



JO Bennett <jbennett@keywestcity.com>

**1200 White Street (#10 HARC agenda tonigh)**

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Tue, Sep 25, 2012 at 2:10 PM

RE: 1200 White Street

DATE: Tuesday, September 25, 2012

TO: HARC BOARD MEMBERS c/o Jo Bennett, HARC,

Dear Ms. Bennett ,

Thank you for your time on the telephone this morning. I am just now trying to open on-line and review the application and plans submitted to HARC for the meeting this evening. Unfortunately, I am out of town and will be unable to attend the meeting tonight. I understand that my deadline for e-mailing comments is 3pm today, so even before I finish reading the materials, I wish to voice the concerns my neighbors and I have with this project and the way the city is being asked to review it: that is, piecemeal, without a comprehensive plan of all of the intended uses planned for the site and without addressing the site in it's totality. Mr. Mills has informed me that he intends to use the property as follows:

1. Operate a shop for the rental of mopeds and bicycles and for the sale of motorcycles (this will presumably include a parts and repair department, and involve the storage and outside display of these vehicles).
2. Apply for an easement to install an awning over White Street sidewalk.
3. Install a fence (and presumably a gate) across the existing parking lot.
4. Relocate the existing "cafe" in the middle of the building (which currently has a counter, 3 stools and standing room for perhaps 5 persons inside) to the corner space previously occupied as a tile shop; according to Mr. Mills, it will become a 15-seat restaurant.
5. Break through the walls from the bakery portion of the building to expand the square footage of the moped rental business.
6. Add an insurance agency office to the downstairs portion of the building.
7. Continue to use the upstairs part of building for residential rental unit(s).
8. Hire a contractor to "grade down" a portion of his parking lot.

When will the issue of off-street parking requirements and the features of the parking lot for these various mixed uses be addressed?

Where will the waste dumpster(s) for the moped shop, the cafe/restaurant and the residential units be located? There are currently 2 sitting in the middle of the parking lot, which are unsightly and limit the use of the parking lot for customer and employee parking.

When will the issues of storm water runoff and handicap access be addressed?

What landscaping features are intended? The entire parcel (building and parking lot) are currently 100% impervious surfaces. Surely landscaping must be a necessary and important aspect to this project.

Please understand that we welcome the opening of a new business at this property and we wish Mr. Mills well in his efforts. However, the owners and residents are trying very hard to improve the streetscape of this neighborhood. The chiropractic clinic (White Street Healing Arts) on the corner of White and Duncan has been done a beautiful job of restoring the building, installing landscaping and providing attractive off-street parking for it's clients; Coldwell Banker Realty has transformed an abandoned tire repair shop into sleek offices for itself, a doctor's office and TDC administrative offices, as well as providing off-street parking for their employees and customers; the owners of the new building at the corner of White and United (which replaced an unsightly abandoned restaurant) have spent a great deal of time, money and effort constructing a lovely new mixed-use building that is compatible with the scale and style of the neighborhood, and they too have provided off-street parking for it's tenants. Many of us have planted stands of Royal Palm trees along the street to try to soften the streetscape. The NOAA weather station has incorporated a restful public facade with open space, trees and public art. Hopefully, we will soon welcome the new City Hall to our neighborhood. With all this positive energy and opportunity for improvements to our area, it hardly seems the proper time or place to take a "well, it's better than what was there" stance.

My neighbors and I feel that HARC should be given an opportunity to know and review the entire intended project in order to provide guidance that will insure a coordinated project that is a positive addition to our neighborhood, rather than being presented with a series of applications, which will result in a series of compromises; that is, decisions now for the rental moped shop and change of windows and doors, then later decisions for the addition of a restaurant, next requests to comply with necessary fire codes for the mixed use of residential and commercial spaces in the same building, then later discussions about fencing and parking lot uses, etc.

Without the owner providing a comprehensive plan or at least sharing fully his intended plans, the issues of streetside appearance, parking, landscaping, and appropriate uses cannot be properly addressed nor concrete requirements for HARC approval be spelled out and enforceable.

Again, thank you for your consideration of these matters and if you wish to discuss this further, I am available by mobile telephone - 305/509-2145

Best Regards, Linda Wheeler

cc: Don Craig and Brenden Cunningham, Planning Department

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