

15-011-695
Highland

April 15, 2015

Donna Drummond
Director of Planning
c/o Zoning Committee
City of Saint Paul

re 15-011-695 Highland Village mixed use development

Dear Zoning Committee Members:

We residents of Highland Park would be the immediate neighbors of the mixed use development planned in Highland Village at 735 South Cleveland Avenue between Pinehurst Avenue and Highland Parkway (the "Development"). Over the last several months, we've learned about the proposed development, followed it through one architectural revision, and expressed our significant concerns on numerous issues to the developer, members of City of Saint Paul staff, our representatives at the Highland District Council, Saint Paul City Councilmember Chris Tolbert, and others. We understand that these concerns led you to conduct the site plan review process, as opposed to delegating the process to City staff. Your review is absolutely warranted, we appreciate your time, and we believe that, after review of the Development in accordance with the City of Saint Paul Zoning Code, you, too, will conclude that it is not the right project for this very important and visible neighborhood location.

Standards for Site Plan Review

The process of site plan review, as it is codified in the Zoning portion of the City of Saint Paul Code of Ordinances (the "Code"), mandates consideration of the following 11 criteria when evaluating an application for review and approval. Section 61.402(c) of the Code requires consistency with *all* of these standards. *If you conclude that the Development is inconsistent with even one part of one of these criteria, you must deny approval of the site plan.*

"Site plan review and approval. In order to approve the site plan, the planning commission *shall* consider and *find* that the site plan *is consistent* with:

- (1) The city's adopted comprehensive plan and development or project plans for sub-areas of the city.
- (2) Applicable ordinances of the city.
- (3) Preservation of unique geologic, geographic or historically significant characteristics of the city and environmentally sensitive areas.
- (4) Protection of adjacent and neighboring properties through reasonable provision for such matters as surface water drainage, sound and sight buffers, preservation of views, light and air, and those aspects of design which may have substantial effects on neighboring land uses.

- (5) The arrangement of buildings, uses and facilities of the proposed development in order to assure abutting property and/or its occupants will not be unreasonably affected.
- (6) Creation of energy-conserving design through landscaping and location, orientation and elevation of structures.
- (7) Safety and convenience of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic both within the site and in relation to access streets, including traffic circulation features, the locations and design of entrances and exits and parking areas within the site.
- (8) The satisfactory availability and capacity of storm and sanitary sewers, including solutions to any drainage problems in the area of the development.
- (9) Sufficient landscaping, fences, walls and parking necessary to meet the above objectives.
- (10) Site accessibility in accordance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), including parking spaces, passenger loading zones and accessible routes.
- (11) Provision for erosion and sediment control as specified in the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's "Manual for Protecting Water Quality in Urban Areas."

The criteria range from specific – consistency with the applicable ordinances of the City – to more broad – consideration of the implications of a proposed development on the surrounding neighborhood and requiring consistency with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Summary

Within the framework provided above, we, first, urge you to examine whether the Development actually meets the T-2 Code requirements, especially with regard to setback and height.

The Development must also meet the T-2 design applicability standards for managing transitions in density or intensity to lower density neighborhoods through careful attention to building height, scale, massing and solar exposure.

We also urge you to resist the idea that consistency with the T-2 dimensional standards of the Code, alone, should result in your approval of the Development. To the contrary, the criteria above recognize that meeting massing and sizing requirements is just a portion of what is necessary for an approved site plan. You must consider all 11 criteria – which themselves are found in the Code itself – for an approval.

Second, we urge you to examine whether the Development objectively meets other portions of the Code, including its purpose and intent to promote and to protect the public health, safety, morals, aesthetics, economic viability and general welfare of the community; ensure adequate light, air, privacy and convenience of access to property; lessen congestion in public streets by providing for off-street parking of motor vehicles and for off-street loading and unloading of commercial vehicles; provide for safe and efficient circulation of all modes of transportation, including transit, pedestrian and bicycle traffic; encourage of a compatible mix of land uses, at densities that support

transit, that reflect the scale, character and urban design of Saint Paul's existing traditional neighborhoods; and conservation and improvement of property values.

Importantly, all of these intentions and purposes are objective and can be quantified.

Third, we urge you to examine the remainder of the above 11 criteria, paying specific attention to whether the Development is consistent with the City's adopted comprehensive plan. The standard for your consideration should not be simply whether the Development meets the comprehensive plan's long-term guidance for the property as part of a mixed-use corridor, but whether the Development demonstrates compliance with the specific components of the comprehensive plan set forth to guide development over the next fifteen years, including protection and promotion of solar energy and zone transition, density and development standards that are so important in neighborhoods where residential and commercial uses are located together.

(1) Setback and Height

Returning to the building height – mixed-use properties in T-2 zoning districts are not permitted to be greater than 35 feet in height unless they are stepped back from side and rear property lines by a distance equal to the additional height.

Notwithstanding that this exception allows monolithic tower structures so long as the building height to setback ratio is met, the setback must be measured from *all* of the above-ground building faces and not just the top story. As a result, the Development cannot be approved because its height is higher than the side and rear setback distances permitted in the Code.

Section 60.220 of the Code defines *setback* as the distance required to obtain front, side or rear yard *open space* provisions of the Code is measured from the lot line to the above-grade *faces* of the building. Importantly in this Code definition, setback relates contextually to "open spaces," and the word "faces" is plural. This means that *all* of the above-ground faces must be setback, not just the face of the upper story.

Further, Section 2.02 of the Code is in agreement, indicating that words and phrases shall be construed so far as possible in their plain, ordinary and usual sense except that technical words and phrases having a peculiar and recognized meaning in law shall be understood according to their technical import. It is the Planning Commission's duty to apply the Code in this instance according to its plain and unambiguous meaning – regardless of whether it has done so consistently in the past. The risk that adverse impacts will result from this Development is significant, and the Commission should therefore strictly apply the actual language of the Code, not rely on unwritten rules or subjective comparison to so-called past practices.

Finally, we ask whether the City interprets the definition of setback differently between residential and commercial properties. It is difficult to imagine a residential homeowner in a comparable scenario getting a building permit by setting only an upper story back from a property line.

(2) Compliance with Code Provisions

(a) The Development *neither promotes nor protects the public health, safety, morals, aesthetics, economic viability and general welfare of the community*. Neighbors have objectively and

voluminously voiced concerns about increased traffic and alley circulation dangers, the safety of pedestrians at the southwest corner of Highland Parkway and Cleveland Avenue, the health and safety impact of garbage and recycling collection, the loss of privacy and sunlight, the aesthetics of the west-facing façade, an increase in noise and disturbances from apartments, motorcycle parking location, and from an audible traffic signal, and we have shared concerns about storm water collection given the area's high water table. In total, these numerous, serious concerns add up to an overall concern about general welfare in our community caused by the Development.

(b) The Development objectively *does not ensure adequate light*, because adjacent residential homes will be blocked from sunlight. It does not require complex science to factually state that a long, "L" shaped, four-story building will not ensure the same amount of sunlight to adjacent two-story homes. Solar access will be discussed in more detail later in this document.

(c) The Development *does not ensure privacy*, because it has 27 apartments, including 16 decks and balconies that face two-story residential properties. Given that people living in small, traditional R-4 homes spend the majority of their waking time on the first floor and in their yards, these homeowners will factually lose their privacy to approximately 40 apartment dwellers on the second, third and fourth floors of this building.

(d) The Development *has not ensured convenience of access to adjacent properties*. Even without complex calculations, it is logical that a large, intense building in an area with complex alley flow will diminish convenience of access to our homes. We neighbors have no assurance that access to our property will continue to be convenient.

(e) The Development *does not lessen congestion in public streets*, even though it provides off-street parking for motor vehicles. It does not *lessen* congestion because factually there will be *more* cars and delivery trucks accessing this property and using public streets. Highland Village is known by the City to have significant parking constraints, and for many years homeowners on Pinehurst Avenue and Highland Parkway have voiced concerns to the Highland District Council and Ward 3 Councilmembers about our inability to park our cars on our street. The City has not quantified the neighborhood's current parking needs, nor provided an estimate of how parking will be impacted by the Development.

(f) The Development *will not have off-street loading and unloading for all commercial vehicles* and this too will not lessen congestion.

(g) The Development *has not quantified provisions for safe and efficient circulation of all modes of transportation, including transit, pedestrian and bicycle traffic*. Streets in Highland Village have complex traffic patterns and underperforming intersections. Dynamic modeling shows what happens to congestion and circulation under a wide range of traffic scenarios. Even without these quantifications, it is logical that a large, intense building in an area with poor traffic flow is unlikely to improve the safe and efficient circulation of transportation. Emblematic of this concern is the strong objection by neighbors to an audible signal at the north end of the Development which, by virtue of its existence, exemplifies how poorly traffic is likely to circulate in this area.

(h) The Development *does not reflect the scale of Saint Paul's existing traditional neighborhoods*. Our traditional Highland Park neighborhood has both residential and commercial buildings, inclusively, whose scale is both objective and quantifiable. At four stories, the Development is two to four times taller than every one of our homes. With a Floor-Area-Ratio ("FAR") of approximately 2.1 times, the Development is 3 to 5 times denser than our homes. That the Development is in a T-2 zone and our homes are in an R-4 zone is irrelevant to the reading of this section of the Code, which simply states the intent of the Code to reflect the scale of the *neighborhood* and not just the scale of a *zone*.

(i) The Development *has not shown to neighbors that it will conserve and improve our property values*. We residential property owners bear a significant risk with the Development near our homes. Our diminution of value is quantifiable and objective but we have not seen this analysis.

(j) The Development *does not meet the design applicability standards for transitions to lower density neighborhoods*, because careful attention has not been made to density or intensity (including building height, scale, massing and solar exposure) as shown in the analysis above. There is an abrupt, binary change of height, scale, massing and solar exposure when the Development is adjacent to our homes, and the intensity of its land use is exponentially greater than the intensity of land use by our homes.

(3) Compliance with Other Parts of the Site Plan Review Criteria in the Code

(a) The *Development is not consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan*. The Code clearly states that the Development must be consistent with *all* of the applicable portions of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan (the "Plan"), not just generally consistent with its guidelines for overall land use. The Development is not consistent with a number of provisions of the Plan including, but not limited to, solar energy and zone transition issues such as density and development standards in residential and commercial areas, how alleys can serve small commercial buildings when they abut residential neighborhoods, and design standards to provide a transition between single-family houses and nearby taller buildings.

