

Dear Councilmember Tolbert,

This letter documents the communication timeline as it pertains to the proposed, denied and now appealed project on 540 Portland Avenue. The HPC directed the developer to engage the community and after days of hearing nothing Tom Darling and I drafted a letter requesting a meeting. We have done our best to follow city rules, processes, guidelines and navigate our way through lack of communication, failed technology all coupled with a denial of community input.

Wednesday, December 23, 2020 12:09 PM

Dear Carlos and Olov,

As you are aware from the Historic Preservation Commission hearing our organizations are concerned about your plans for a new triplex at 540 Portland. In all cases we believe it is very important for neighborhood organizations such as ours to have an opportunity to discuss and provide meaningful input into plans that will affect the areas we represent. Consultation is critical. The discussions among the HPC members and actions of the HPC at the recent hearing, including the instruction to revise and resubmit a design, demonstrate that the HPC shares this belief.

Accordingly, we invite you to a ZOOM meeting to begin a consultation process leading to a revised design. In the initial meeting we can discuss the project assumptions and other basic items so that we can then usefully discuss various design options. As noted, both of our organizations are concerned about the plans for your project and we feel that we can serve a useful function in successfully completing the task the HPC and City Council have set before all of us. We can call upon concerned neighbors who have expertise and who stand to be very directly affected by this project to work with us and with you.

It likely will be difficult to bridge the gap between those who oppose this project and you. However, it certainly will be impossible if we do not meet and work hard at resolution. The HPC minutes read "Intent of denial is not to deny the project, but to get the developer and the neighborhood together and hopefully find a mutually acceptable project." The City Council concurred. We would like to help our organizations and those who oppose the project as currently designed and you to achieve that mutually acceptable project.

Please respond to this email (to both Cathy and Tom) with some dates and times that would be convenient for you for the ZOOM meeting we propose. We believe we must do this very soon so we can all move forward.

Thank you,

Cathy Maes Ramsey Hill Association

and

Tom Darling Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association

RESPONSE:

Wednesday, Dec 30, 2020 at 10:24 PM

Hi Cathy – Thank you for reaching out;

Excuse me for the slow response. As the HPC timeline for reaching a decision precluded the commissioners from postponing the vote, as it was suggested during the HPC hearing, the entire process would need to start all over again. In any case, I think it would be in the best interest of the neighbors and the owner to have the HPC staff sponsoring any future meetings, to make sure meeting minutes are recorded properly and they can be used for the commissioners review. We'll notify you of any future meetings and also the neighbors that submitted letters of opposition, so everybody that wants to express their opinion can be heard.

I am including George Gause and Allisson Eggers on this email to maintained them informed. Please do not hesitate to let you know if you have any comments.

I hope you a wonderful Holidays and Happy New Year.

Sketches LLC

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Sincerely,

Cathy Maes

501 Portland Avenue resident and Ramsey Hill Association President

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