential risks to people on the property and to adjacent properties in an emergency.

Venice is a residential coastal community with a high volume of visitors. As such, there are many ordinary emergency incidents but a higher volume than in most residential communities, and also the potential for an extraordinary circumstance in terms of an emergency. On January 13, 2021, a fire at 723 Ocean Front Walk gutted the entire building. More than 100 firefighters were required to knock down the fire and prevent its spread to adjacent buildings. Fortunately, no injuries were reported. In 2003, a fire at 8 Brooks, very close to the subject site, destroyed a 24-unit apartment building. It was the largest fire in the City of Los Angeles that year. In 2013, one person was killed and many others were injured by a person driving onto Ocean Front Walk. These are just a few examples.

Again, Ocean Front Walk is a heavily trafficked pedestrian-only walkway. Only emergency vehicles, LAPD, and maintenance crews have vehicular access. Speedway is a 20ft-wide one-way alley traveling north to south for the entire **seven blocks** between Rose Avenue and Brooks Avenue. All of the residents in this area use Speedway and the alleys to get in and out of their homes. Adding a restaurant to the existing 100% residential use at this location will cause traffic for the restaurant continuously throughout the day until 2am, including cars attempting to park and Lyft and Uber pick-ups and drop-offs from Speedway and the alleys. Delivery vehicles for a restaurant at this location can only use Speedway and not the alleys. Emergency vehicle access for the entire residential population as well as business uses and visitors between Ocean Front Walk and Pacific Avenue for seven blocks is limited to Speedway as the primary route, and the crowded pedestrian-only Ocean Front Walk.

The **existing infrastructure is inadequate and cannot be modified** to support a significant intensification of use at this particular location. There is zero open green-space on a three-lot development with passageways reduced to six-feet (an exception from the required from 12-feet) and limited vehicular access in a densely populated residential and commercial area.

For these reasons, please support the appeal of CPC-2019-2282-CDP-MEL-SPP-DB-CUB at 811-815 Ocean Front Walk.

Appreciatively,

Margaret Molloy

PHOTO EXHIBITS

Please support the appeal of CPC-2019-2282-CDP-MEL-SPP-DB-CUB at 811-815 Ocean Front Walk due to an Unreasonable Public Safety Risk because of Inadequate Infrastructure.

Annual Hare Krishna Parade in Venice, 2010.



A truck is unable to make a turn onto Speedway. Speedway is the only access to Ocean Front Walk and the surrounding residential areas for 6 entire blocks.



1 dump truck blocks Speedway.



