

Re: 9/8/16 ZAB hearing on auto sales/repair proposed at 2777 Shattuck/2747 Adeline

Dear ZAB members,

Removing the 2747 Adeline (“triangle”) driveway on Shattuck would not lessen the detrimental impacts of the repair service entrance. It would make the Shattuck/Stuart intersection even more dangerous, as well as making access to Kirala’s 9 parking spaces on the triangle more difficult.



The open parking lot driveway (near the southernmost arrow, top right) is highly visible to pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. The proposed repair entry (immediately to the right of Kirala, top left) would not leave sufficient curb space for restaurant delivery trucks to legally park in front of Kirala. Even the linen delivery truck would extend into the new curb cut. These trucks would have to park south of the new driveway, where they would block visibility: for drivers

turning out of the service driveway; for drivers heading north on Shattuck, and for pedestrians and bicyclists. Add Sconehege deliveries, and you get an obscured mid-block entrance. A warning siren at the garage door would not save bicyclists, unless the wail is loud enough and sustained enough to give them time to react. Diners and pedestrians would need earplugs.

Honda and Kirala traffic approaching northbound on Shattuck would turn left across traffic onto Stuart: the very turn movement that the Berkeley Pedestrian Master Plan identifies as a hazard one block further south (at Oregon and Shattuck) and then right on Adeline to reach the only access to the triangle parking lot. Southbound drivers would continue to add traffic to Shattuck between Ward and Stuart; they would merely turn right on Stuart. Since there is no access to the Adeline driveway from the north, the only other option for southbound drivers would be to turn left on Adeline, across three lanes of traffic, to reach it.

It is unclear whether Berkeley intends to reserve the "passenger drop-off" yellow zone in front of the 2777 Shattuck entrance for Berkeley Honda, or how delivery trucks would be able to avoid that section of curb.



The above photo shows what is all too common at the failed (LOS F) westbound intersection on Stuart at Shattuck. Some drivers mistake this for a 4-way stop; many just grow impatient and step on the gas. The repair entrance would create another F intersection, only with poorer visibility. The left turn restriction out of the repair entrance, as the traffic consultant has noted, is unenforceable through signage alone. And respecting the turn restriction would add trips to Ward Street as some drivers circle the block—perhaps to the failed westbound intersection of Stuart and Shattuck shown above—to head south. The traffic study fails to consider the likelihood that Honda customers will avoid the increasing regional traffic messes on Ashby and Shattuck by using Telegraph and then heading west on Stuart.

To accommodate a queue of repair customers in the morning, Berkeley Honda proposes to switch the outbound drive aisle to an inbound one. If the inbound drive aisle fills up with 6 vehicles—or if any car or truck pulls in and stops near the entrance—other vehicles would have to either turn into the outbound aisle as they enter, block the sidewalk, or stop on Shattuck while the drivers read the directional instructions above the service entrance.

The traffic consultant for Berkeley Honda wrote, “Overall, the two lane access driveway is proposed to be 24 feet wide, which would be adequate for cars and small trucks to access the site.” The curb cut is 20’ wide and the *entrance* is slightly under that. (The aisles widen inside.) Is this wide enough for a truck to enter as a car exits? What is the recommended width?

In a letter supporting the 22-unit car-free project approved for 2711 Shattuck near Ward, Greenbelt Alliance encouraged the City to work with the developer to install traffic-calming measures in front of the development, “which is situated at an intersection that may prove dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists.” A car struck a bicyclist in this intersection in April 2015. (Fortunately, she was unhurt.) In an email, the traffic engineer told Honda that he was willing to shift the center striping on Shattuck further east if this was necessary to accommodate the repair entrance left turn. Is the City really willing to increase hazards to bicyclists from a narrowed northbound lane in order to prioritize car repair access? This is frightening.

Please look at the photo at the top of this letter and imagine a pedestrian bulb-out on the right. A bus would not be able to clear the crosswalk and veer around waiting Honda traffic. Berkeley should not make it harder for buses to move through the City, or for those of us dependent on public transportation to get around, in order to accommodate a repair entrance. And please don’t tell me that the City is going to abandon its plans to install the pedestrian amenities, in order to make it easier on Honda. At this point in the process, I fear anything is possible in that regard.

