

# Summit Hill Association

May 15, 2012

Councilmember Dave Thune  
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St. Paul, MN 55102

District 16 Planning Council  
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Dear Councilmember Thune and Other City Council Members:

The Board of Directors of Summit Hill Association/District 16 Planning Council met on May 10<sup>th</sup> to review the recent discussions held by our Zoning & Land Use Committee on May 8<sup>th</sup> with PED Staff Merritt Clapp-Smith regarding proposed zoning amendments to the city's off-street parking requirements for establishments serving liquor. In our advisory capacity as a citizen-participation St. Paul District Council representing the views and concerns of residents, business and property owners within the Summit Hill neighborhood, we want to share our perspective with the St. Paul City Council for the hearing on May 16, 2012.

At our May 10<sup>th</sup> board meeting, PED Staff Clapp-Smith once again generously attended and fielded questions from SHA Board members as to the recent history of city efforts to revised off-street parking requirements for businesses in St. Paul. We were reminded that two years ago, the City Council passed a comprehensive set of revisions to the ordinances regarding off-street parking, but not in terms of businesses serving alcohol. There was extensive discussion about the merits and rationale of these new proposed amendments to the citywide off-street parking requirements.

In the end, given the long history of off-street parking issues on East Grand Avenue, the historic deficit of off-street parking spaces along all of Grand Avenue, and the impact on nearby residents and current businesses, the SHA Board noted that these new proposed amendments would likely add to the deficit and parking pressure. There was particular concern about how current retail spaces could become more intensely utilized if they should be changed to "restaurants serving liquor but closing at midnight" under the current language of the amendments. The Board also focused on both maintaining and enhancing the vitality of the Avenue.

In response to the proposed changes, the SHA Board of Directors voted 7-3 to support a motion expressing SHA's concern that as Grand Avenue and the surrounding portions of Summit Hill have their own unique issues regarding off-street parking, the "one-size fits all" approach of the proposed amendments is not appropriate for Grand Avenue, which may instead benefit from a separate off-street parking overlay or other targeted solution.

If you have any questions about the discussion or recommendation, you may contact me or Jeff Roy, SHA Executive Director, at (651) 222-1222. As always, we appreciate your on-going efforts to sustain a strong and vibrant Summit Hill neighborhood.

Sincerely,



Mark Berhow, President

Summit Hill Association/District 16 Planning Council

cc: Councilmembers Bostrom, Brendmoen, Carter, Lantry, Stark and Tolbert  
Merritt Clapp-Smith, PED Planner  
Sue Evens, GABA Executive Director