

Regarding the denial of three variance requests for a 5-story building at 1769 Grand Avenue:

We heartily agree with the decision to deny the appeal for such such a tall building on the site, including the other two variants requested.

My wife and I live just a block away from the property and we feel the proposed building would be much too tall!

Thank you for turning down the applicant's request!

Sincerely,
Rocky Mjos and Peggy Larson
1797 Lincoln Avenue
St Paul, MN 55105

Dear Mayor Carter, Councilmember Noecker, and Members of the St. Paul City Council,

I am a renter and a constituent living in Ward 2 and I support the appeal made by Good Timing LLC for the requested variances at 1769 Grand Avenue. This progressive development will serve as a positive catalyst for future developments arising from the 2040 Comprehensive Plan and contribute to our City in the following ways:

- Most rental-living options in St. Paul consist of vintage apartments (often unrenovated) with large living/dining room areas and tiny kitchens, or expensive studio/1-bedroom flats in a downtown high-rise. There are few options in between for those who prefer the village neighborhood setting and enjoy modern finishes found in newer buildings. The multi-level floorplans of this development are extremely unique and provide an entirely new rental option not currently found in St. Paul. We need to support this project because it brings needed housing choice and diversity to our City.
- The project adds density to a transit corridor. Mitigating vehicle traffic congestion has many benefits: reduces carbon emissions, noise pollution, and reduces stress by creating a more enjoyable pedestrian experience. However, it also requires thoughtful and systematic city planning, hence the formation of designated transit corridors. As a city, we need to respect long term growth by concentrating density near existing and planned transit.
- The development incorporates solar panels. Despite the proven long-term benefits, few apartment owners incorporate solar. In this regard, this project will serve as a proof of concept for future sustainably-oriented development. If our City wants to work towards the sustainably goals outlined in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan and see the private sector incorporate sustainable features – especially when it is not the most cost effective option – then we need to support this proof of concept and provide our residents with a new sustainably-oriented rental option.

This project provides a unique housing option compared to what currently exists in St. Paul: multilevel floor plans, land-efficient design, year-round bike storage, solar panels, and other green features. The project is located in the perfect area for its purpose, size, and aesthetic. I believe it will be a great addition to this area, so I ask you to join me in supporting the appeal of the property owner. This project embodies the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, and now is the time to enact that Plan. Please allow the variances as proposed.

Mayor Carter and CM Noecker – I am grateful for your continued efforts to increase St. Paul’s livability.

Thank you,

Chad Fahning
401 Sibley St.
St. Paul, MN 55101

DONOHUE McKENNEY, Ltd.

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Chad McKenney
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May 20, 2020

St. Paul City Council

Via Email:

Matt.Privratsky@ci.stpaul.mn.us

Matthew.Graybar@ci.stpaul.mn.us

Contact-Council@ci.stpaul.mn.us

CouncilHearing@ci.stpaul.mn.us

RE: 1769 Grand Avenue Variances (ABZA 20-2)

Dear Council Member Jalali and Members of the St. Paul City Council:

I am writing to support the appeal and proposed variances for the 1769 Grand Avenue development as a

Ward 4 property owner and University of St. Thomas alumnus.

• **Density (Variance):** The proposed density of 50 units/acre is appropriate based on the 2040 land

use guidance and the transit-oriented nature of this development. The project represents 1.4 FAR, which is within the proposed guidance (1.5 FAR) of the RM2 zoning currently under study by the

planning department. For these reasons, I believe the density of this project is a nonissue.

• **Setback (Variance):** The project proposes a side yard setback consistent with the neighboring properties. Personally, I think a 9’ setback as required by a strict enforcement of the zoning code

would result in disproportionate spacing between buildings and cause negative/unattractive sightlines. Furthermore, denying this variance will lead to a tall, very narrow-looking structure.

• **Parking (Variance):** I'm not an architect, but it appears the developer is providing the maximum

parking possible given the constraints of the lot which should necessitate a variance. I also believe

the City's parking minimums are outdated and a parking ratio of 1 car per 1 unit is reasonable

considering the walkability of the site and its location to public transit.

• **Scale:** The scale of the building should be of little importance when considering the above variances because the project complies with the City's lot coverage dimensional standards.

• **Height:** RM2 zoning allows for 50' in height, and this project complies with that requirement. The

numerous comments on height used to oppose the project should not be considered.

As a former St. Thomas student and current owner of St. Thomas student rental properties, I am disheartened that some of my fellow community members are using anti-student rhetoric to attack this

project and the developer. Macalester-Groveland is a thriving community because of the students, faculty,

staff, and alumni that work and live in this neighborhood. I ask you to grant the appeal and the variances

requested because this project will help balance the needs of our growing neighborhood by providing

homes to the aforementioned stakeholders. Moreover, this development will promote continued prosperity

for the community as a whole.