Neighbors have brought up the bus stop at the northwest corner of Stuart and Shattuck. It is unsheltered and dangerously close to the street. Operating a car repair and sales business on two sides of the street, with a repair entrance obscured by delivery trucks, increases the chance that one of the cars that careens across Shattuck will hit a transit rider, a child taking the “Safe Route to School,” or a bicyclist heading to work. This project is simply too large for the space it

proposes to use, has design features too dangerous for this location, and would degrade one of the only complete street walls along South Shattuck. Please make findings of detriment and deny all permits.

Sincerely,

Marianne Sluis  
2100 block of Derby

Zoning Adjustments Board  
City of Berkeley

Dear Members of the Zoning Adjustments Board

Re: Deny Honda Service Garage at 2777 Shattuck Due to Extreme Detriments

**This is the wrong location for an operation with the space needs and negative impacts of the Honda Corporation.**

The owner of 2777 Shattuck booted out Any Mountain in favor of the more lucrative Honda dealership and service station. The same owner also owns the sites now occupied by beloved locally owned businesses, Sconehege and Kirala. Since the Honda Corporation needs vastly more space than is contained within 2777 Shattuck, and it can pay more in rent than small businesses can – why would the property owner fail to boot out Sconehege and Kirala when their leases come up for renewal? Thus we would lose more neighborhood-serving retail, which is exactly what neighbors have consistently clamored for, and gain further automobile domination, which neighbors have consistently opposed.

**The Overlay Ordinance is illegitimate.**

This project would not even be under consideration if not for the 2013 Dealership Overlay Ordinance. But the overlay is an illegitimate piece of legislation, as it was enacted through stealth. The community was kept in the dark about it before it was passed, and it is counter to all the area plans that the community actually did participate in. How could the neighbors be entirely left out of legislation with such negative and detrimental consequences to their health and welfare?

Even if it were legitimate, it would not reverse all other zoning and safety regulations, such as requirements for off-street parking and traffic regulations. The idea that repair service bays can double as parking spaces is laughable. I hope you will not seriously consider such a perversion of the code – and of logic.

**The driveway arrangement for the service garage has been previously designated as potentially hazardous by the applicants' own traffic consultant.**

The traffic study prepared for Berkeley Honda on September 22, 2015 by Joy Bhattacharya claims that “The left turn out of the driveway would be prohibited by a sign posted at the driveway, which would only allow right turns out of the driveway.” Yet in 2010 for the Parker Place project at 2598-2600 Shattuck, this same traffic consultant stated, “the effectiveness of turn restrictions through signage is entirely dependent on the level of enforcement provided at the location. Without proper enforcement, drivers may tend to make illegal turns, *creating an unexpected hazardous condition for pedestrian, vehicular and bicycle traffic*” (emphasis added.)

**The applicants claim in error that the service garage is not the primary use.**

On page 2 of their August 5, 2016 Addendum to Revised Applicant Statement, the applicants present a chart showing 12,468 (I assume the figures on this chart refer to

square feet) of area devoted to sales in 2777 Shattuck, and 11,043 sq ft devoted to service. The sales area column includes 3,350 sq ft devoted to "Service for new/used vehicles (for sale)." But it doesn't matter what variety of vehicles are being serviced, it is *the activity of servicing them that is the problem*. Obviously servicing vehicles, which involves toxins, noise and vibrations, is more detrimental to the surrounding neighborhood than selling them.

If the servicing of cars that are for sale is moved to the proper column (the "service" column), then the chart would show that 14,393 sq ft are devoted to service in 2777 Shattuck and 9,118 are devoted to sales. Servicing a large number of vehicles in a building that is too small for this usage, and located directly on the property line of the neighboring house, is a clear and vigorous detriment to the neighborhood.

**It is your duty to deny projects that create detriment.**

Please honor your charge as members of the quasi-judicial body whose duty is to enforce the Zoning Ordinance. In order to approve a project, you have to make a finding of non-detriment. I do not see how such a finding can be made in this case.

Sincerely,

Gale Garcia