

**From:** [The Morrows](#)  
**To:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#); [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward1](#); [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward2](#); [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward3](#); [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward5](#); [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward6](#); [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward7](#); [\\*CI-StPaul\\_CityClerk](#)  
**Cc:** [Leah Timberlake Sullivan](#)  
**Subject:** 1984 Marshall Avenue request to rezone / City Council meeting 04/17/2024  
**Date:** Saturday, April 13, 2024 8:09:37 PM  
**Attachments:** [cidclip\\_image001.png](#)  
[PastedGraphic-1.png](#)  
[cidclip\\_image002.png](#)

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From: Mark Morrow  
1984 Carroll Avenue  
Union Park District Council's Land Use Committee Co-Chair

Re: 1984 Marshall Avenue request to rezone from RM1 to RM2  
I oppose the request to rezone 1984 Marshall Avenue from RM1 to RM2,  
I concur with the Planning Committee's recommendation that

1984 Marshall Avenue should not be rezoned

I concur with the Planning Commission's recommendation that 1984 Marshall Avenue should not be rezoned from RM1 to RM2.

• Zoning on Marshall Avenue from the river to Hamline was updated in 2018 after an extensive community-based process October, 2017 through October, 2018, including 27 public meetings. This process included a comprehensive analysis of the entire corridor.

• Between Cretin and Snelling, there is only 1 RM2 property, which was grandfathered in.

• As a result of recent zoning changes, RM1 now allows more intensive development. These zoning changes are so recent that we have not yet seen a project completed under the revised zoning codes.

**Overview of the 2017-2018 West Marshall Area Study and 2018 Zoning Update:**

I suspect that Council President Jalali knows the West Marshall Avenue zoning map like the back of her hands because she had significant input into the 2018 zoning update. For those who were not fortunate enough to participate, I've included this overview:

Our neighborhood is growing. It is certainly easier to add more people and end up with more cars than it is to add more people and end up with fewer cars, but that is what the 2040 Comprehensive Plan challenged Study participants to achieve. (Drafts of the 2040 Plan were available in 2017).

Our neighborhood extends north and south of Marshall. It is easier to connect along a corridor but divide across it (such as occurs across Snelling Avenue) than it is to connect along and connect across it, but that is what Study participants challenged ourselves to achieve.

During the discussions, the following sections from the 2040 Comprehensive Plan were quoted repeatedly:

“The following goals guide the Land Use Chapter:

1. Economic and population growth focused around transit.

2. Neighborhood Nodes that support daily needs within walking distance.

...”

“Policy LU-30. Focus growth at Neighborhood Nodes using the following principles:

1. Increase density toward the center of the node and transition in scale to surrounding land uses.

...”

To achieve these goals, the 2018 West Marshall Avenue zoning update clusters the highest density at intersections that have both B line stops and north-south transit stops:

• Cretin: T3 and B2 (gas station), as well as H2 (golf course) and RM1

• Cleveland: T1, T2, T3, and B3 (gas station)

• Snelling: T2, T3, I1 (railroad corridor) and IT (power transformer)

The update clusters moderate density at the B line stop with no north-south connection:

• Fairview: T1 and T2

(Prior has no B line stop - the cluster of T1 zoning reflects the existing apartments.)

Between those 5 clusters of density are 4 stripes of RM1 zoning (with one exception) to provide a transition in scale to the surrounding neighborhood. The stripes of RM1 allow the recreation center and park (which are north of Marshall) and the University of St. Thomas (which is south of Marshall) to remain part of a single cohesive neighborhood. (I love the feel of this design – it reminds me of the Golden Gate Bridge. One neighborhood with multiple clusters of goodies, connected along and across Marshall rather than divided by it.) This is certainly not what all transit corridors look like, and that's fine. Variety, when it addresses the needs of the community, is a strength rather than a weakness. I feel fortunate to live in a neighborhood, and in a City, that embraces variety as a strength.

In the 4 stripes of RM1 zoning between Cretin and Snelling, there is a single RM2 property (1975 Marshall Avenue), which was grandfathered in. (The developer submitted the building application hours before the 2017-2018 West Marshall Area Study building moratorium went into effect). This could perhaps best be described as zoning by default rather than zoning by design.



**Changes Since the 2018 Marshall Avenue Update:**

• Growth:

Since 2018, there has been considerable growth along Marshall Avenue, as envisioned in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, and as shaped by the 2018 Marshall Avenue zoning update. I view this growth as an endorsement of the wisdom of the zoning design.

**New West Marshall Avenue Apartment Buildings Built Since 2018**

Address	When Built	Number of Units	Estimated Number of Bedrooms	Number of Clusters	Dwellings Demolished
1889 Marshall Ave	2023	40	120	5	2 Single-Family Homes
1818-1822 Marshall Ave	2023	24	40	3	Industrial Site
1811 Marshall Ave	2020	8	24	4	2 Single-Family Homes
1818 Marshall Ave	Under Construction	40	127 (Actual)	5	School Parking Lot
1420 Marshall Ave	2021	15	45 (Actual)	4	1 Single-Family Homes
1875 Marshall Ave	2018	15	45 (Actual)	5	2 Single-Family Homes
2002 Marshall Ave	2022	40	60 (Actual)	5	2 Single-Family Homes
2101 Marshall Ave / 250 Park St	2022	15	45 (Actual)	4 (2018) + (2022)	4 Single-Family Homes
2127 Marshall Ave	2021	20	60 (Actual)	4	1 Single-Family Homes
		<b>374 Units</b>	<b>1132 Bedrooms</b>		<b>15 Single-Family Homes Demolished</b>

[chart from Dean Cummings and Dean Nelson]

• Zoning Code

More recently, there have been changes to the zoning codes for residential districts (approved by the City Council October 18, 2023, effective November 26, 2023, published in Municode February 14, 2024.) In addition to replacing the R zoning districts with H zoning districts, the RM zoning setbacks were revised (RM1 front 25 feet / rear 25 feet revised to front 10 feet / rear 9 feet). These changes add housing capacity throughout St. Paul. Though there are projects under construction on Cleveland Avenue (H zoning), the zoning changes are so recent that we have not seen a completed project under the revised zoning codes.

The developer of 1984 Marshall stated that, with RM1 zoning, they could build 5 townhomes which, as noted by the Planning Commission, would be “the missing middle”.

**Summary**

Zoning on Marshall Avenue from the river to Hamline was updated in 2018 after an extensive community-based process including a comprehensive analysis of the entire corridor. The design of 5 clusters of density connected by 4 stripes of RM1 meets our neighborhood’s and our City’s needs for growth, connection, and cohesion as envisioned in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

Between Cretin and Snelling, there is only one RM2 property, which was grandfathered in.

As a result of recent zoning changes, RM1 now allows more intensive development to meet the missing middle. We have not yet seen a project completed under the revised zoning

codes.

I concur with the Planning Commission's recommendation that 1984 Marshall Avenue is appropriately zoned RM1 and should not be rezoned to RM2.

Sincerely,

Mark Morrow

CC: Leah Timberlake Sullivan, Union Park District Council