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Sincerely,

DONOHUE McKENNEY LTD.

Chad McKenney

CM:lad

To Whom it May Concern: I am a St. Paul resident writing in regards to the above referenced development proposal (<https://shinglecreekcapital.com/1769-grand-ave>). I was born and raised in Highland Park and am now raising my family near the Highland Golf Course in a house that we purchased in 2011. Throughout my lifetime the Grand Avenue corridor has always been a vibrant part of St. Paul and many of us that call this area home have been proud of the way in which local businesses along Grand Avenue have been able to thrive. In recent years it appears as though businesses along this corridor have suffered, perhaps as they try to shoulder the burden of increased tax obligations. Today I am saddened to see an increase vacant store fronts and dilapidated houses along Grand Avenue, many of which were vacated prior to Covid-19. I believe that forward thinking projects such as the proposed development at 1769 Grand should be more prevalent as the redevelopment of this site will not only have a positive impact on the vibrancy of our proud corridor but also be beneficial to the city in terms of increased revenue through property taxes. While many properties along this corridor are eclectic, many

other are becoming functionally obsolete, and for that reason I am in favor of development projects such as the proposal at 1769 Grand.

Mike Vannelli

RE: Appeal of BZA's Decision for 1769 Grand Avenue

Dear Councilmember Thao, Councilmember Noecker, Councilmember Tolbert, Councilmember Jalali, and Members of the St. Paul City Council,

I am writing to support the developer's appeal of this project because it will bolster Grand Avenue businesses and be an improvement to this stretch of Grand Ave.

As a local business owner, myself, I welcome greater density on commercial corridors such as Grand Ave. Businesses big and small need customers. Every business relies heavily on local demand, especially in today's challenging environment. Small businesses are the lifeblood of St. Paul's beloved culture and vibrancy.

This project is located within a block of several restaurants, a movie theater, a florist, a bank, a dentist, an orthodontist, a dog daycare, a tailor, a salon, a barber, a butcher, two hardware stores, two cafés, a gift shop, an art supply store, and two apparel retailers. Of course, these new neighbors will venture much further than just their block and will be new customers to many businesses on Grand Ave and beyond

Adding density along Grand Avenue will ensure the long-term viability of the small businesses we cherish. For this reason, I urge you to allow this development as proposed and support the reinvestment it brings to our City.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin DeGezelle

611 Grand Ave

St. Paul, MN 55102

Ward 1 Property Owner

Ward 2 Business Owner

Ward 3 Property Owner

Ward 4 Property Owner

TO: Councilmember Amy Brendmoen, President
Councilmember Dai Thao
Councilmember Rebeca Noecker
Councilmember Chris Tolbert
Councilmember Mitra Jalali
Councilmember Nelsie Yang
Councilmember Jane Prince

FROM: All of the current neighbors on the south side of Summit Avenue: Fairview to Wheeler

DATE: May 22, 2020

RE: Proposed Development: 1769 Grand Avenue
Applicant: Good Timing, LLC

We have listed all of our names, home addresses, and email addresses below. Due to the state order to shelter in place, we were unable to get our signatures--the home owners. However, we have been in continuous contact through telephone, texts, and emails. The fourteen of us have a copy of this statement.

Suzi Scott	1740 Summit Avenue	suziscott@comcast.net
DanScott	1740 Summit Avenue	Dan.Scott@stinson.com
Melinda Aljabry	1750 Summit Avenue	Melinda.aljabry@gmail.com
Naji Aljabry	1750 Summit Avenue	
Debra Asplund	1760 Summit Avenue	Dasplund99@yahoo.com
Paul Patratzik	1760 Summit Avenue	Padratzik@hotmail.com
Anne Geisser	1770 Summit Avenue	ageisser@umn.edu
Cathy Messina	1774 Summit Avenue	Chow225@me.com
Rick Messina	1774 Summit Avenue	
Mari Ampe	1788 Summit Avenue	Mari.ampe@gmail.com
Bob Schestak	1788 Summit Avenue	
Linda Redenbaugh	1812 Summit Avenue	laredenbaugh@outlook.com
Rob Redenbaugh	1812 Summit Avenue	robredenbaugh@yahoo.com
Bill Long	1818 Summit Avenue	billlong@acm.org

We appreciate the opportunity to present our position on this proposed project to build a 50 foot, 5-story multi-plex on the site where a duplex has been standing and lived in since 1916.