The Plan, passed by the City Council in early 2010, is the main (but not exclusive) land use control document describing these solar energy and transition issues. It has been four years and, to the best of our knowledge, these planning and zoning studies have neither been conducted nor implemented and codified.

Solar Energy. The Development unequivocally obstructs access to solar energy. This loss of sunlight conflicts not only with the Code to ensure and preserve access to light, but also the Metropolitan Land Planning Act (Minnesota 473.859 Subd 2b) as administered by the Met Council, and Minnesota statutes 394.25 Subd 2 and 394.27 Subd 7. That the City, as members of ICLEI for 20 years, would knowingly conflict with state law relating to solar energy is difficult to understand.

Our contention is that shadows on adjacent property lines should be "integrated" over each/every day of the year and measured as an average "percentage reduction of daylight" and as a "maximum percentage reduction of daylight." In this way the impact to adjacent

homeowners can be quantified. By our own measurements, the home at 2074 Highland Parkway will get an average of 34% less sunlight throughout the year, and nearly 50% less sunlight during the winter. Many other adjacent properties will get significantly less sun.

Solar energy experts say that any loss of solar access reduces the efficiency of solar panels. Regardless of whether these properties have installed solar arrays already, solar access laws are meant to provide access to any homeowner who is or may someday wish to install a solar array. On November 17th, 2014, the owners of 2078 Highland Parkway began the process of installing an array on their property through a company called Geostellar, Inc. of Martinsburg, West Virginia.

The Plan promotes access to sunlight for solar energy systems in new or rehabilitated residential, commercial, and industrial developments to the extent possible. The Plan states that the City will prepare a study on tools, techniques, and regulations to facilitate increased usage of solar energy systems, either as standalone systems or as supplements to conventional energy sources, including, but not limited to: orientation of buildings, lots, and streets to capture the maximum amount of sunlight; building and site design, and the permissible levels of shading by structures and vegetation; and determination of minimum degree of solar access protection needed to produce maximum amount of solar energy. To the best of our knowledge in the past four years these studies and their implementation and codification have not been completed by the City.

Transition Issues. The Plan calls for studies to evaluate potential problems when large commercial areas abut residential homes, and for standards to be developed in these transition areas. The Development is in the second-most liberal traditional neighborhood zone (T-2) and it abuts the densest residential zone (R-4), and yet there appear to be no additional studies or standards published by the City for such a transitional combination. See specifically the language in the following sections of the Plan:

Density and development standards (LU-1.3). “The study will focus on density and other development standards, including, but not limited to, height, setbacks, lot coverage, scale, and massing.”

How alleys can serve small commercial buildings when they abut residential neighborhoods (LU-2.6). “Prepare a zoning study to determine how alleys can be used to serve small-scale industrial firms and commercial office buildings when they abut residential neighborhoods; issues will include, but not be limited to access, curb cuts on adjacent streets, loading areas, and buffers for residential uses.”

Design standards to provide a transition between single-family houses and nearby taller buildings (LU-3.2). “Prepare design standards that provide a transition between single family houses and nearby taller buildings. Issues that the design standards should address include, but are not limited to, height, mass, scale, and architectural context. Taller buildings might be located in Neighborhood Centers or Mixed-Use Corridors, at the edges where they abut single-family neighborhoods.”

(b) The Development *does not protect adjacent and neighboring properties through reasonable provision for such matters as surface water drainage, sound and sight buffers, preservation of views, light and air, and those aspects of design which may have substantial effects on neighboring land uses.* Much in this document voices concerns over surface water, sound, sight, light, views and land uses. Here however we would like to address another issue related to the cumulative effect of these concerns. We believe it is not reasonable for us neighbors to bear the burden of the impact of the Development on our community. In other cases it may be reasonable for us to bear some burden for one or two minor inconveniences. In this case there are numerous significant diminutions to our land use and value, and the aggregated effect is substantial and unreasonable.

(c) The Development *does not arrange buildings, uses and facilities to assure abutting property and/or its occupants will not be unreasonably affected.* In this document we have written about the size and intensity of this building, but here we would like to address the issue of assurances. Our concern here is that we have been given no assurances of any kind that the building uses will not unreasonable affect abutting property owners.

Privacy. We have written and spoken to the City about privacy issues, given that a four story building with many west-facing balconies and large windows will overlook homes and yards with no more than two stories. We have not been given assurance that our privacy will be protected.

Garbage and Recycling Removal. Garbage collection in the alley rather than on the back (west) portion of the property is unreasonable. Three large dumpsters will be located less than 15 feet of the side of the home at 2074 Highland Parkway. In addition, the collection of rubbish and recyclables means more trips of garbage and recycling trucks in the alley, and the noise of these trucks will ripple down the alley. More people will be living in the apartments than live in homes in the alley, and four first-floor commercial properties, including restaurants, and a second floor office (Edina Realty) will generate significant waste. We have not been given assurance that we will be not be unreasonably affected by the garbage and recycling collection practices of the Development.

Ingress and Egress. The egress/ingress on the north side of this property and alley is treacherous today, and will not become less so with significantly more traffic entering and leaving the Development. The City proposes adding an audible traffic signal to minimize the dangers of collisions and pedestrian safety in this area. We strongly oppose this measure as unreasonable because it will create more noise and because better, more passive traffic management tools exist to improve public safety. The City, to the best of our knowledge, has not suggested eliminating parking spaces on Highland Parkway, which, in our opinion, is a better solution to improve sight lines and safety in this area.

Noise. The Development puts motorcycle parking on the west surface lot and we think this is unreasonable. These motorcycles would start up and discharge their exhaust pipes toward a four story building and create an "echo chamber" down the alley. Further, we have been given no assurances that noise and disturbances from apartments in the Development will not be unreasonable.

Alley Setback. We interpret a part of Section 66.331(k) of the Code to say that the setback for interior lot lines shall be a minimum of thirteen (13) feet from the centerline of an adjoining alley. The 20 foot wide alley shared by residents of Highland Parkway and Pinehurst Avenue makes a 90 degree turn northward at the northwestern most part of the Development. We believe that the northwest portion of the Development must be setback from the alley an additional three feet to comply with this ordinance.

(d) The Development *does not create energy-conserving design through landscaping and location, orientation and elevation of structures.* The tall height, the higher elevation compared to homes west of the Development, the orientation east of homes that blocks morning light, as well as the "L" shape on the south side that blocks midmorning light, reduces the ability for adjacent homes to conserve energy because we will get less sunlight and, as a result, will have higher energy costs.

(e) The Development is *not consistent with safety and convenience of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic both within the site and in relation to access streets, including traffic circulation features, the locations and design of entrances and exits and parking areas within the site.* We have identified several issues relating to this element of the site plan review criteria.

Parking. The City has given no assurances that parking problems in Highland Village will be no worse as a result of the Development. Because the proposed underground parking is shared by both the building residents and the commercial tenants, the City must examine exactly how the proposed parking will work. We cannot reasonably conclude that parking is sufficiently addressed without knowing what kinds of businesses will occupy the proposed commercial spaces in the Development.

Traffic Circulation. There are many concerns related to traffic circulation. The City has not given assurances that pre-existing traffic circulation issues will improve.

An alley going south to Highland Parkway/Pinehurst Avenue is very close to the egress/ingress of the Development, and another alley going north onto Highland/Eleanor is close to the ingress of US Bank. All seven of these entrances and exits are within 100 feet of the sub-performing traffic light at the Highland Parkway and Cleveland Avenue intersection. Today, cars traveling eastbound on Highland Parkway frequently back up to the ingress/egress and to the alley making it even more difficult to make a right hand turn from the alley or the property onto Highland Parkway. It is also difficult for Edina Realty employees and clients to make left hand turns to go west on Highland Parkway.

Edina Realty currently has an ingress and egress on the south side of its land on Pinehurst Avenue. These are used very infrequently, mostly during holidays when Edina Realty gives away Christmas trees. The Development proposes ingress and egress that would be used *very frequently*, with cars and delivery vehicles entering and leaving a highly trafficked collector street with an already poor right-of-way.

Homeowners on Highland Parkway, Pinehurst and Eleanor Avenues frequently observe vehicles habitually averting congestion in our area by using local alleys and private property for general traffic circulation.

Southwest Corner of Highland Parkway and Cleveland Avenue. The sidewalk on the southwest corner of Highland and Cleveland is narrow, graded to the street and has two traffic signal poles located very close to the curb. It is a narrow, dangerous spot already, and will become more dangerous if the Development "holds the corner" there. Eastbound Highland Parkway drivers will have a hard time seeing around the corner and residents fear being run over. The City has not provided assurances that this corner will be safe.

Pedestrian Safety Due to Increased Shadows. The Development casts long shadows on Highland Parkway and Cleveland Avenue. These shadows reduce temperatures on sidewalks and streets and make it more difficult for snow and ice to melt in the winter sun. The City has not given assurances that pedestrian safety will improve at this intersection. This is important for residents with children who use the intersection to walk to and from local elementary schools.

Conclusion and Recommendations for Denial

The proposed Development is inconsistent with the majority of the required criteria for site plan approval. Considering the totality of the implications of the proposed Development on the surrounding neighbors and neighborhood, we strongly urge you to deny approval of the proposed site plan. Your findings for denial should include that the proposed site plan does not meet the criteria listed in Section 61.402(c) of the Code including:

- (1) The city's adopted comprehensive plan and development or project plans for sub-areas of the city.
- (4) Protection of adjacent and neighboring properties through reasonable provision for such matters as surface water drainage, sound and sight buffers, preservation of views, light and air, and those aspects of design which may have substantial effects on neighboring land uses.
- (5) The arrangement of buildings, uses and facilities of the proposed development in order to assure abutting property and/or its occupants will not be unreasonably affected.
- (6) Creation of energy-conserving design through landscaping and location, orientation and elevation of structures.
- (7) Safety and convenience of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic both within the site and in relation to access streets, including traffic circulation features, the locations and design of entrances and exits and parking areas within the site.

