

TO: Architectural Board of Review
FROM: Allied Neighborhoods Association
RE: 3885-3887 State Street (aka State Street Lofts)
DATE: September 19, 2007

Dear ABR Members:

The Allied Neighborhoods Association's Board of Directors is pleased to note that the resubmitted project is reduced in size and in the number of proposed units. We also appreciate that the project no longer requires modifications of the Municipal Code's front setback and parking requirements.

We continue to believe, however, that even the present version of the project, rejected by City Council in February 2006, remains incompatible with its surroundings. Furthermore, the current review of this project strikes us as premature given that city staff is in the process of drafting new Design Guidelines for Upper State Street which are yet to be submitted for consideration by the public and approval by the decision makers (ABR, Planning Commission, and City Council).

Under the circumstances, we hope that your comments on the project will be at least as guarded and critical as were the comments made at the Planning Commission's concept review of August 16th. In particular, we request that you scrutinize

(1) whether the project's proposed height, size, bulk, scale, style, and character are compatible with its surroundings as experienced by the public and described in the recent Upper State Street Study;

(2) whether the project's proposed size, bulk, and scale are commensurate with the lot size of 62,331 square feet (1.43 acres); and

(3) whether the design of the proposed buildings, open spaces, and circulation could not be much improved if the following changes were implemented:

(a) The density calculations for the project's residential component should exclude the square footage of both the proposed commercial component (6,302 net square feet plus the appropriate setbacks and parking spaces) and the uninhabitable long driveway connecting State Street and La Cumbre Lane.

(b) The driveway just mentioned, which has functioned as a *de facto* public easement for many years, should be widened and possibly turned into a road so that it can properly serve both as the sole access for 3 commercial and 44 residential units and as the kind of short cut for through-traffic vividly described by Commissioner Myers at the Planning Commission's concept hearing.

We thank you in advance for considering our input as you deliberate on the merits and demerits of this project which could become an influential precedent for other mixed-use developments in the Upper State Street area.

Joe Rution, Secretary, for
Judy Orias, President, of the
Allied Neighborhoods Association