We are very concerned about this multi-plex structure that has been proposed and began discussing it when we first received notice about it from the applicant Lucas Wiborg. We had hoped to present our observations, opinion and questions to the District Council at the Housing and Land Use Committee after submitting our written comments to the members of the Committee. We expected that it would be the basis for a discussion after the property owner presented his plan and answered questions from the Committee. Unfortunately, that did not happen. This hearing was conducted through Zoom so the format was awkward and cannot adequately replicate a public hearing. There were at least six

neighbors present to speak if asked. After the Committee members finished their questioning of the applicant, we thought those of us who had submitted opposing views would then be asked to speak and take questions from the Committee which is the usual format for this type of meeting. That did not happen. In fact, no mention was ever made of the fact that they had received three letters with serious questions and doubts about this proposal. One of our neighbors was recognized to speak but there was no follow up to his comments. We do not feel that the Committee ever heard our concerns. It was an unfortunate experience.

However, we did participate in the Board of Zoning Appeals hearing. We submitted our written comments and were able to connect via the phone set up to voice our concerns. And our position to deny the variances was the position of the BZA with a 6-1 vote. We find that there was no error in their findings.

Thank you for reading our comments, which follow, and giving us your consideration. If you would like additional information or have any questions, please contact us.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: 1769 GRAND AVENUE
CITY COUNCIL HEARING—MAY 27,2020

We are the residents who live on the south side of Summit Avenue on the block from Fairview to Wheeler. We share the alley with the north side of Grand Avenue where redevelopment is proposed for the duplex at 1769 Grand built in 1916.

Grand Avenue is a very important part of our daily living and we know it is a very special place with a unique history. We understand that every block tells its own story and the avenue as a whole has evolved with a mixture of single family homes, duplexes, multi-family units, and commerce (or retail and offices). We believe that its strength and endurance rests in its individuality by blocks. Therefore, this proposed development should be viewed and assessed as to how it fits into this block in addition to the legal requirements of the City's plan.

Concerning the latter, we are concerned about the process and approach taken by the City when considering any variance request, including those at issue in the appeal. Specifically, we respectfully

encourage the City Council to apply its zoning laws in an even-handed manner, without fear or favor to interests or arguments that deviate from the plain language of the laws. Here, there is no factual or legal basis for the City to ignore its code or for it to grant the requested variances due to “practical difficulty,” “plight,” or any other basis.

The project also needs to be reviewed in the context of its proper zoning code of RM2 which, we believe, is not the proper zoning for Grand Avenue as a whole and this block specifically and the rather massive proposed structure. The categories are RM1—low-density multiple residential district; RM2—medium-density multiple family residential district; RM3—high density multiple family residential district. We believe a 5-story/6 level building should be relegated to RM3 districts. It is too large for RM2, especially on this block of Grand. This zoning code should require some type of a conditional use permit for a building of this size if it remains classified as an RM2.

A significant part of our concerns about the development is that this site is in the middle of the block. This means that this development is defined as infill housing. The objective of infill housing is to fit into the block it wants to join not to disrupt it. The proposed building is not consistent with the look of this block. It is very clear in reading the zoning code and the District’s own plans as it pertains to infill housing that any new development should conform and fit into its current character. Yet it is the proposed building that will drastically change both the livability and the look and feel of this block on Grand Avenue....and not in a good way.

Every apartment and multi-plex on both sides (north and south) of this block are 2 to 3-stories in height. There are no structures anywhere in the area that are higher than 3-stories. The rest of the north side of the block has been established for 50 years and the duplex has been part of this neighborhood since 1916.

The duplex sits on the smallest parcel of land on this block. That means that this proposed project—the biggest structure--will be sitting on the smallest parcel on the block. This lot barely meets the minimum requirements for a multi-plex yet the request is to build the tallest building in the zoning code—a 5-story (50 foot) multi-plex to house 43 bedrooms with a mix of 3 and 4 bedroom apartments. The design and lay-out of the 4th and 5th floors definitely suggest a dorm or student housing. Further,

the developer has stated that he will build a solar roof which will add another 3 feet to the building's height.

It is important to emphasize that the lot size is 50 ft x 201 ft. The proposed building is 38 ft wide and 90 ft deep leaving just 12 ft in total for a side yard setback that the owner requests be split to 6 ft between each building. Its footprint is entirely too large for the space bringing the new structure literally face to face with the apartment complexes on both sides. Its design and size overwhelm and harm the two apartment buildings to its east and west.

Further, its height will cast shadows over the apartments and houses across the alley on Summit Avenue so that they will not see sun during the day. (The photographs that were submitted with the proposal show this to be true.)

The proposal states that it will house 12 units. However, that is not the number to be used in calculations for such items as parking. Each of the 12 units will be comprised of 3 to 4 bedrooms making for a total of 43 bedrooms. That is far more than any of the other apartments on the block because those offer 1 and 2 bedroom units. Based on the design of the individual units, more than one person could be sleeping per room thereby increasing the occupancy to over 43. This area has colleges nearby so the likelihood is that students will be the major tenants as is reflected in the other apartments on the block.