In addition, the proposed site plan does not meet the plainest reading of the setback standards for T-2 zoning, and it is inconsistent with many applicable zoning and other City ordinances.

cc Chris Tolbert, Michelle Beaulieu, Kathy Carruth, Tia Anderson, Amy Salmela

Tom Ordahl 2092 Eleanor Ave	Ray Getsug 2090 Highland Pkwy	Leisa Knych 2110 Pinehurst Ave	Jim DuCharme 2114 Highland Pkwy
Tom Kramer 2103 Highland Pkwy	Paula Farell 2118 Eleanor Ave	Laura Fries 2096 Eleanor Ave	Jim Cech 2115 Highland Pkwy
Tim Gross 2107 Pinehurst Ave	Pam Zagaria 2118 Highland Pkwy	Kris Young 2095 Highland Pkwy	Jeffrey Compton 2079 Pinehurst Ave
Tim Giuliani 2087 Pinehurst Ave	Pam Smyth 2077 Highland Pkwy	Kevin Smyth 2077 Highland Pkwy	Janet Dickelman 2086 Highland Pkwy
Terry Dickelman 2086 Highland Pkwy	Nancy Shaffer 2100 Eleanor Ave	Katie Holtz 2083 Pinehurst Ave	James Little 2076 Eleanor Ave
Teri Youngdahl 2086 Eleanor Ave	Mike Youngdahl 2086 Eleanor Ave	Kathy Ordahl 2092 Eleanor Ave	Jack Mueller 2111 Pinehurst Ave
Susan O'Connor Von 2094 Pinehurst Ave	Mike Holtz 2083 Pinehurst Ave	Kathie Cech 2115 Highland Pkwy	Jack Kirr 2078 Highland Pkwy
Stephanie Thigpen 2099 Pinehurst Ave	Matt Mead 2075 Highland Pkwy	Kate Hunt 2081 Highland Pkwy	Howard Miller 2081 Highland Pkwy
Shawn Mullarky 2085 Highland Pkwy	Marty Fudenberg 2107 Highland Pkwy	Karla Hollinshead 2114 Pinehurst Ave	Howard Kelly 2096 Highland Pkwy
Ron Von 2094 Pinehurst Ave	Margaret Galvin 2103 Pinehurst Ave	Judy Giuliani 2087 Pinehurst Ave	HJ Schmidt 2074 Highland Pkwy
Rick Dagenais 2111 Highland Pkwy	Lydia Schwartz 2082 Highland Pkwy	John Cox 2096 Eleanor Ave	Henry Waldenberger 2115 Pinehurst Ave

Elissa Getsug
2090 Highland Pkwy

Beverly Kelly
2096 Highland Pkwy

Deb Slee
2074 Highland Pkwy

Berit Peterson
2111 Highland Pkwy

Colleen Zuro-White
2095 Pinehurst Ave

Ashley Kirr
2078 Highland Pkwy

Chris Knopff
2078 Eleanor Ave

Andrew Thigpen
2099 Pinehurst Ave

Charlie Broadnax
2102 Highland Pkwy

Cerise Blanchard
2114 Highland Pkwy

Cathy Kramer
2103 Highland Pkwy

Caroline Little
2076 Eleanor Ave

Carol Broadnax
2102 Highland Pkwy

Birdie Mullarky
2085 Highland Pkwy

Bill Shaffer
2100 Eleanor Ave

15-011-695
Highland

From: K.L. McDonnell [mailto:klgustafson@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2015 8:22 AM
To: Beaulieu, Michelle (CI-StPaul); Drummond, Donna (CI-StPaul)
Subject: 735 South Cleveland

I understand the proposed building at 735 S. Cleveland is legally able to build 4 stories high with the proper setbacks. Although this may be legal, it does not seem ethical. Not only will this building completely dwarf neighboring homes but it is grossly out of scale and character with any commercial building in the Highland area.

IF this is allowed these are my top concerns.

TRAFFIC

Not only will this put a strain on the light at Highland & Cleveland that I understand is already rated a "D" at times. But I am concerned about the amount of traffic that will go down Highland or Pinehurst to hit Cretin. School children wait for a bus on Highland and Pinehurst around 7:00 AM; it is still dark a good part of the school year while they wait there. Also with the proposed development at the old Ford site Cretin will become a lot busier as well so how will this traffic now coming from Highland and Pinehurst merge safely with just a stop sign?

PARKING

I am concerned about the parking not being sufficient, there is already overflow of commercial customers into neighborhood parking. The vast majority of the parking is proposed as secured underground parking. That works for residents and office staff (Edina Realty) but what about the office customers? How will they easily access this parking? Also, the office parking demand on weekends and in the evenings is minimal so they could be reserved during the week business hours only. Which in turn could allow these spots for others and reduce the overflow on to already crowded residential streets? The builder was opposed to this for security reasons, but why not at least allow these spots for residents and their guests during the off hours? I ask that you make sure the required parking is not only provided but easily accessible for use and that some consideration be made to allowing parking to turn over as suggested above.

NOISE

I am concerned about the amount of noise the generous balconies will generate. Especially on the west side of the building.

SAFETY

This is a busy area with lots of foot traffic and children walking past this area to and from school. I am concerned about forcing all traffic in and out on the residential streets of Highland and Pinehurst.

Thank you for your time,
Kaleigh McDonnell

klp

ZF# 15-011-695
Highland

From: Heidi Schallberg [<mailto:heidils@gmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, April 16, 2015 7:21 AM
To: Drummond, Donna (CI-StPaul); Beaulieu, Michelle (CI-StPaul)
Subject: 735 S Cleveland project

To Zoning Committee and Planning Commission members:

As a resident of Highland, I write to you to support the proposed mixed-use development at 735 S Cleveland. I was excited when I first heard about the project because it will provide additional attractive and modern housing options for the neighborhood, where the apartments most convenient to the businesses around Ford and Cleveland are considerably older. I moved to Highland from Lowertown because I wanted a neighborhood where it was convenient to walk to what I wanted and needed in my daily life and where I had good transit to get me beyond the neighborhood for other needs. This development will support residents who want lifestyles that emphasize riding transit, walking, and biking, and it is an encouraging step in the implementation of the district's neighborhood plan.

Within the district, 45% of households rent, according to the neighborhood profile on Minnesota Compass using American Community Survey data from the Census Bureau. As one of these many renters in the neighborhood, I urge you to allow this development to proceed promptly to expand attractive options in Highland.

Thank you.

Heidi Schallberg
706 Mississippi River Blvd S, Apt 204
heidils@gmail.com

2F#15-011-695
Highland Village

Greetings,

This communication is to strongly object to the inclusion of a 4th floor in the building proposed for construction at 735 South Cleveland in Highland Village. It is completely out of scale with neighboring buildings and the character of the neighborhood.

An important additional benefit to the elimination of the 4th floor of the building is the reduction of number of bedrooms, allowing for a better match between the planned parking spaces and the number of the building residents, employees, visitors and customers.

In keeping with the recommendations put forth by the HDC regarding this building proposal, I am opposed to the building's direct abutment to the sidewalk on the Cleveland side of the building. This would make impractical any sidewalk seating for any ground floor business occupying space in the building. Moving the building in by several feet on the Cleveland side of the building, puts the building in line with the buildings just up the block (housing the Highland Cafe and other businesses). This would enable the 735 building to have room for a row of tables between the building and the sidewalk, just as currently exists with the Highland Grill.

There has been unprecedented levels of objection raised to the design of this building, the height in particular. The current building is occupied and attractive. There is NO urgency that would factor into zoning committee approval of a proposal to replace a structure that is currently a neighborhood asset, with a structure that is the source of such significant concern and opposition, in its current proposal.

Sincerely,

Kris Ohnsorg
1881 Saunders Avenue

Dear Ms Drummond, Ms Beaulieu, and Mr. Tolbert:

I am contacting you to express my concerns about the 735 S. Cleveland development. The 735 S. Cleveland development is a blight on this neighborhood that will erode the quality of life and character of Highland Village. The community supports development if it is done well and enhances the quality of life in the community. However the Highland Village neighborhood is strongly opposed to the 735 Cleveland development as it currently exists because it will erode the characteristics that make this community desirable.

My specific concerns include:

- Increased vehicular traffic congestion and parking created by this four story mixed use development will endanger pedestrians, drivers, and cyclists.
- The development is out-of-scale in terms of height and mass for the residential neighborhood.
- Noise and light pollution from the apartments. Garbage trucks, delivery trucks for the retail operations.
- Highland Village neighbors and stakeholders have suggested various modifications including three-story modification but the developer rejected this compromise and will proceed with four stories.

Residents of the Village have raised families, paid taxes and made considerable investment in maintaining our homes and properties have been blindsided by TJJ Development actions that undo what we have worked so hard for. We want to right to peaceful enjoyment of our property. That's impossible when an over-sized and out-of-character structure towers over its neighbors, blocks sunlight, views, disrupts existing drainage systems, displaces water onto neighboring lots and more quality of life elements. Existing regulations are an invitation for developers to impose suburban sensibilities onto established urban neighborhoods

The request: The city should reject this project as currently proposed. Until enforceable building code/standards are developed, please don't let profit trump people. If this development and the Ford development are left unchecked for community, then Highland Park and the Village will cease to be a desirable destination. Facilitate TJJ, the developer, to work with neighborhood stakeholders to modify the current development plan and maintain Highland Village as a vibrant, welcoming and safe community.

Sincerely,

Kate Hunt

ZF# 15-011-695
Highland

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

TO: Saint Paul Planning Commission Zoning Committee

RE: Site Plan File #15-011695, 735 S. Cleveland Ave

FROM: Mathews Hollinshead, 2114 Pinehurst Ave., St. Paul MN 55116 651-492-0645



I write as a frequent transit user and homeowner within one block of 735 S. Cleveland, immediately contiguous to Highland Village, who is in favor of the essential urban, environmental, social, economic concept and characteristic of density. I do not oppose the size, massing or aesthetics of the 735 S. Cleveland proposal, although I favor fair monetary compensation for the loss of light and privacy of those next door. All cities need such a cost recognition to compensate adjacent neighbors, or the result will continue to be endless opposition to and prevention of otherwise healthy urban evolution and growth, evolution and growth that is absolutely necessary if St. Paul is to cover current and future legacy costs of being a historic core city its taxpayers can continue to afford to live in.

I do specifically oppose the 735 S. Cleveland proposal on the basis of unaddressed traffic and transportation impacts.

Notwithstanding City Public Works opinion, I know that increased use of Pinehurst as a bypass for Ford Parkway traffic lights and feeder to the Ford Bridge and I94 will directly and adversely affect my property and quality of life as a result of the 735 S. Cleveland proposal. I urge the Zoning Committee to incorporate making Pinehurst one-way eastbound between Finn and Cleveland, or that Pinehurst be cul-de-sacked at the 735 S. Cleveland property boundary. I understand that in the case of the U.S. Bank site/Johnson Brothers proposal at Shepard Road, various traffic and design conditions were imposed by the City. Traffic conditions do have precedent.

