

The Yerba Buena Neighborhood Consortium
c/o 230 Fourth St. San Francisco, CA 94103
A Council of the Yerba Buena Neighborhood's Residents and Community Organizations

San Francisco Board of Supervisors
City Hall
San Francisco CA 94102

October 26, 2021

RE: 469 Stevenson FEIR Project Appeal
2017-014833ENV

Supervisors:

There is one last grievous flaw in the Environmental Review process for the 469 Stevenson Project that we want to bring to your attention as you consider our Appeal of the Certification of its EIR tomorrow. It is this conclusion stated in the Comments and Responses to its DEIR (and the full discussion on pages 81-82) that are a part of the legal environmental record we are challenging:

The overall conclusion from the literature review is that there is no evidence to support the argument that new market-rate development causes gentrification or displacement. The findings overwhelmingly suggest that while some displacement may occur, it is not the inevitable result of gentrification, and that many factors influence whether or not displacement occurs.³³ As such, the planning department finds that the proposed project is not likely to result in residential displacement and gentrification. Thus, the proposed project would not result in physical environmental impacts due to gentrification or displacement beyond those disclosed in the draft EIR.

Both the science of Sociology and the cold-blooded market dynamics of the Real Estate Industry well understand that the Truth of American society is the exact opposite: **People with sufficient income buying power chose to live where others already live who are like themselves, with regard to race and class.**

Thus with regard to class, the more professional "gentry" people who live in a neighborhood, the more likely other higher-income professional class people are to want to move there too, of any race, as well.

This is what makes the 469 Stevenson project a mortal threat to our low-income, overwhelmingly BIPOC Sixth Street community. Starting with putting the Filipino-American community's crucial asset, the Mint Mall apartment building on Mission Street between the Project site and the just-completed 5M project, in grave danger of 'flipping' via "investor" purchase and "reno-victions into an upmarket residence for Tech Industry workers.

The Planning Department has never conducted a survey of who lives in the new market rate housing in SOMA built in recent years in SOMA or anywhere. Thus it has no legally adequate basis to make such conclusions about who does or does not live in market-rate housing in SOMA or anywhere as a legally adequate basis for this EIR conclusion above. It could of course. Surveys could be required for all approved projects in the past. The Department has simply failed to ask. Using Census data is no substitute, because that data does not distinguish among who lives in regulated affordable housing in SOMA and who does not. And citing various research papers is also legally inadequate, because the Department can easily 'cherry-pick' only those that support a certain viewpoint. Other papers have been published with the opposite conclusion as well, which the Department has ignored. But in any case, primary data should be the standard, had the Department has none.

The Planning Department has not asked for that data because ... it doesn't really want us to know. But we can guess, we do know. It's mostly professionals of every demographic. And so do they. They are just 'hiding the ball.'

If built, the 469 Stevenson Project would be a spearhead for the transformation of all of Sixth Street and its privately owned housing into one more gentrified innercity district. For mainly professional 'gentry' future populations. And the Tenderloin would be next. Uphold, please, our appeal and stop this before it happens. It does not have to turn out this way.

John Elberling
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