We believe what is underlying all of these zoning changes with less stringent requirements and assessments is the issue of density. The new formulas being used are increasing density in smaller spaces and lowering requirements for other specific situations. It appears that there are more zoning codes allowing more people in less space. Everyone has a different definition of density. Neighborhoods define density based on their special and unique characteristics. Therefore, perhaps, such issues should be considered when creating general zoning codes city wide and allow for special cases.

Clearly, parking is a major and serious issue in this neighborhood. The rationale for a request of a variance is not acceptable. It needs to be stressed that the equation for assessing parking requirements are the 43 bedrooms not the 12 units as the developer suggests. We question the new

formula for lowering the number of parking spots required. Is the request for two variances a result of a man-made problem? Is there a more viable proposal that legally aligns with the City's plan?

As a duplex, only two spots were required and provided in the back of the house. This is already a heavily trafficked area with four apartment complexes providing rear parking requiring alley access which is shared with the homes on Summit Avenue. Overflow parking will be on Grand Avenue where the new tenants will have to compete with tenants from all of the apartments on both the north and south sides of Grand. A smaller development would require less parking. We do not support any variances for additional parking. Whatever is built must be designed so that all required parking is on the site.

With the current challenges we have with parking in the winter, where are all of these extra cars going to park during snow emergencies? How will the snow in the parking lot be handled? Where will it go? It cannot be plowed into the alley.

Most of the residents living in these apartments now tend to be students. Most of these students have cars. The fact that a bus runs on Grand does not eliminate the fact that students want to have their own vehicles. This is a reality as evidenced by the demographic of the college students within the 5-block radius.

In addition, all of us who live on the south side of Summit Avenue hear cars at all hours, car alarms, loud music, deal with trash issues. There are a lot of students already living in the apartments so there is always a great deal of foot traffic and bikers. There is a history of trespassing on private property, a lack of respect that many students bring to the neighborhood knowing that they are in temporary spaces.

There is also a lack of green space. In fact, the only open space on the north side of Grand are the trees and green space on that lot. Another issue that will require study is the matter of water management. There is already a problem with overflow from the alley onto Fairview. It is thought that adding another concrete parking area, along with eliminating the trees and grass will only make the matter worse. These issues should be considered when making a change from a duplex which usually housed 5-6 people to a facility with 43 bedrooms with a minimum of 43 people.

On April 27, this development proposal was heard by the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) and they agreed with our position by a vote of 6-1 to deny this project. BZA did not err when it made its ruling. During the discussion other findings for denial were noted.

One of our statements delivered at the hearing via telephone (in addition to our written statement) was based on the six required findings for granting a variance which we then reviewed with what was written in the District Council's Comprehensive Plan.

No. 2 The variance is consistent with the comprehensive plan

In the sections on land use and housing from their Comp Plan this applicant's proposal really isn't consistent with its policy.

In their housing section, the District Council says any new construction is to preserve the traditional aesthetic appearance and appeal of the neighborhood with appropriate scale and mass to the surrounding buildings.

To preserve the well-kept traditional feel and scale of the neighborhood.

While they encourage higher density (taller) development at the intersections of mixed-use corridors, they support lower density (shorter) development at mid-block in these corridors.

These words from their Comp Plan indicate support for new and improved development but with conditions that conform and enhance the neighborhood. This proposal does not do this. And very clearly, the proposed development is at mid-block.

No. 3 Applicant has established that there are practical difficulties in complying with the provision and that the property owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by the provision.

No. 4 The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner.

No. 6 The variance will not alter the essential character of the surrounding area.

The plight of this landowner has been created by himself. He bought this property with a duplex on it that has been there since 1916. Now he claims it can't be repaired and that in its place he must have a 50 foot, 5 story building that is entirely too large for the space of this lot which is 50 feet wide by 201 feet in length. This is a problem of his own making. He could fix the duplex or he could build something smaller which would fit that lot without requiring a variance.

Further, it is very obvious that these variances will alter the character and feel of Grand Avenue and more specifically that block.

Finally, there is a need to readdress the important issue of parking which is one of the variance requests from the property owner. With a three or four-plex or smaller multi-family unit, he would then have the space to offer on-site parking. We think that any owner of that site would want that feature to be available to potential tenants. We consider on-site parking a definite condition of any structure proposed for this site.

We have included a picture of what the immediate area of the block will look like with the proposed building between the two established apartments.

In sum, we do not believe that a project of this size is suitable and comparable for the space. The design and size do not fit with the current appearance and feel of Grand Avenue and as an infill structure it must conform to what is already in place and in accordance with the District's own plans. We believe the request for these three variances should be denied.