At age 66, I use transit almost every day even though I own a very good motor vehicle. Although Highland Village has Traditional Neighborhood Zoning to which this proposal may at first glance appear to conform, it will result in more, not less motor vehicle trips than under past zoning. Many new motor vehicle trips will use Pinehurst if changes are not made, on a street with many seniors and children.

If we are to walk the talk about diversity, opportunity, climate change, affordable housing and a host of other environmental, urban, political, rhetorical tropes, we must look in the mirror and acknowledge that St. Paul is a city, not a suburb. Moreover, St. Paul is a core city. Its business nodes and transit lines should have much more housing adjacent, but that housing should have severely limited parking combined with meaningful cost discounts in return for achievable, documented transit use, biking and walking as transportation for residents. If motor vehicles are allowed to the numbers in current, still overly generous code, then current homeowners should be physically protected from that traffic, as they are in almost every suburb around St. Paul.

I live across the alley from the north side of Ford Parkway at Finn Street, within sight of Lunds Supermarket. Some years ago, Highland homeowners mounted a multi-year campaign to make Finn a cul-de-sac between Pinehurst and the Ford Parkway alley. Subsequently, we and our neighbors secured the official vacation of that portion of Finn. That seemingly small victory for pedestrians has made all the difference for dozens of homes on several streets northward between Cretin and Cleveland, homes that pay generous property taxes and have high per-square-foot valuations.

If we are to be a green city, density and shift to transit, biking and walking are not just elitist fantasies, but essential to survival. That's particularly obvious in light of the threat of mile-long oil bomb trains traversing downtown Minneapolis, whose cargo only exists to feed motor vehicle gas tanks.

735 S. Cleveland is a prime opportunity to invoke the full intent and realize the true potential of Traditional Neighborhood Zoning. Please do so.

Mathews Hollinshead

2114 Pinehurst Ave.

St. Paul MN 55116

651-492-0645

ZF# 15-011-695
Highland

From: Michael Sonn [<mailto:sonn.michael@gmail.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2015 3:52 PM
To: Beaulieu, Michelle (CI-StPaul); Drummond, Donna (CI-StPaul)
Cc: HDC@visi.com; #CI-StPaul_Ward3
Subject: 735 South Cleveland

City of Saint Paul Planning Staff,

I'd like to extend my support for the project at 735 Cleveland Ave S. While I don't live in Highland Park, I do live in Macalester-Groveland and regularly visit and pass through Highland Village. On the surface, the complaints levied against the project sadden me. New neighbors should be welcomed with open arms, not cast in disapproving and demeaning stereotypes. And they certainly shouldn't be seen as only (and falsely) adding to parking issues, traffic congestion, or crime.

The developer has been more than responsive to community concerns. As stated in the staff report, the site plan meets applicable ordinances and standards in the T2 district for height, setbacks, density, parking, and design. The developer has proposed a step-back design to maintain a reasonable distance from neighboring homes and reduce shadow impacts.

Traffic and parking impacts have been more than mitigated for these. A traffic study is being conducted and there will be 111 car parking spaces provided even though only 93 spaces are required. If neighbors are concerned about traffic, providing more parking will induce more car trips which will in-turn create more car congestion. Neighbors can not have both more parking *and* less traffic. This building is situated in a perfect location to access shopping, entertainment, and employment without needing a car. Furthermore, these units will provide a place for our aging population to downsize and still remain a part of the community.

Overall, reviewing the zoning committee staff report, there is no reason not to approve this project.

Thank you,
Mike Sonn
1458 Wellesley Ave
415-606-9721

ZF# 15-011-695
Highland

From: Howard Paster [<mailto:HP@pasterprop.com>]

Sent: Thursday, April 16, 2015 8:30 AM

To: Beach, Tom (CI-StPaul); Drummond, Donna (CI-StPaul); Beaulieu, Michelle (CI-StPaul)

Subject: Proposed Mixed Use Development - 735 Cleveland Ave., St. Paul

Dear Tom, Donna, & Michelle,

We have been following the proposed re-development of the existing Edina Realty building at Cleveland & Highland Parkway in St. Paul. We are writing in support of the proposed development. We believe that the proposed project is appropriate for the site given the T2 zoning designation, and we believe this development will help continue the commercial re-gentrification of Highland Park and the surrounding community.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Howard Paster
President

Direct: 651-265-7865

HP@PasterProp.com



paster
PROPERTIES

2227 University Ave. W, St. Paul, MN 55114

www.PasterProp.com

ZFH 15-011-695
Highland

From: admccnicoll@gmail.com [mailto:admccnicoll@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2015 5:17 PM
To: Beach, Tom (CI-StPaul); Drummond, Donna (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Highland Development

Just a quick note to express my support for the Highland Development Project. Density on this particular location is exactly what it needs. Change can be difficult and you will never get everyone in complete agreement, but the site is worthy of a great design as presented and any adjustments or minor tweaks can likely address much of the concerns raised. This area is a fantastic part of St. Paul and needs continued attention w retail, restaurants, residential and great design. It is on or near to Buss Lines and other transportation and the additional traffic if created will be minimal for the overall benefit to the community.
Thanks for reading.

Doug McNicoll

Sent from Windows Mail

2F# 15-011-695
Highland

From: Matt%20Anfang [<mailto:mranfang@comcast.net>]

Sent: Thursday, April 16, 2015 10:52 AM

To: Beach, Tom (CI-StPaul); Drummond, Donna (CI-StPaul); Beaulieu, Michelle (CI-StPaul)

Subject: TjL Development File 15-011695

Chair Nelson and members of the Zoning Committee,

I am hoping to be able to attend the Zoning Committee meeting this afternoon. If I am not able, please consider this email when reviewing this case.

I have followed the proposed development at 735 Cleveland I have reviewed the Staff Report for the proposed development and read the comments submitted through various times during the project's proposal.

Near my home, where I've lived since 1997 there have been several projects that have replaced less intensive uses with higher density, multi-family, 3-4 story developments. These projects were approved despite neighborhood opposition not unlike the debate occurring with this proposal. Years have gone by and I say with confidence that fears about loss of privacy, increased congestion, increase in crime, decrease in property value, etc have never come to fruition. I would argue that increased investment, evolution of property usage, modification of zoning are all needed to keep a neighborhood thriving and keeping pace with the ever changing societal needs.

I was a member of the St. Paul Planning Commission and Zoning Committee when the TN zoning code was being developed. What TjL Development has proposed is precisely what many stakeholders envisioned would be the result of the enhanced code.

Specifically addressing proposal, the use of "stepping" building heights is an architectural feature that provides for a more aesthetically pleasing visual. What the developer has proposed in this project is arguably better than the *advisory* Highland District Council Comprehensive Plan of 2007.

In my opinion, supported by the facts of the staff report, this proposal meets every finding necessary to approve this project. TjL is no longer seeking Conditional Use Permits as originally proposed, TjL meets every component requirement of the Zoning Code / Site Plan Review and the developer has demonstrated their commitment to minimize (perceived) impacts on adjacent neighbors.

I respect the concerns of those who live closer to this project than I. However, as a resident that has been impacted by nearby development similar to this I believe that this type of development should be welcomed if not encouraged throughout the Highland Area.

I support every facet of this project and welcome the investment that will keep Highland and the Village area evolving and enhancing the vibrancy of the surrounding community.

Sincerely,

Matt Anfang
1635 Bayard Avenue



Highland District Council
1978 Ford Parkway Saint Paul, Minnesota 55116
651-695-4005 Fax 651-695-4019
Email: hdc@visi.com

Building a More Vibrant, Welcoming, and Safe Neighborhood

Resolution -735 South Cleveland Development

WHEREAS, the Highland District Plan from 2007 called for a zoning study of the Highland Village area,

WHEREAS, the Highland District Council requested a zoning study of the Highland Village Business Corridor on January 21, 2010; and after a series of public and stakeholder meetings with property owners, the Neighborhood Planning Committee and Planning Commission T2 zoning was approved by the City Council on April 13, 2011,

WHEREAS, the T2 traditional neighborhood district is designed for use in existing or potential pedestrian and transit nodes. Its intent is to foster and support compact, pedestrian-oriented commercial and residential development that, in turn, can support and increase transit usage. It encourages, but does not require, a variety of uses and housing types, with careful attention to the amount and placement of parking and transitions to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

WHEREAS, the Highland District Council's Community Development Committee met with TJI Development on a proposed mixed use development at 735 South Cleveland and about 40 neighbors on January 27, 2015 and the overwhelming response to the developer were concerns about;

Density

- Mass of Building, overall size –location
- Height
- Number of Small Apartments Turnover in Retail and Apartments
- Crime Increase

Parking

Light Pollution

Sound –Balconies, etc...

- No fast food

Traffic

- Stop light/signal at Pinehurst/ Cleveland?
- Timing of traffic light on Highland Parkway and Cleveland
- Deliveries
- Garbage –noise and pick up times -2x a week

WHEREAS, the HDC has received an overwhelming amount of feedback (emails and calls) from neighbors with concerns about the proposed building height and mass, parking, traffic and overall effect on the neighborhood,

Resolution 2015 – 7D



Highland District Council
1978 Ford Parkway Saint Paul, Minnesota 55116
651-695-4005 Fax 651-695-4019
Email: hdc@visi.com

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WHEREAS, the Community Development Committee met with TJL Development, City of Saint Paul Planning, DSI, Public Works, and many neighbors on March 18, 2015 to discuss changes to the original project;

THEREFORE, Be it Resolved that the Highland District Council's Community Development Committee is asking the Planning Commission's Zoning Committee to hold a public hearing to listen to the resident's concerns.

Approved March 18, 2015
By the Community Development Committee of the Highland District Council



Highland District Council
1978 Ford Parkway Saint Paul, Minnesota 55116
651-695-4005 Fax 651-695-4019
Email: hdc@visi.com

ZFH 15-011-695
Highland Villas

Building a More Vibrant, Welcoming, and Safe Neighborhood

Resolution Regarding Development at 735 South Cleveland Ave.

