

Arguments against the draft motion for case 2011.1249C

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Four problems

Problem One: Increased traffic near a school. The plan increases traffic near S.F. International High School, leading to more cars hitting more kids.

Problem Two: Sidewalk blocked. The plan blocks the sidewalk, removing Americans With Disabilities Act compliance.

Problem Three: Drinkers at a bus stop children have to use. The plan forces students in close to patrons drinking wine and beer.

Problem Four: Unexpected occupational exposure to diesel exhaust. The plan exposes the workers to diesel exhaust, which is not a typical occupational hazard for restaurant workers.

Background: People drive to restaurants in the Mission

Restaurant patrons take cars even when there isn't parking. In response, many restaurants in the Mission now have to provide valet parking. The Mission Local journalists document this in the January 26, 2012 article "Valet Parking Set to Expand in the Mission".¹

We can't trust anecdotes. Ask people directly, and social desirability bias sets in; people will say they didn't drive even though they did. Indirect evidence is more reliable-- and it shows that people continue to drive when they go out to eat.

Nor can a restaurateur control who will come, or how they'll get there. It's impossible to make these conditions of acceptance. Without them, we must assume patrons will arrive however they choose-- and those who come by car will increase traffic.

Problem One: Increased traffic near a school

The Mission is out of parking. Adding commercial development outside commercial zoning means more people driving around trying to find a parking spot.

S.F. International High School stands half a block away. Traffic is already bad enough that to protect the kids, Bryant between 22nd and 23rd is a 15 MPH zone.

Epidemiology proves increasing traffic increases traffic accidents, including those involving children; see Wazana et alia's "A review of risk factors for child pedestrian injuries: are they modifiable?"² Sometimes we have no choice but to increase traffic near a school regardless-- but this is not one of those times.

1 <http://missionlocal.org/2012/01/valet-parking-set-to-expand-in-the-mission/>

2 *Injury Prevention* 1997; 3: 295-304. doi: 10.1136/ip.3.4.295 .

<http://injuryprevention.bmj.com/content/3/4/295.full.pdf>

Problem Two: Sidewalk blocked

There's nowhere to put in much outdoor seating; the space is already a sidewalk and a bus stop on the 27 Bryant line.

There is a single broad clear path along Bryant past the property. There's no more than 110" between the wall and the big bench. The plan puts tables and seats against the wall, extending five feet out. 110" minus 60" leaves a 50" pathway. The Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities (AADAG) specify that "The minimum width for two wheelchairs to pass is 60 in (1525 mm)".³

The space estimate, "approximately 127 square feet", is low. 127 square feet is enough for the tables and chairs. However, it does not include the space needed for workers to do their jobs. Someone working the tables on Bryant has nowhere to stand but in the already narrowed path, blocking it completely.

Working in the pathway means collisions with passers-by. The workers are carrying forks.

If there isn't enough space for wheelchairs, there isn't enough space for zigzagging toddlers, the elderly, the pregnant, or kids in strollers. Kids play on sidewalks near where they live; they're going to collide with the workers. The workers are also carrying knives.

Problem Three: Drinkers at a bus stop children have to use

San Francisco International High School students commute on the 27 Bryant line. It is illegal to sit at the bus stop with a drink in hand, chatting up the kids who are stuck there waiting-- and for good reason. Accepting the plan adds a loophole sanctioning doing just that.

At a minimum, we should ask S.F. International's administration about this.

Problem Four: Unexpected occupational exposure to diesel exhaust

The 27 Bryant line runs diesel buses about every fifteen minutes.⁴ Diesel exhaust is hazardous.⁵ The workers will be right next to running diesels. During temperature inversions, exhaust gets stuck near the ground-- so it'll be even worse.

Since most restaurants don't have busses stopping at the tables every fifteen minutes, diesel exhaust is not an occupational hazard restaurant workers are prepared for.

We need a specialist to look at this. This means a professional site-specific review of occupational safety and health issues-- but that's going to be expensive.

3 <http://www.access-board.gov/adaag/html/adaag.htm#4.2>

4 <http://transit.511.org/accessible/schedules/routeinfo.aspx?cid=SF&rted=27>

5 <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/dieselexhaust/chemical.html>

The plan is too broken to fix

An outdoor full-service restaurant on that corner is a square peg in a round hole. Traffic means accidents, there's no space for tables, drinkers plus kids at a bus stop is a bad mix, and buses spew exhaust. Those can't be changed.

The backup plan suffers none of these problems

The project description states:

The tenant plans to proceed with the establishment of a retail coffee shop should they not receive authorization to establish a full service restaurant.

This is a wonderful idea.

I suggest this:

- (1) **Don't do it.** Disapprove any motion like the draft motion.
- (2) Encourage the applicant to build his new restaurant in commercial zoning.