May 25, 2020

RE: ABZA 20-2 Public hearing to consider the appeal of Lucas Wiborg to a decision of the Board of Zoning Appeals to deny three variances for density, off-street parking, and side yard setback at 1769 Grand Ave.

Dear Honorable Members of the St. Paul City Council, I thank Mayor Carter and I thank you for the Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The Plan's Core Values provide a lens to discern actions that create "a community that is welcoming to and a place of opportunity for people of all incomes, ages, ethnicities, and abilities." This Plan calls us to get comfortable with discomfort. I think it's good timing to come to you for Good Timing, LLC's appeal of the BZA's Denial of 1769 Grand Avenue Variance. The RM Zoning Study process is a guide. This appeal is your opportunity to clarify how you expect Macalester Groveland to use the land that we have for the Land Use Plan.

I see the ways 1769 Grand Avenue's proposal meets the needs of the Plan. Macalester Groveland Community Council (MGCC), the BZA staff and BZA Chair Tom Saylor found it met the criteria for the requested variances. The other members of BZA used #4, "The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by

the landowner.” to deny the variances. They wrote, “The plight of the landowner is self-created.” I do not agree with that ruling and ask you to support the landowner’s appeal

People other than the landowners have created many “plights” that require variances on land in Macalester Groveland. For years deals have been struck over lunches at the Lex. Perhaps that explains why the apartment buildings on the East and West sides of 1769 Grand have 4.7 and 5.1 foot side-yard setbacks. The landowner did not create that “plight” which factored into the discussion of his side-yard setback variance.

Good Timing’s proposal brought light to an example of another “plight” that limits density on Macalester Groveland’s land. Soon after Graham Merry built a five story building on the corner of Grand and Finn, at the neighbors request, St. Paul enacted a new zoning regulation. Building heights became limited to 40 feet on 0.7 miles of one of Macalester Groveland’s major corridors. It is described on page 40 of the RM Zoning Study: *“A footnote to the RM2 dimensional standards provides additional regulation for a 0.7-mile stretch of Grand Avenue from Fairview to Cretin that contains a lot of RM2 zoning and is near the University of St. Thomas.”* The Study says *“the proposed code amendments do not address this Grand Avenue-specific footnote and would leave it in-force.”*

Seven years of representing MGCC on the West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee (WSNAC) has taught me that *“near the University of St. Thomas (UST)”* is code for discrimination against the unprotected-class called “student renters”. I am uncomfortable that at the same time residents of Macalester Groveland are working to remove deed covenants that red-lined our neighborhood, WSNAC members continue to press UST to pay money for deed covenants that forbid renting to students. It’s no wonder that at a meeting about a racial slur a student leader of color paused when a neighbor asked if he felt welcome in our neighborhood. After reflection he said, “Ma’am, no student feels welcome in your neighborhood.” MGCC’s Inclusivity Task Force learned from a Wilder Research Demographic Study that Macalester Groveland residents are highly educated. That isn’t surprising given our proximity to three colleges. What does surprise me is that we never talk about the opportunities we have at our doorstep to interact with people who study at the first Changemaker Campus in Minnesota (<https://news.stthomas.edu/st-thomas-first-minnesota-named-changemakercampus/>) or the Kofi Annan Institute for Global Citizenship (<https://www.macalester.edu/igc/>) or Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership (<https://www.stkate.edu/news-and-events/news/master-of-organizationalleadership-launches-new-nonprofit-concentration>) . The alumnae from these programs become our neighbors who serve on our District Council. I’m uncomfortable that they don’t feel welcome while they are students. This may fall under “Character of the neighborhood”

but it is a “plight” for any project with the possibility of student renters in Macalester Groveland. This “plight” is not caused by the landowner of 1769 Grand Avenue.

I humbly ask you to support Good Timing, LLC’s appeal of the BZA’s ruling. I believe this creative project, on a block of apartment buildings, is worthy of the requested variances. It will add density at a level Macalester Groveland needs to maximize our participation in the Comprehensive Plan. “Plights” limit Macalester Groveland’s opportunities to use our land for the density St. Paul needs. The Planning Commission’s decision to “*not address this Grand Avenue-specific footnote and would leave it in-force.*” gives a message. Now I ask you, “How comfortable should Macalester Groveland get with discomfort?”

Sincerely,
Cathy Plessner
2038 Summit Avenue

Re: File # 20-032124, Appeal of variance denial by BZA for property at 1769 Grand Avenue

We support the denial of the variances requested for the development of the above property. The proposal is oversized and not in keeping with the adjacent properties. We do not object to the development but want to see it scaled back in size.

Robert J. Schestak
Marilyn C. Ampe
1788 Summit Avenue

We have been resident/owners of 1788 Summit for 27 years. During this time we have had few problems with the apartments and commercial property facing Grand Avenue (and Wheeler) across our shared alley. The apartment residents have been respectful and the property owners have been conscientious in managing the apartments and maintaining the properties.