WHEREAS, the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* adopted in 2009, designates Highland Park as a Neighborhood Center, an area with compact, mixed-use development that provide services and employment close to residences; and,

WHEREAS, the *District 15 Highland Park Neighborhood Plan Summary*, adopted by the Saint Paul City Council in 2007, called for "rezoning portions of Highland Village to TN-2 to support mixed-use development and appropriate building design;" and,

WHEREAS, the Highland District Council (HDC) requested a zoning study of the Highland Village Business Corridor on January 21, 2010; and after a series of public and stakeholder meetings with property owners, the Neighborhood Planning Committee and Planning Commission, T2 zoning was approved for almost all Highland Village commercial properties by the City Council on April 13, 2011; and,

WHEREAS, the T2 traditional neighborhood district is designed for use in existing or potential pedestrian and transit nodes; its intent is to foster and support compact, pedestrian-oriented commercial and residential development that, in turn, can support and increase transit usage; it encourages, but does not require, a variety of uses and housing types, with careful attention to the amount and placement of parking and transitions to adjacent residential neighborhoods; and,

WHEREAS, the full 2005 *District 15 Highland Park Neighborhood Plan* (not part of the *Plan Summary* adopted by City Council) includes a goal of "new development in the Village shall be guided by architectural and urban design standards that create an attractive environment and do not negatively impact the adjacent residential areas;" and,

WHEREAS, the HDC's Community Development Committee hosted a public meeting on January 27, 2015, with TJJ Development and about 40 residents on a proposed mixed-use development at 735 South Cleveland Avenue where the overwhelming response to the developer were concerns regarding:

- Height and mass of the building in proportion to neighboring commercial structures and single-family homes
- Natural light obstruction and noise pollution from the building in general, and particularly from balconies overlooking single-family homes on the west façade of the building
- Anticipated increase in traffic on an already busy corridor, and the ability of current traffic signals and flows to handle this increase



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- Expected increase in demand for on-street parking on neighboring residential streets from residents, employees and customers
- Pedestrian safety considering the proposed layout of parking ingress and egress with respect to sidewalks, alleys and other driveways
- Types of commercial tenants in consideration of the numerous fast food and quick casual restaurants already operating in the area, and the faster turnover driven by those tenants as compared to sit-down service restaurants
- Deliveries and trash pickup timing, frequency and location for a building of this scale and at this location
- Proposed number of small apartments in the building and turnover of lessees
- Potential for increased crime from increased density

WHEREAS, the HDC has received an unprecedented volume of feedback (through emails, calls and online forums) from neighbors and residents with concerns about the proposed building height and mass, parking, traffic and overall effect on the neighborhood; and,

WHEREAS, the HDC's Community Development Committee hosted a second public meeting on March 18, 2015, with TJL Development, City of Saint Paul PED, DSI, Public Works, and many neighbors to discuss the proposed 735 S. Cleveland Avenue development as submitted to the City for site plan review; and,

WHEREAS, the attendees of the March 18, 2015, HDC's Community Development Committee meeting reaffirmed the aforementioned concerns about the proposed building height and mass, parking, traffic, and overall effect on the neighborhood, resulting in a CDC Resolution requesting the Planning Commission's Zoning Committee hold a public hearing to listen to residents' concerns; Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Highland District Council does not advocate for a four-story development at 735 S. Cleveland Avenue, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Highland District Council requests that the proposed 735 S. Cleveland Avenue development do all that it can to include qualities that scale to a pedestrian level by including building façade articulation, architectural elements to help define primary entrances, and commercial façade street level windows and doors that allow views into and out of the interior, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Highland District Council supports the following conditions on the proposed 735 S. Cleveland Avenue development if it proceeds:



Highland District Council
1978 Ford Parkway Saint Paul, Minnesota 55116
651-695-4005 Fax 651-695-4019
Email: hdc@visi.com

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1. TJJ Development's representatives continue to work with the HDC and neighbors on design details including:
 - Building materials
 - Size and location of windows and balconies on the west façade of the building to preserve the privacy of neighboring homes
 - Landscaping and continuation of the Village Streetscape along the property
 - Potential for outdoor patio restaurant seating on the property
 - Business and parking signage and lighting
 - Building access and pedestrian safety, including features to alert pedestrians to vehicle egress from the site
 - Location, timing and frequency of supplier deliveries, garbage and recycling pick-up, and snow removal
2. TJJ's representatives consider real ways to reduce auto traffic to and from the development through implementing a Travel Demand Management Plan by working with an expert such as St Paul SmartTrips, or some similar group to help reduce traffic and parking in the neighborhood and promote multi-modal transportation
3. TJJ's representatives work with Public Works to implement a stormwater management system that considers the area's high water table and layout of the site with respect to adjacent alleys and properties
4. TJJ's representatives work with the HDC on construction details including timing, location of equipment and materials, parking for crew and employees, and mitigating impacts on neighboring residents and businesses during the phased development, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Highland District Council requests the following of the City of Saint Paul in regards to the proposed 735 S. Cleveland Avenue development:

1. DSI confirms that the proposed design meets setback requirements with respect to the adjacent alley
2. DSI reverse its Site Plan Review recommendation to move garbage and recycling pick-up to the adjacent residential alley rather than the property's surface parking lot
3. Public Works consider the best options to help with traffic flow and pedestrian safety, such as by considering bump-outs on Cleveland Avenue, possible one-way traffic flow options, and on-street parking locations and requirements on adjacent streets.

Approved April 9, 2015
By the Highland District Council Board of Directors



Thanks,

Jack Kirr

Petition: Oppose Mixed-Use Development Proposed at 735 South Cleveland

We the undersigned are real property owners in Highland Park who value commercial development in our neighborhood. However, we oppose the proposal for a mixed-use development at 735 South Cleveland Avenue. We ask the Highland District Council, Saint Paul Planning Commission, and Saint Paul City Council to oppose it.

Background

Edina Realty and its affiliates occupy a building and surface parking lot at 735 South Cleveland Avenue in Highland Village. On January 27, 2015, T.J.L. Development LLC proposed to the Highland District Council Community Development Committee plans to build a four-story (45 feet) mixed-use property on this site.

Why We Oppose the Proposal

- It does not reflect the scale or character of other properties in Highland Village
- It will not improve the known and documented parking constraints in Highland Village
- It will not provide adequate ingress and egress to adjacent residential streets
- It will create undue congestion in an area known by the city to be congested
- It may endanger the public safety – especially pedestrian safety – in Highland Village
- It will limit light, air, privacy and convenience of access to adjacent properties
- It will not conserve or improve local residential property values
- The spirit of the Zoning Code has been violated regarding Conditional Use Permitting

This project – in the middle of a dense, congested urban neighborhood – is too big and intensive for this site. Please join your neighbors in opposition and let them know how to sign this Petition.

- Andi Chang
- Ashley Kirr
- Bill Shaffer
- Carol Broadnax
- Caroline Little
- Catherine Kramer
- Cerise Blanchard
- Chris Zagaria
- Claudia Root
- Coleen Zuro-White
- Conor Quinn
- Dan Berg

David Gray
Deb Slee
Diane Sineps
Elissa Getsug
HJ Schmidt
Ho Youl Chang
Howard Miller
Jack Kirr
Jack Mueller
Janet Dickelman
JB Little
Jeffrey Compton
Jim Cech
John Cox
Judy Giuliani
Kate Hunt
Kathie Cech
Kathy Ordahl
Kevin Mencke
Kristen Young
Libby Wyrum
Lynn Seep
Margaret Galvin
Michael Foldes
Pam Zagaria
Paul Michenfelder
Ray Getsug
Ron Pearson
Ron Von
Susan Rafferty
Terri Shefelbine
Terry Cavanaugh
Terry Dickelman
Tim Giuliani
Tom Kramer
Tom Kreuzer
Tom Ordahl
Tony Giuliani
Tricia Pearson

Beach, Tom (CI-StPaul)

From: Drummond, Donna (CI-StPaul)
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2015 5:38 PM
To: Beach, Tom (CI-StPaul)
Subject: FW: Proposed development at 735 Cleveland Ave S

Tom – FYI.



Donna M. Drummond

Director of Planning

Planning & Economic Development

25 W. 4th St., Suite 1400

Saint Paul, MN 55102

P: 651-266-6556

donna.drummond@ci.stpaul.mn.us

The Most Livable
City in America



Making Saint Paul the Most Livable City in America

From: HOWARD MILLER [<mailto:howardjmiller@msn.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2015 4:07 PM
To: Drummond, Donna (CI-StPaul); Beaulieu, Michelle (CI-StPaul)
Cc: kate hunt; Jack Kirr
Subject: RE: Proposed development at 735 Cleveland Ave S

Dear Director Drummond:

TJL Development LLC has proposed a four-story (45 feet) mixed-use project at 735 Cleveland Avenue South in Highland Village, Saint Paul. The vast majority of neighbors living in what will be 'the shadow' of this development object to it in the strongest terms.

My wife and I moved into this neighborhood two years ago because it offered such a wonderful array of village-like characteristics: small businesses and a lot of activity while providing stable property values and neighbors who support and know each other. It is an incredibly walkable neighborhood which we, as retirees value highly.

Now, thanks to zoning changes no one can seem to explain adequately which appear to contradict our neighborhood's Comprehensive Plan, we are being asked to forego the very values which brought us here and compelled us to invest in our home on Highland Parkway. When we question this change we are told that it is legal (de jure) though it's a clear violation (de facto) of the Plans agreed upon in the past.

How anyone can say assert that this development is not going to scar this neighborhood irreparably is beyond comprehension. According to the City's Traffic Engineer, the

Cleveland Ave./Highland Parkway junction is rated a 'D' during the afternoon rush hour. What will happen when 4 or 5 businesses including a high-turnover restaurant and 53 units are literally injected into a half-block area which now houses only a sedate real estate business?

To the four entrance/egress outlets (2 alleys and two businesses) used frequently by residents will be added traffic serving the businesses and the 53 residential units. This greatly increased traffic will enter a Highland Ave. already supporting considerable traffic traveling at relatively high speeds. Highland also has unusual pedestrian traffic: customers and staff served by local businesses, school children attending 3 nearby schools and an considerable number of recreational walkers and runners.

Add to this maelstrom of traffic a geometrically increased trash pickup and store supply deliveries and the disturbances to the neighborhood skyrocket. Property values must drop as tax-paying homeowners, having had enough, leave the Village.

This is what the original Comprehensive Plan was designed to prevent. If the City abandons it the losses may not be immediate, but they will be significant within a short matter of time because the market will inevitably reflect the decline in home values.

Sincerely,

Howard Miller and Kate Hunt

2081 Highland Pkwy

St. Paul, MN 55116

Comments Opposed to 735 South Cleveland

March 15, 2015

Dear Highland District Council:

I OPPOSE the proposal for a four story mixed-use property at 735 South Cleveland (Edina Realty).

This building lacks compatibility with the existing density, height and scale of adjacent residential homes, and it is not in keeping with the expressed goals of the city's Comprehensive Plan to maintain the character of established neighborhoods.

At four stories, this building is unlikely to improve public safety or reduce parking concerns and congestion in Highland Village. It will cause a loss of privacy and reduce access to sunlight for nearby homes. It has the very real potential to reduce home values.

