Dear Editor Sean O'Donoghue:

We are pleased to submit a revised manuscript that responds to the comments of your last review. We include below a point-by-point response to the comments there. We appreciate the feedback and its resulting improvement in the document.

**Comment:** SketchBio is being released as open-source software and will be available for download at this location". While this is sufficient for BioVis, it is of limited value to publish this work in BMC Bioinformatics prior to the tool becoming available. The authors should clarify when this tool will be available. **Response:** The source code has been uploaded to sketchbio.org and the paper points to it.

**Comment:** The introduction is still too informal in parts for publication as a journal article. The following sentences should be removed or at least greatly shortened: \* "In his introduction to the ?Cellular and Molecular Data? session at BioVis 2013, Tom Ferrin identified two open challenges for molecular biology software." \* "Hanging David Goodsell?s excellent ?Molecular Machinery? poster [1] showing renderings of many of these molecules and their interactions helped to grow our shared under- standing of the structures in the mitotic spindle ( a structure that separates chromosomes during cell di- vision), ... " **Response:** The first sentence was removed and the second shortened.

**Comment:** Also the manuscript should be carefully revised again to remove remaining informal language; e.g., change "We?re developing" to "We have developed" or "We are developing". **Response:** Contractions expanded throughout. First person switched to third person in some locations. Informal language ("clunky") removed or replaced.

**Comment:** Further attention is required to regularize some tool names: Pymol > PyMOL throughout, and Powerpoint -> PowerPoint (this was noted in an earlier review but has still not been addressed). **Response:** These two names, along with BioBlender, have been made consistent throughout.

**Comment:** Finally, the manuscript should be carefully revised for typographical errors: \* Â "( a structure that" > " (a structure that" \* (?Joe?) > ("Joe?). **Response:** Each of these has been repaired, and another careful pass looking for typographical errors has been completed.

We hope that the submitted manuscript is acceptable and apologize for the slow response in uploading the revision. We will be glad to make other changes as needed for publication.

Thank you,

Shawn M Waldon, Peter M Thompson, Patrick J Hahn and Russell M Taylor II