Currently, the only problem to note is the amount of alley traffic and resident and commercial trash service. This heavy use has damaged the alley. We are concerned that the occupant density of the proposed project, the number and configuration of the units, height of the building, increased traffic and the proposed variance reducing the amount of parking will create more problems.

We oppose the the 1769 Grand development as proposed and want to see the project scaled back to be more in keeping with the adjacent properties. We support Bake Baker's thorough analysis of this proposed development and his recommendations.

Robert J. Schestak
Mari Lyn C. Ampe
1788 Summit Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55105

Name: Rick Anderson

Email: rick@france44.com

Address: 4351 France Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55410 United States

Message: As the owner of St. Paul Cheese and St. Paul Meat, both located within the trade area of the proposed development, I would like to offer my strong support for your project. Vibrant neighborhoods are created through a mix of housing stock and diverse businesses. Commercial properties require patrons. By far, the best and most sustainable approach is to develop housing density near the commercial properties. Our businesses completely depend on local demand. We would welcome this improvement to the neighborhood.

Subject: Opposition to 1769 Grand Avenue Zoning Appeal

Dear St. Paul City Council Members:

This email denotes opposition to Mr. Lucas Wiborg's appeal to reverse the decision by the BZA regarding his proposed development project at 1769 Grand Avenue. As the President of SARPA, I have personally attended (via Zoom) both the Mac-Groveland Community Council Land Use hearing and the subsequent BZA hearing regarding Mr. Wiborg's proposal to develop this site. Although many Council and Committee members along with members of the public have expressed a multitude of very legitimate concerns regarding this proposal, two of my additional concerns are that this proposal is neither affordable nor accessible to the general citizenry of St. Paul.

When asked about the leasing arrangements, Mr. Wiborg indicated that the monthly lease amount would range from \$2500 to \$3400 per unit, at which point one of the BZA Council members suggested that was "egregious and that his own four member family would not be able to live there". Furthermore, although proposed at 5-stories, this building will not have an elevator. This means that people with disabilities, the elderly, small children and those not fit enough to negotiate up to five levels of stairs will not be able to live there. This is clearly discriminatory. While seeking to maximize density at all cost on a tiny lot, this project as proposed will do little to help alleviate St. Paul's housing shortage despite Mr. Wiborg's claims.

Finally, Mr. Wiborg consistently cites the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan and its "increased density" goals to justify his extreme plans for a high and wide building that does not fit on the lot

or in the neighborhood. Meanwhile he fails to consider the many other aspects of the Comprehensive Plan that must be considered when assessing the merits of redeveloping or developing a site. Examples such as H1.5 (“preserve the traditional aesthetic appearance and appeal of the neighborhood”), LU 2 (“expand and enhance the various types of green space in the neighborhood”), LU 3 (“preserve the well-kept, traditional feel and scale of the neighborhood”), LU 1.2 (“Maintain and/or enhance density (taller) development at the intersection of mixed-use corridors and lower density (shorter) development at mid-block of mixed use corridors”), and E7 (“reduce storm water run-off”) are all violated by this project as proposed, as are a multitude of other provisions of what is meant to be a COMPREHENSIVE Plan. In summary I would agree with one of the BZA Commissioner's closing comments when he said, "the size and scope of this project is just too much, too big and too inappropriate for such a narrow, mid-block site on this section of Grand Avenue in St. Paul".

Thank you,
Bob Morrison
President
Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association
1649 Summit Avenue

Dear Mayor Carter and Members of the City Council,

I am writing in support of Good Timing LLC's appeal of the BZA's **Decision #20-024086**. I strongly urge you to support the approval of the three variances requested for the construction of much needed multi-family housing at **1769 Grand Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105**.

My wife and I own the single family home located at 1995 Grand Ave, which is ~2 blocks from the proposed project site. We reside in this home with our three children, which means we live immediately next to similarly dense multi-family housing that provides limited off-street parking and share an alley with multiple other multi-family buildings that do the same.

I am familiar with the concerns raised by community members regarding this project's off-street parking, building height and level of density. Based on our family's lived experience down the block among similar buildings, I do not share these concerns.

One of the reasons we chose to live in this neighborhood and on this street is because of its urban character and unique mix of mid-to-high density housing stock (of which more is needed). We also chose to live here because the ready access to transit and bike infrastructure enabled our household to eliminate the need for a car and use a cargo bike year round for groceries, transporting our children and commuting.

I can absolutely imagine families hoping to live a similar life style choosing to live in this building.

This project is consistent with the the surrounding neighborhood's density, it is designed in a way that enhances the urban fabric and streetscape, it provides ample car and bike parking, and it does so with an eye toward sustainability and carbon reduction. All projects should be so thoughtfully conceived, but few are.