In summary it is hard to imagine Highland Park and Saint Paul being better off with this project.

Sincerely,

Jack Kirr
2078 Highland Parkway
(612) 412-7011 Cell

Tara Hennings
2149 Scheffer Avenue
Saint Paul

Janet Dickelman
2086 Highland Pkwy
651-698-5059

This group of people all had the same email as Jack Kirr
Diane Sineps
2155 Pinehurst Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55116

Tom Ordahl
2092 Eleanor Avenue

Kathy Ordahl
Cambria Market Rep
11000 W. 78th St.
Eden Prairie, MN 55344
Kathy.Ordahl@Cambriausa.com
612-756-3807

Terri Cavanaugh
2134 Pinehurst Ave.
St. Paul, Mn.55116

Sue Hamill
s7hamill@gmail.com
www.linkedin.com/in/suehamill/
651.308.2874

Andrew Thigpen
2099 Pinehurst Ave

Joe and Brooke Nemo
2121 Hartford Avenue
40 year resident of Highland Park, now living in the Highland Park home my grandparents purchased in 1939 (not by accident):
Diane K. Mancini

Caroline Little
2076 Eleanor

Claudia Root
2150 Pinehurst Ave

Ashley Kirr
2078 Highland Pkwy

Cerise Blanchard DuCharme
2114 Highland Parkway

Kaleigh & Tom McDonnell
2153 Highland Parkway

James DuCharme
2114 Highland Parkway,
St. Paul, MN 55116
651-698-7200

Nancy Granowski
Coldwell Banker Burnet
Highland Park Office
ngranowski@cbburnet.com
651-247-3503

Carol Broadnax
Highland Pkwy

Hi, Kathy.

I am writing to voice my opposition to the proposed four story mixed-use property at 735 South Cleveland (Edina Realty).

This building lacks compatibility with the existing density, height and scale of adjacent residential homes, and it is not in keeping with the expressed goals of the city's Comprehensive Plan to maintain the character of established neighborhoods.

At four stories, this large building creates a long list of detrimental effects including but not limited to parking, traffic congestion and circulation, pedestrian safety, privacy, and neighborhood access and convenience. It has the very real potential to reduce local home values.

Highland Park and Saint Paul are unlikely to be more livable as a result of this project.

Thank you for considering these concerns shared by many of our Highland neighbors.

Sincerely,

Katherine Drake
1849 Bayard

I OPPOSE the proposal for a four story mixed-use property at 735 South Cleveland (Edina Realty).

This building lacks compatibility with the existing density, height and scale of adjacent residential homes, and it is not in keeping with the expressed goals of the city's Comprehensive Plan to maintain the character of established neighborhoods.

At four stories, this large building creates a long list of detrimental effects including but not limited to parking, traffic congestion and circulation, pedestrian safety, privacy, and

neighborhood access and convenience. It has the very real potential to reduce local home values.

Highland Park and Saint Paul are unlikely to be more livable as a result of this project.

Let's focus on the right decisions for residents of the Village not the desires of a few developers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tom Kramer (Proud Highland Resident since 1964)

To Whom it may concern : Due to being out of town and therefore unable to attend the hearing Wednesday evening regarding the above noted project we would like to add our voice to all the others who are opposed to this project. We live at 2087 Pinehust ave. for the 43 years and are in full agreement with the facts expressed in a memo recently sent to you by Jack Kirr. Please help preserve the livability of the best neighborhood in the great city of St.Paul. Respectfully yours,
Tim & Judy Giuliani.

Hello Tia,

I and our neighbors have just received a copy of the email sent by Jack Kirr to you, Chris Tolbert and Michele Beaulieu. Mr. Kirr has done an amazing and complete job, discussing the negative aspects of the proposed development. Ray and I are COMPLETELY AGAINST the development in any manner. We hope the developer and his plans will cease and desist any form of plan for our block.

This development is a nightmare. We do not need any more apartments, neighbors, traffic, restaurants, cars etc. added to our neighborhood. We will fight this to the end, until this developer drops his plans to touch our block. The only person for this development was the gentleman living on Eleanor, and I do not consider him my neighbor.

This is OUR neighborhood. We must be able to control the safety and comfort of our homes and our block. The city must realize this development will effect people's lives. Please do all you can do to keep this development out of our neighborhood and off our block.

Thank you,

Elissa and Ray Getsug
Mid block on Highland Pkwy

Dear Councilmember Tolbert,

I have lived at 2074 Highland Parkway since 1993. My husband and I are directly west of the Edina Realty parking lot. The proposed 4-story multi-purpose building proposed for 735 Cleveland Ave S would loom over our property, and would "stick out like a sore thumb" in the neighborhood.

In 2005, the Highland District Council approved a development plan for our neighborhood that stipulates that no building can be taller than 3 stories. Do you support this plan?

I hope that you and others involved in approving the proposed site plan will take the time to walk around this neighborhood (not just drive) and get a sense for what's here. You will notice that few buildings are over one story; a few have 2, and I don't believe any (except the Wells Fargo building on Ford Parkway) have more than 2.

There are many cars, bikes, pedestrians, and buses. Traffic can get quite congested at rush hour, and a high-density development like this would greatly increase congestion at the corners of Highland Parkway and Pinehurst at Cleveland. The proposed building goes right up to the sidewalk on three sides, so the corners would be blind, making it all the more hazardous.

I hope that there are ways this project can be reduced so that it is more in keeping with the approved development plan and the spirit, safety, and welfare of the neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Debora Slee

2074 Highland Parkway
Saint Paul, MN 55116-1311
651-260-6359
dslee@tringa.com

Howard Miller and Catherine Hunt
2081 Highland Parkway
St. Paul, MN 55116

Highland District Council
Community Development Committee
1978 Ford Parkway, St. Paul, MN 55116

Dear Committee Members:

My husband and I attended the public meeting held to discuss the proposed mixed use, high density proposal for 735 South Cleveland Avenue on 1/27/15. The purpose of this letter is to state our strong opposition to this proposal.

We understand the importance of preserving and carefully planning a mix of homes, businesses, public and private spaces to create a livable community. We chose to buy a home in Highland Park because it is a vibrant, well-planned community in which residential values would remain solid and even grow.

We are not opposed to all development, we would be happy to share ideas which we feel would contribute to a safer, more secure neighborhood. The project proposed at 735 South Cleveland is wrong for so many reasons. Most notably it will:

- Significantly increase traffic congestion and parking problems, creating a hazard for pedestrians, bikers, other drivers;
- Significantly increase noise and light pollution;
- Degrade property values;
- Appear conspicuously out of proportion with a design jarringly out of keeping with the traditional surrounding neighborhood;
- Draw renters whose commitment to the neighborhood is short-term [9 studio, 33 one-bedroom, 11 two-bedroom units]

This development will clearly degrade the neighborhood. It will pose a clear threat to the safety of its citizens and is totally lacking in the qualities that make Highland Park a desirable destination for living, dining, and shopping.

The City's zoning codes, intentions, and rules on granting a Conditional Use Permit should guide your decision. The City of St. Paul Zoning Code, Article V, Section 61.501 clearly shows that this proposal does not meet the code standards.

We oppose a Conditional Use Permit requested by TJJ Development and ask that the Highland District Council oppose this proposal.

Sincerely,

To whom it may concern:

I want to let you know that I am in full support of re-developing the property at 735 South Cleveland. The existing building and land use appears to be inefficient and does not add much to the quality of life in the neighborhood. I believe this parcel of land could be put to better use.

I also want to let you know that I am strongly opposed to the proposal of a 4 story mixed use building that is currently being considered unless certain concerns are adequately and realistically addressed.

The letter below was written by a concerned neighbor who attended the community meeting to discuss this proposal and he shared it with a large number of area residents. It appears that he has spent a good deal of time investigating the various codes and intentions / objectives of these

codes. My opposition is not based on code compliance or interpretation; it is based on personal experience as cited below.

Traffic: It is almost an every day occurrence that the south bound traffic on Cleveland backs up during rush hour. I have sat thru 2 and even 3 light changes at the intersection of Highland Parkway and Cleveland trying to get from Eleanor to Highland Parkway on southbound Cleveland. I could attempt to put into writing the driving behavior that I believe contributes to the back up, but the fact is that there are a lot of cars trying to get through the area at the same time. You can personally observe the situation just about any day of the week. The proposed building plans eliminate all line of sight from Highland to Cleveland and also requires turning from Highland into the property. This may work well for cars traveling east on Highland, but I foresee backups as traffic heading west attempts to turn left into the complex. I can only assume that people that live in the apartments will be coming home from work at a similar time as the rest of the people in the neighborhood.

Parking: I have been told that the proposed building would have 53 apartments of various sizes plus various types of retail/business. I can only assume that the retail/business will have employees and customers who will need somewhere to park. I also assume that the retail/business will require or at least encourage their employees to park farther away from shops and offices to keep close spots for customers. There is no way that 109 parking spots will be adequate for this site and I believe that parking will spill over to the streets closest to the complex. I live on Highland near Finn and even today there are many times, like weekends and when there is a popular movie at the theater, when parked cars line both sides of the street. This will occur much more frequently, maybe even constantly, if the proposed plan moves forward. There are several neighbors that have multiple adult drivers in their households (I am one of them with 5 adult drivers and 5 cars) that already take up most of the parking. When there is a snow emergency we have to move our cars 2 or 3 blocks away just to find a place to park overnight. I have heard that there is the possibility of permit parking on Highland, but I do not want to pay for a permit that would allow me the right to find a parking spot on my own street when I already pay over \$6,000 in property taxes.

I am interested in hearing how the city and developer intend to adequately and realistically address the traffic and parking concerns. I am also interested in hearing alternate development proposals that do not present these same concerns, or to the same degree.

I have included the letter written by Mr. Kirr with his permission because he expresses many of the same concerns regarding traffic and parking.

Thank You

Jim and Kathie Cech

I thank you for organizing the meeting on the proposal for 735 South Cleveland on 01.27.2015. I appreciate your efforts to keep the neighborhood informed.

I'd like to start by saying how much I LOVE my Highland neighborhood and living here. I love that we can walk as a family to so many things, parks, church, library, park & rec classes, restaurants, doctors, haircuts, to visit good friends, and Highland Fest is always a highlight of our summer. In the summer, we love putting our girls (2 & 4) in the bike trailer and heading out for a family ride. When they want to ride their bikes we can walk along with them in the neighborhood or along the river. And when it's too snowy for bikes and strollers, no worries, we just take the sled. I love that my girls are learning that a car is not necessary to enjoy a dinner out or run errands to the library, bank, grocery store, etc. I hope this will led to long healthy happy lives for all of us.

