

APC 21-1 Ward 4 Public Comments

Hi Councilwoman Jalali,

I am a constituent living at 1536 Hewitt Ave, I wanted to contact you regarding a vote on April 7th concerning developer Alatus and the Wilder Foundation.

I urge you to vote against allowing Alatus to develop that property and instead move forward with a proposal for some sort of low-income housing and rent-controlled project instead to better support the Midway and the current crisis unhoused folks continue to face.

Thank you for your time,

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Jack Fischer '22

Please vote "no" April 7 on the Alatus proposal

Hi, Mitra. St. Paul needs to better for its residents who need very affordable housing.

Best wishes,

Tom Kottke

Hello, my name is April and I live in Ward 4 in the Midway neighborhood. I urge ALL Councilmembers to vote NO on the Alatus appeal on the Lexington Station Apartments.

Because community members, like me, are being denied the opportunity to testify on at the council meeting on Wednesday, I am writing to share that I am deeply troubled by the degree to which the city has stifled public input on a project that we know will raise rents, increase property values and push low-wealth and BIPOC residents out of communities they have called home for decades.

Denying the developer's appeal should not be complicated. This project is clearly contradictory to or in violation of :

- years of community input from directly impacted residents
 - the city's 2040 Comprehensive Plan
 - the Lexington Area Station Plan
 - the city's zoning code
 - and the city council's own commitments to affordable and equitable housing.
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- As you know, the 2040 Comprehensive Plan emphasizes that "How Saint Paul grows, develops and invests over the next 20 years must be done in a way that reduces racial disparities." Equity and opportunity is included as its first core value, and is integrated throughout the plan, including a commitment to "Fair and equitable access to housing for all city residents; and improved access to affordable housing."
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- Last month the Planning Commission voted NO on the Lexington Station Apartments site plan because it actively increases racial inequities — which is in direct and fundamental conflict with the Comp Plan. Most significantly, Alatus has made no written commitment around affordable housing and has only suggested it would provide units at 60% AMI — a level that FAR exceeds what is actually affordable to area residents and renters most in need of housing.
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- This project violates critical aspects of the Lexington Station Area Plan. While the plan requires that adjacent district councils "review development applications coming forward... and meet with residents, institutions, business and property owners to discuss and document evolving community concerns and objectives for new development," the voices of Frogtown Neighborhood Association and Summit University Planning Council have been ignored and actively excluded in this process.

- This project violates the T district design standards by making no attempt to transition the large building to adjacent lower density neighborhoods, or to preserve and extend an interconnected street network, as required by §66.343(b) of the city's zoning code.

- For years, city council members have passed resolutions and made specific commitments to increase affordable housing for those earning 30-50% of area median income; address and prevent displacement that is pushing renters out of their home; and advance opportunities for land trusts, cooperatives and other forms of community ownership. This development is a critical moment to follow-through on those commitments — or be complicit in further entrenching racial and housing injustice in St Paul.

The community has voiced its strong opposition, the Planning Commission has provided strong leadership, and lawyers have shared clear legal precedent to reject this development. I urge you to VOTE NO on the Alatus appeal on the Lexington Station Apartments.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent issue.

Sincerely,

April

Dear Mitra

As your constituent, a proud property tax payer, and someone who is deeply concerned about the lack of deeply affordable housing in St Paul — and someone who was, like you, deeply moved by the testimony of homeless families at the City Council in Spring 2019 — I urge you to vote no on the Alatus Appeal to build Lexington Station Apartments.

The Alatus building plan includes no truly affordable units for renters at 30% of AMI or less, and so is in violation of the city 2040 plan and the council's long advocacy for homes for all, especially for families with children. New sources of federal funding from the Biden administration should be used to subsidize a better residential building project, one that doesn't displace St Paul's less affluent working families. As a MICAH member, I know MICAH advises that 20% of the units in new building projects should be affordable to those at 20% of AMI and another 30% of units affordable to those at 30% of AMI. And I urge that most of those units in the Lexington project be 3 BR units to house families with children: the future of our city.

Thank you for opposing this building proposal.

Elaine Tarone

Dear Mitra Jalali,

I was living in Midway area, on Seminary Ave., until I moved to Maplewood to live with my son. I would encourage the council to vote no on the Alatus Appeal. The area along the Green Line really needs to focus on lower income housing to be close to transportation. It feels like the route 94 Issue all over again. Now we're trying to make up for the mistakes of that decision. Let's keep this population upper most in our minds when making choices in renewal and change.

Mary Myers

Dear Councilmember Jalali and Mayor Carter.

Please VOTE NO on the Alatus appeal and their completely inequitable and code-violating development at Lexington and University Avenue. As a member of Hamline Midway, this project flies in the face of so many initiatives that make me proud to be a member of St. Paul. **Please vote NO.**

As public voice is being stifled around this at the next City Council meeting, please take my video testimony (attached as a link to a google drive file) and include it on the public record.

Thank You-

Tyler Olsen

1194 W Seminary Ave, St Paul, MN 55104