Context matters. We face both a climate and a housing affordability crises, and should be doing everything we can to address both head on. Projects like this are essential in that effort, and your decisions on them directly impact the economic vitality, economic inclusion, and carbon footprint of our city.

Enabling responsible, sustainable infill that enhances the urban fabric like this project should be a top priority. The climate, economic and social justice challenges we face demand leaders who will not allow proposals like this to be arbitrarily dismissed without grounds by the BZA, against the recommendation of professional planning staff.

Our comprehensive plan calls for additional housing density located close to commerce, transit and bike infrastructure...housing stock which we desperately need...housing stock which this project proposes to deliver.

This infill project in my back yard should be approved without hesitation in its own right on its own merits. But there is more at stake here than just a single 12 unit building.

The decision made here also sends a signal to all the would-be, small scale developers considering infill projects of this nature that we so desperately need to help us reach our climate, economic and social justice goals in the coming decades.

I ask that you overturn the BZA's decision on the three variances requested so this project can move forward as proposed. Thank you for considering my comments in advance of your decision.

Sincerely,
Cody Fischer
1995 Grand Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55105

Subject: ABZA 20-2 1769 Grand Avenue

Dear St. Paul City Councilmembers,

I am writing to you as a MacGroveland business owner and resident of West 7th. I strongly support the appeal made by the landowner for the requested variances at 1769 Grand Ave. Macalester-Groveland is my home. I grew up on Juliet and Finn, and I now operate my business on St. Clair and Albert. During my life, local businesses have been replaced by corporate chains and once considered permanent residents have dispersed throughout the city. MacGroveland is an expensive place to do business and an expensive place to live. Today, our city needs more density to increase the customer base of existing businesses and provide new housing choices for future residents who aspire to call MacGroveland home. I support the development and the appeal because this is the change I want to see in my city.

Best regards,

Mike Padden
1395 St Clair Ave

Melanie.McMahon@ci.stpaul.mn.us
Kayla.Thao@ci.stpaul.mn.us
Matthew.Graybar@ci.stpaul.mn.us
Contact-Council@ci.stpaul.mn.us
CouncilHearing@ci.stpaul.mn.us

City of Saint Paul – City Council
ATTN: Council Member Chris Tolbert
Department of Safety and Inspections
375 Jackson Street, Suite 220
St. Paul, MN 55101

May 22, 2020

Re: 1769 Grand Avenue//Good Timing LLC Appeal of Decision//File No. ABZA 20-2

Dear Council Member Tolbert and City Council:

This letter is submitted in response and opposition to the above appeal.

On April 27, 2020, the City of Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeal ("BZA") considered the application by Good Timing LLC ("Appellant") for major variances to the City's Legislative Code, in relation to Appellant's proposed construction at 1769 Grand Avenue ("Project"), an RM2 zoning district. Through its submission and presentation, Appellant sought several variances in support of its proposed demolition of the existing multi-family, multi-level duplex built in 1916, to be replaced by a much larger multi-family, multi-level housing structure. Appellant seeks demolition of the existing duplex, and construction of a new 12-unit, 43-bedroom, 6-level structure, which would require dimensional, density and parking variances.

By a 6-1 vote, the BZA denied Appellant's application seeking variances for:

1. A lot size variance of 634 square feet for every unit within the structure; Code requires 1,500 square feet per unit; Appellant requested 866 square feet per unit.
2. Two (2) side yard setbacks of 3' on each of the East and West sides of the structure; Code requires a 9' setback per side; Appellant requested 6' per side.
3. A variance of 7 parking spaces; Code requires at least 19 off-street parking spaces; Appellant requested 12 parking spaces.

In arriving at its decision, the BZA ended up in the same place as most of the concerned citizens and community volunteers who are part of the public record: the Project is simply too big for the subject lot and immediate neighborhood, and it fails to satisfy all of the required variance standards. By law, neither the BZA nor the City Council can grant a variance unless all zoning code requirements are satisfied. Here, the BZA found, *"There is no unique circumstance to the property. The plight of the landowner is self-created. This finding is not met for all variance requests."* In an uncomplicated, straightforward manner, the BZA concluded the Applicant failed to meet its legal burden by establishing: "[t]he plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner." Because Appellant created its "plight," the variance requests were appropriately denied.