Problems with the TJL Development Proposal

We are not opposed to something new going in the current Edina Realty location; we are not even opposed to mix use. However, we are **adamantly opposed** to the current proposal by TJL Development. It violates the height requirement and it simply too massive for that site with inadequate parking and traffic plans and does not fit into Highland Park's existing character at all.

I know we were told this is just a proposal and had not been submitted yet. However, the builder said they wanted to start Phase one in the spring, complete by summer then Phase 2, finishing the project by Jan 2016! As I've walked past this location the past few days I've noticed some survey markings. So we feel time is of the essence in getting our voice heard.

PARKING

There is NOT enough parking to meet code required parking! Per the Harriss Associates blueprints dated 1/6/14, there are 81 underground + 28 street level = 109; listed as requiring 64 Residential + 18 Office + 28 Retail = 110 (the blueprint shows this as incorrect sum on page A-1). Even if this 1 spot is resolved, the parking is not even close to being able to meet demand. The presentation on the 27th highlighted this, **after** the other HUGE error was pointed out. The FACT is: ONLY 28 of the 109 spots are available for public use. Assuming the residents have sufficient parking (which is optimistic as best) there are 18 "office" spots. It was mentioned Edina Realty (6,994 sq. ft.) stated they need up to 22 spots, already 4 less than the 18 available. What about the staff of the restaurant, and all other ground level retail (total of 10,727 sq. ft.)? What about guests of the residents? If they have a guest for the weekend are they going to park in one of these 28 for the entire weekend? Will these spots have time limits and/or limitations about who can park there? What if we have another bad winter and St. Paul restricts street parking? Where are delivery trucks for retail and/or residential going to go? If memory serves me the presenter had a chart that showed estimated parking demand around 80 spaces at times. So that leaves 50+ to circle our homes with eyes on open parking spots, not our children. This will be after they have driven in & out of the property, since the parking is not visible from the street, the only way to find out it's full will be to drive through. When there is no parking left in front or near our homes how will we be able host a Birthday party for our children? What about when elderly parents visit or friends with small children & babies? Are they now going to have to fight for a spot blocks away? Or if they can get a spot, will it be safe to exit a car on Highland or Pinehurst with the volume of traffic this will generate?

TRAFFIC

As for traffic, Cleveland does back up and is already busy, this will add to that issue. Beyond Cleveland my other big concern is all traffic here is being routed in & out on Highland & Pinehurst – (R4) residential streets – not Cleveland, driving across these sidewalks 24/7. Currently, there is little to no traffic from that site during the dinner hours and weekends. Traffic will begin to zip down Highland and Pinehurst to hit Creitn as an alternative to Cleveland. There are no stoplights there, as they are residential streets. Please note, I do NOT want a stoplight; I do NOT want the need for a light, these are residential streets that should not have 100's of trips added to them. Would our family bike trips still be safe? As they get older and ride on their own will the few block on Highland to get to the river trails simply be too dangerous? Will my children be safe to walk to school?

RENTAL UNITS

The fact that only about 20% of the units are 2 bedrooms, the rest being 1 bedrooms or studios will lead to the residence being a dormitory. The "generous" balconies will be looking into my neighbors' windows and backyards. This high density housing will lead into increased noise and crime, causing all of our home values to decrease.

Other Ideas

So what should be there? I don't know the answer, I'd love to hear some OTHER ideas that are within the code and fit with Highland Village.

If it's a mixed use space I'd suggest cutting off at least one story to comply with the height requirement. Eliminating the studios and changing the small apartments to be larger to appeal to young professionals looking for a future neighborhood or empty nesters looking for a way to stay in the neighborhood without house maintenance. Keep the underground parking for the residents AND their guests and have enough for ALL retail to be able to accommodate their staff. Above ground, scale down the building! Covering the entire space with building is part of what makes this out of scale with the neighborhood - scale it back and add more public parking that is obviously needed. At least double what they have in the plan? I know enough parking for all times may not be possible and parking may spill into the neighborhood. But let's make that the exception, not the rule. What about at least one entrance and/or exit on Cleveland to ease the traffic on residential zoned Highland & Pinehurst?

I thank you for your time.

Please support this neighborhood and take an oppose position to this proposal and do NOT grant a conditional use permit.

Sincerely,
Kaleigh McDonnell
2153 Highland Pkwy

From: menckek@msn.com
To: ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us
Subject: FW: Opposition to the Proposed Development at Edina Realty location - : 735 South

Cleveland Mixed Use

Date: Mon, 2 Feb 2015 08:46:22 -0600

Dear Councilman Tolbert:

I am forwarding the email below in support of my neighbors opposition of the conditional use permit for the property located at 735 South Cleveland Ave. The development doesn't fit the neighborhood and would undoubtedly exacerbate the current awful traffic and congestion problems on Cleveland & Pinehurst Avenues.

I believe Mr. Kirr's thorough email (below) outlines several reasons why the developers plan at present is a poor fit for the area and why the plans don't meet St. Paul's conditional use permit requirements. Additionally, I feel that in Highland Park variances & conditional use permits are routinely considered on a case by case basis without consideration for the cumulative impact that these exceptions have on the area overall neighborhood.

As it stands, Cleveland Ave. experiences significant traffic jams on weekdays from roughly 4 PM to 6:30 PM due to excessive traffic volume and the traffic light at Ford Parkway. If you haven't seen this or are unaware, I would respectfully suggest we are due for a new traffic study on Cleveland & Pinehurst for that matter. At last count, several years ago Pinehurst west of Cleveland Ave. was experiencing roughly 600 cars daily- I'm confident that number has risen significantly. In my opinion, we are in need of some congestion relief not a new 45' tall apartment building (with minimal parking) that spills its traffic onto Pinehurst Ave.

Sincerely,

Kevin Mencke
2135 Pinehurst Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55116

RE: 735 South Cleveland (Edina Realty)
Homeowner: 2075 Highland Parkway
Kathy,

As many of my other neighbors have all ready done, I am putting forth my concerns about the preliminary (proposed) plans for the four story mixed use (commercial and residential) building at 735 South Cleveland (Edina Realty). As we all know, the owner of the property and the development team have the right to build a structure on their property that is within code and is potentially profitable to the owner. The key here is that as long as it is within code. The request for a conditional use permit seems detrimental to the integrity of the neighborhood. The city itself has raised these concerns before when discussing such developments. In notes from the Neighborhood Planning Committee, on letterhead from Barbara A. Wencl, Chair (Planning Commission) to the Planning Commission regarding the District 11 Hamline Midway Mixed-Use Corridors 30-Acre Zoning Study, dated December 5, 2014, the commission states, "Commercial uses are generally relatively limited along Residential Corridors and in Established

Neighborhoods. Where commercial uses do exist, underlying zoning should support the continuance of uses – and establishment of new uses on existing commercial sites – that are generally **compatible with the surrounding neighborhood** and provide locally – consumer goods and services. **Zoning should also reflect building scale and form and site design requirements consistent with the character of the surrounding neighborhoods.**” I believe that granting a conditional use permit from the City goes against the commentary noted above. There are no four story buildings within a number of blocks of Highland Parkway and Cleveland Avenue. I personally think that a building of this size would stick out like a sore thumb and would set some poor precedence for future development of this small T2 corridor.

Additionally, I have significant concerns in regards to how the preliminary proposal will affect the entire neighborhood. These concerns are, but not limited to, the following: lack of enough on-site tenant parking (both residential, which is reserved, and commercial), overflow parking ending up on Pinehurst/Highland Parkway/Eleanor/Finn/etc., employee parking for workers in proposed retail businesses, the change of traffic patterns – where now the traffic would ONLY enter and exit from Pinehurst Avenue and Highland Parkway (currently, entering and exiting on Cleveland Avenue assists in traffic management on Pinehurst Avenue and Highland Parkway), overall increased sound from balconies and the addition of 53 units, the fact that 42 of the 53 units are less than 1000 sq. ft. – which may not attract “young professionals” and “older” tenants as the architect expressed in the January 27, 2015 meeting, potential for increased crime, and again the sheer size of the building.

Finally, I would like to add that when US Bank and Langford Chiropractic decided to upgrade their separate facilities (one being right next to my house) one of the good things about the projects was that they kept the neighborhood in mind. The building fits the neighborhood. Each business functioning within the facility has set hours that allow the business to do its thing during the day and the neighborhood to be a neighborhood after hours. This preliminary proposal does the completely opposite. The neighborhood would now be active much later in the day and earlier in the morning. Do we really want to corrupt this pocket of Highland Park when we truly do not know how any development on the old Ford Plant property, the West 7th development, and the old US Bank empty lot will impact the area as a whole? We all certainly know that currently we have limited traffic patterns from the North to the South when attempting to cross Ford Parkway (Mississippi Blvd, Cretin Avenue, and Cleveland Avenue). The integrity of our neighborhood is really in play over the coming months/years. It really makes me think about moving after close to 23 years of living in the neighborhood (23 years in April).

Thank you for your consideration and for listening to the neighborhood concerns,

Matt Mead

C: 651-261-6320

Dear Kathy Carruth:

This is to let you know that I am very opposed to the 735 South Cleveland Project, as currently conceived. This would be very near my street. I moved

into the Highland Park neighborhood in 2007 in part because I was told that a Highland Park plan that had been passed meant that no buildings would go above 3 stories. This is part of the charm and character of Highland and its neighborhoods. We're always losing some of that every year -- let's not lose it all!

I hope that you will oppose this project.

Sincerely,
Nancy Hanway
2099 Hartford Ave
Saint Paul, MN 55116

Dear Highland Development Committee,

I arrived at the Jan. 27th meeting with only two words ruminating in my mind..."Corporate Greed". But to my pleasant surprise, the participants' overwhelming voiced disapproval of the project, said it for me, and from many different vantage points. The probable increase in crime, traffic congestion, noise, light, loss of residential property value for those near by, and increased parking problems which are already quite challenging and disappointing.

My wife and I moved here 27 years ago and have loved the peace and relative quiet of the neighborhood back then.

As Jack at the meeting stated, "You've missed your chance to build a parking ramp" that has been so sorely needed, (such as the one on Victoria and Grand.). He also stated he wants to protect his neighborhood from "a dumb Idea". I stand with him and the rest of the neighbors on this. I was so PROUD of MY NEIGHBORS who shared so eloquently and respectfully.