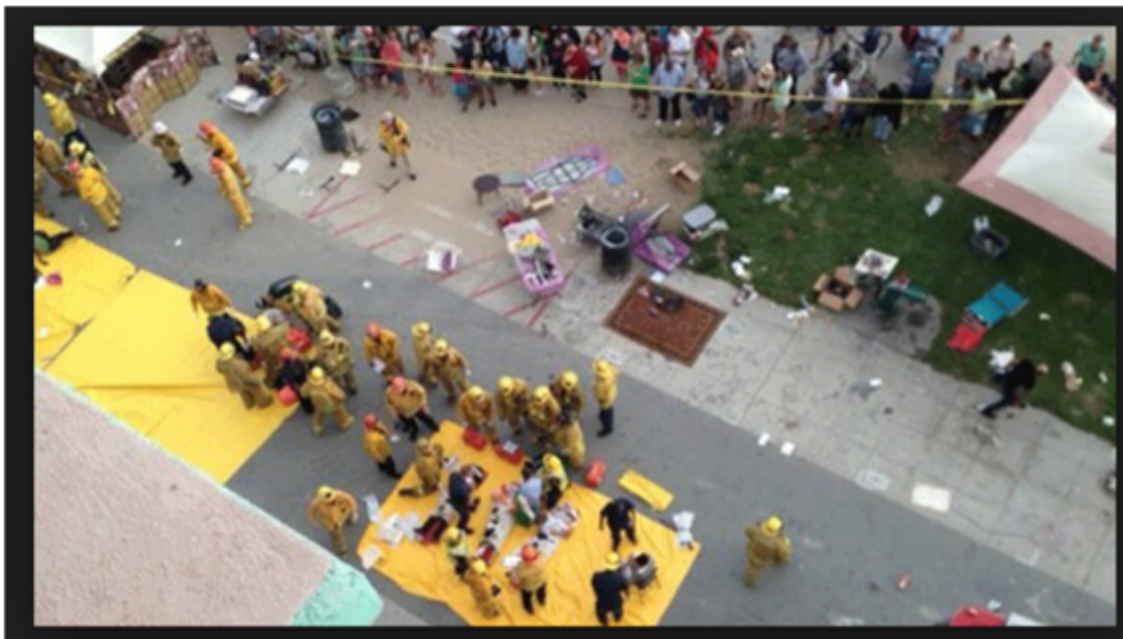
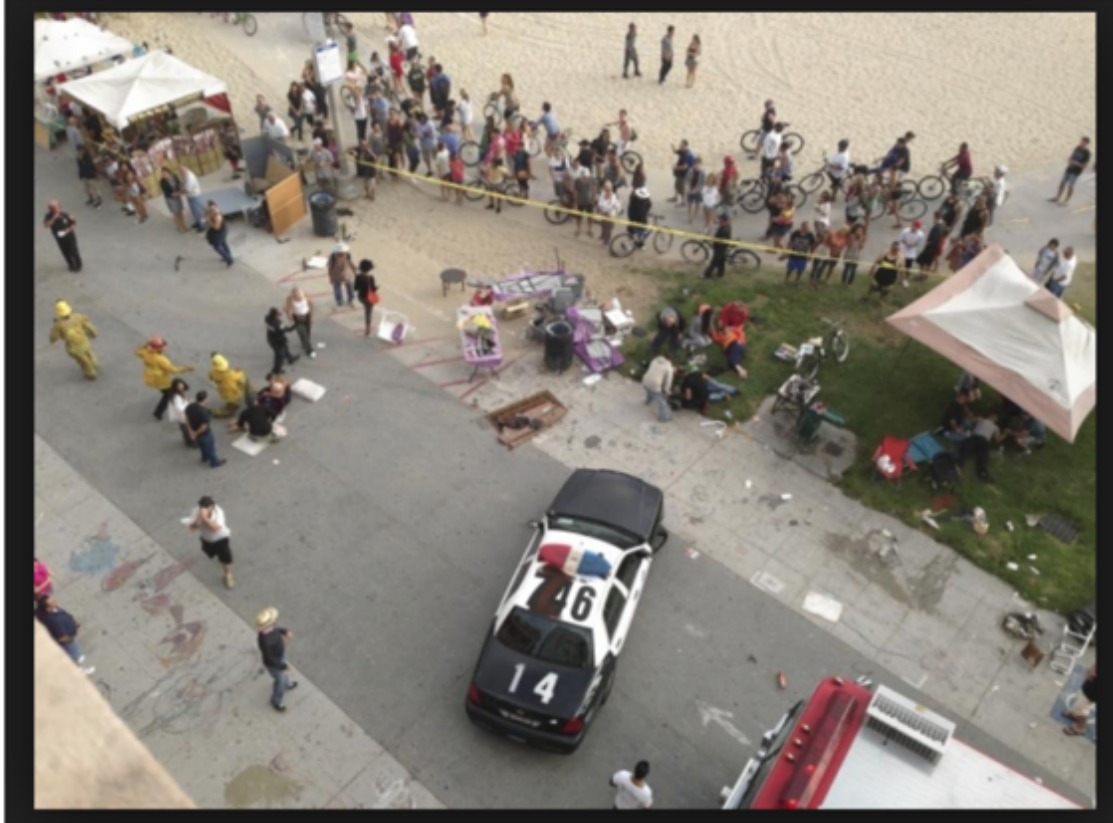
On Speedway, a 20ft-wide alley, vehicles are trapped behind one large truck with no room to pass.



1 jeep blocks an alley adjoining Speedway.



On August 3, 2013 a man drove on Ocean Front Walk killing an Italian tourist and injuring several people. Emergency personnel need unobstructed access to OFW and the surrounding residential areas. This is critical for public safety.



A 2020 emergency response to a suicide on Speedway in Venice:



Bob Newman

21 hrs

Just another day in Venice.. jumper off Thornton Tower



Vinnie Caggiano and 1 other

5 Comments

On January 13, 2021, more than 100 firefighters knocked down a large fire at a vacant commercial building. The flames and smoke were reported at 6:19 a.m. at a two-story, 6,952-square-foot building at 723 Ocean Front Walk, near Park Avenue, Los Angeles Fire Department spokesman Brian Humphrey said in a statement. No injuries were reported.



Apartment Fire at 8 Brooks Avenue / Ocean Front Walk in Venice (Boardwalk) in 2003

Apartment Fire at 8 Brooks Avenue / Ocean Front Walk in Venice (Boardwalk) in 2003

https://youtu.be/AZcYtoN_j6k

A fire at 8 Brooks & Ocean Front Walk in 2003 was the largest fire in Los Angeles that year. More than 100 firefighters were deployed. The fire burned for hours.