Thanks for hearing us!

Ron Von
2094 Pinehurst Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55116
rvon2094@USFamily.net

Hello, my name is Tom Sybrant and I live on Pinehurst Avenue in St. Paul. I just received notice of this proposal and did some research into the plans. I have MANY concerns with this project. As a home owner in Highland Village, I am most concerned over the direction our city is going to take when it comes to projects such as the one, which may be proposed. Here is my list of concerns:

1. The size of this is frightening. Allowing a 45 foot apartment in our village would look completely out of place, both visually and historically. Just think about the residents living right behind this building. In addition, there is nothing historic or appealing to this design. It is the same old design being repeated all over the cities. It just doesn't fit the space, maybe better for the suburbs but not here.
2. Having a combination of 3-4 large tenants and 55 apartments would cause SIGNIFiCANT traffic issues in an area that is already stretched to its limit. There is no way a development like this one can contain all of its customers and tenants with the parking proposed. This means, our streets would see a large increase of parking and traffic. The congestion would be unbearable.

3. What kind of Highland Village do we want? It sounds like this developer uses tenants such as Mattress Giant, Five Guys restaurants ect. The same tenants seen all over the cities. Highland deserves so much better. We need a vision to keep Highland unique!

4. Most people are just learning about this through the Villager, with a meeting proposed this same week. It is feeling rushed. Hmm.

5. Please take my concerns seriously. Many of my neighbors on Pinehurst and HP are just finding out about this and are very CONCERNED.

Thank you
Tom Sybrant

I would like to express my opinion about the four story mixed-use property being proposal at 735 South Cleveland (Edina Realty).

I am OPPOSE the proposal as currently designed for two principle reasons:

1. At four stories, the building lacks compatibility with the existing density, height and scale of adjacent residential homes and businesses. If the height could be lowered to be more consistent with the other building in the area, the proposal would be more acceptable.
2. Along Highland the building setback is inconsistent with all the other commercial building and the residential buildings on Highland. The other commercial buildings have landscaping and parking at the corner of Highland and Cleveland and this proposal will be discordant with all other buildings in that area. If the building could be constructed with a setback that is required for the residential building along Highland, the proposal would be more acceptable. This would also alleviate other concerns with parking and congestion.

So, in summary I oppose the proposal as currently designated and would support the proposal if:

- The building were limited to three stories
- The Setback along Highland Parkway is consistent with the residential setback requirements for Highland Parkway.

Thank you for your consideration.

Michael Leimbach
2165 Highland Parkway
St. Paul, MN 55116
651-698-2133

Dear Highland District Council,

I have lived and raised a family in Highland Park, Saint Paul for the last 20 years. I love my neighborhood! Through out this time, I have watched it change into the village it is today. However, I do not feel the building being proposed at 735 South Cleveland supports the neighborhood. I am open to change for this lot, but this is not the correct change.

I OPPOSE the proposal for a four story mixed-use property at 735 South Cleveland (Edina Realty).

This building lacks compatibility with the existing density, height and scale of adjacent residential homes. It is not in keeping with the expressed goals of the city's Comprehensive Plan to maintain the character of established neighborhoods.

At four stories, this large building creates a long list of detrimental effects including but not limited to parking, traffic congestion and circulation, pedestrian safety, privacy, and neighborhood access and convenience. It has the very real potential to reduce local home values.

Highland Park and Saint Paul are unlikely to be more livable as a result of this project.

*Thank you,
Kari Chase
2161 Highland Parkway
Saint Paul, MN*

March 9, 2015

Donna Drummond
Director of Planning
Department of Planning and Zoning
City of Saint Paul

Jack Kirr
2078 Highland Parkway
(612) 412-7011 Cell
jpkirr@gmail.com

Re: Site Plan Review 150016950000SR Highland Village Mixed-Use – Dynamic Shadow Summary

Dear Donna:


A Dynamic Shadow Study has been done by neighbors near the proposed development at 735 South Cleveland Ave. This study *quantifies* the impact, by day, of shadows on the home at 2074 Highland Pkwy.

Shadows from the proposed building will fall on 2074 Highland Parkway for **more than four hours every single day**, for a cumulative average of **34%** of every daylight hour in the year. In the winter months this property will be in shadows for nearly **50%** of all daylight hours. Other nearby properties will also suffer from a significant diminution of light.

This loss of sunlight conflicts not only with the Zoning Code to ensure and preserve access to light, but it also conflicts with the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan (Policy LU-3.19), the Metropolitan Land Planning Act (Minnesota 473.859 Subd 2b) as administered by the Met Council, as well as Minnesota statutes 394.25 Subd 2 and 394.27 Subd 7.

This size and shape of this project does not preserve access to light that has existed for more than 20 years. It also creates many other very serious issues, including but not limited to loss of privacy, loss of convenience of access to property, undue congestion, potentially riskier public safety (especially with more pronounced shadows), and it will not conserve or improve our property values. We neighbors will be unreasonably affected by this building.

Respectfully submitted,



cc: Chris Tolbert, Kathy Carruth, Tom Beach, Michelle Beaulieu

15-011-695
Highland Village

Kevin Gallatin
1822 Highland Parkway
Saint Paul, MN 55116
April 4, 2015

Zoning Committee of the Saint Paul Planning Commission

Dear Committee Members:

I write to you in support of the planned development at 735 South Cleveland in Highland Park. The site is currently underutilized and adds very little to the community. As designed the new development will not only replace the existing use, but will add retail and restaurant options as well as at least 54 new taxpayers who will patronize the existing businesses in Highland Park. My family of 5 lives on one of the impacted streets and we welcome the additional offerings in our highly walkable neighborhood. It's my belief that density in this location is exactly what Highland needs to secure a strong retail base on Cleveland prior to the profound changes coming with the development of the Ford Site.

I'm aware that many of the immediate neighbors are opposed to this project. I understand their concerns about the change, but I feel most of the issues they are concerned about can be addressed through small, intentional adjustments to the site plan. I also believe that opposition to the development is based on invalid comparisons to adjacent commercial properties, most of which do not conform to the current zoning and could not be built today.

I've heard many concerns about traffic. The site is directly on the Metro Transit 134 express to downtown Minneapolis and is just one block from the new A-Line Bus Rapid Transit route, with connections to the Metro Blue and Green lines. These routes provide excellent access to all of the major employment nodes and destinations in the region. Coupled with ample bike parking and the excellent retail and professional business offerings in Highland Village, it's hard to imagine a better site to minimize auto trip creation.

Sincerely,

Kevin Gallatin

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Beach, Tom (CI-StPaul)

From: Drummond, Donna (CI-StPaul)
Sent: Monday, March 09, 2015 2:54 PM
To: Beach, Tom (CI-StPaul)
Cc: Beaulieu, Michelle (CI-StPaul); Clapp-Smith, Merritt (CI-StPaul)
Subject: FW: 735 Cleveland

Hi Tom – FYI. Not sure who all she sent this to. Donna



Donna M. Drummond
Director of Planning
Planning & Economic Development
25 W. 4th St., Suite 1400
Saint Paul, MN 55102
P: 651-266-6556
donna.drummond@ci.stpaul.mn.us

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From: JUDY.BROWNE@spps.org [mailto:JUDY.BROWNE@spps.org]
Sent: Monday, March 09, 2015 9:35 AM
To: Drummond, Donna (CI-StPaul)
Subject:

I do not oppose the plans for 735 Cleveland Avenue. I think it is a good use of the property.

Judy Browne
Horace Mann School
651.293.8965
651.293.8985 (fax)

Hey Kathy -

I wasn't able to make the meeting about 735 S. Cleveland last week (or 2 weeks ago?), but wanted to quickly write to you to express my support for it after reading about it in the Villager. In my humble opinion, there are few things more important to the health of a neighborhood than creating a vibrant core.

The new mixed-use Edina Realty redevelopment (at 735 S. Cleveland Ave) will add much needed neighborhood retail and office space, and provide more housing options for residents. And, it is essential that we support development that adds housing withing walking distances to our neighborhood centers and along transit lines. In fact, there are few places in the neighborhood better suited for such a development than on this particular site.

In addition to boosting the city's property tax rolls, the developer has done a respectful job of blending the building into the neighborhood, including respectful rear setbacks and hiding parking. These are precisely the types of developments we need to be encouraging.

Thanks Kathy. Please feel free to share my e-mail with HDC members / decision-makers.

Kind regards -Nathaniel Hood

PS. I'm a (new-ish) resident of Highland (since 2011), but have mostly been inactive in neighborhood meetings/politics. Background: I work for an organization Strong Towns (www.strongtowns.org), which deals with these types of urban planning issues.

Nathaniel Hood
Highland Park, St. Paul
nmhood@gmail.com
(612) 237 - 7614

Hi -
just sending this in in case I can't make it to tonight's meeting. I have another commitment that will keep me until 7:45pm

I am generally in favor of the proposed mixed use development at 735 S Cleveland.
There are some aesthetic and environmental performance ideas I would like addressed but will try to deliver those concerns in person.

Kevin Flynn
2199 Pinehurst Ave
Saint Paul, MN 55116

Hi HDC,

In relation to the 735 South Cleveland development, I would like to express my support for this type of development in Highland Park. I think these type of developments will ensure vibrancy and continued investment in the area for years to come.

However, as others may have already expressed, I'm a bit concerned about the height variance request. As I understand it, the current height is 35', and the developer is proposing a 45' building, which is a **28.5%** percent increase (seems pretty significant). Looking at the surrounding buildings, this will make the proposed building significantly taller than the surrounding buildings and it's height might clash with existing surroundings. While I encourage this type of development (mixed used / dense), the variance height request seems to be a bit excessive.

Ideally, the builder could move forward with the project and stay within the current height variance (35'). However, I would not object if the variance request was only 5' (or 15% increase over current limit).

Again, I'm excited to see this type of development here, and hope that the new residents and possible new tenants (stores) bring new enthusiasm and energy to our area.

Best,

Carlos R. Cruz
Eleanor Avenue, 55116

Tia,
Thank you for sharing this valuable information.

John and I feel fortunate to know you are representing our neighborhood, and leading the HDC as Board President. We appreciate the time, energy and commitment it takes to do this volunteer community service work.

Change is inevitable, and necessary, to maintain Highland Park as a vibrant and active community. We will remain open-minded as new development is proposed; knowing HDC is ready to listen to our concerns and communicate them to the appropriate City decision makers.

Thank you, Tia, for all you do to support our Highland Park community!

Colleen Zuro-White
2095 Pinehurst Avenue