On appeal, the Project owner now argues the BZA's decision lacked specificity, and purportedly failed to provide enough explanation as to "why" the BZA found that (a) there was nothing unique about the property, (b) the "plight" of the Appellant was self-created, and (c) the Appellant failed to meet every requirement of the variance requests. Appellant feigns surprise, lack of understanding. Yet, Appellant admits through its own appeal submission, as it must, that the subject property's lot, platting, configuration, structure, history and use – as well as the Project's design, size, scale, scope, dimensions, layout, construction and intentions – were all thoroughly addressed and discussed and made part of the public record by both the Appellant and concerned citizen. Indeed, on the critical self-created plight finding, several speakers very directly highlighted and confronted the obvious fact that Appellant's "too big/too small" problem was entirely of its own doing. In the end, there is nothing about the subject property that justifies or requires relief from the lawful application of the City's zoning code, or a bending of the rules to allow the City to ignore Appellant's self-created plight.

Appellant also dubiously attempts to obscure the self-created plight findings by attempting to misdirect the discussion by pointing the finger at the City (and/or others). Appellant makes two flawed arguments in this regard: (1) the subject property lot configuration and dimensions are "substandard" and misaligned with the City's 2040 Plan, and (2) the City itself caused the "plight" by allowing or creating supposed "policy conflict" between the 2040 Plan and RM2 zoning requirements. Neither argument is persuasive, nor is either supported by the record evidence or the applicable zoning laws.

Finally, rather than take ownership of the plainly obvious oversize problem and lack of scale, proportionality, restraint or respect for the Legislative Code in its application to the Project and neighborhood, Appellant also resorts on appeal to attacking the BZA's decision as inadequate, "arbitrary" and "minimally" discussed and/or explained. Yet, as highlighted by witnesses at the BZA and district council meetings, Appellant designed its own Project plan and controlled its own submission to the City, and certainly could have proposed a transit-friendly, multi-family, multi-level, medium-density and diverse housing structure that met all code requirements and which required no variance

from the duly enacted Legislative Code pertaining to lot dimensions, density, setbacks and parking. Unlike other applicants that have come before the City and the BZA and done so, however, here Appellant elected not to do so.

Precedent and respect for even-handed application of the plain language of the governing laws is important. Moreover, it would be inequitable, on several levels, to the entire surrounding mixed use neighborhood to unleash the massive parking and environmental load created by this oversized project. No amount of smart and sophisticated presentation and heavy use of "walkable," "bikeable," "good transit," "density," or "streetscape" terminology overcomes the plain reality that if an extremely large multi-level 43-bedroom structure on the narrowest lot on the entire block is proposed, it will likely run into zoning code compliance problems. Indeed, Appellant could propose a significantly larger structure with all of the identified, prioritized features – and not violate the City's zoning codes, nor require a variance. For unexplained reasons, however, Appellant has elected not to do so.

The City Council should uphold and affirm the BZA's decision, and deny Appellant's appeal.

Thank you kindly for your considerations.

Respectfully,

/s/ Dan Scott

Dan Scott

This email is in opposition to Mr. Lucas Wiborg's appeal to reverse the decision by the BZA regarding his proposed development project at 1769 Grand Avenue that the City Council is considering on May 27, 2020. **I urge you to oppose reversal of the BZA decision.** As a nearby resident, I **remain opposed** to the proposed property for the following reasons, especially in the era of infectious disease pandemics, for the reasons noted below.

- The proposed 5-story building will not have an elevator which means that people with disabilities, the elderly, students with disabilities, and small children who are unable to negotiate up to five levels of stairs will not be able to live there.
- With the proposed building design/space allocation, the lack of parking for individuals with disabilities is a barrier to accessible housing in this neighborhood.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has identified an *Infection Control Risk Assessment* for congregate and shared housing with a requirement of "knowledge of airflow patterns and pressure differentials" that can be adjusted to help minimize or eliminate the inadvertent dispersion that could contaminate common air space, living units and surfaces. Minnesota, Wisconsin and other cities with housing density are currently seeing Covid-19 disease spread in congregate and shared housing. The proposed property appears to have high rent, narrow hallways, narrow stairs and no information provided on HVAC airflow/pressure specifics. [COVID-19 Guidance for Shared or Congregate Housing Your Building Can Make You Sick or Keep You Well](#) [Coronavirus in Crowded Spaces](#) [Viral Load Distribution in SARS Outbreak](#)

I also encourage the St Paul BZA to "pause" variance decisions on multi-unit housing until clear St. Paul parameters have been included in the building applications that would support affordable, **healthy**, dense housing for renters and property owners. Thank you for your leadership during these difficult times and for your consideration to protect the health of renters of proposed new housing projects.

Katherine Cairns

Katherine A Cairns
1894 Summit Ave. St Paul, MN 55105

Council member Tolbert & Council Members,

I'm writing as a private citizen who is very concerned about the recent BZA ruling against the three (3) variance requests for 1769 Grand Ave. I attended the April 22nd Housing and Land Use Committee (HLU) meeting for Macalester Groveland Community Council (MGCC) in which we voted 12-4-0 in support of all three variances. I've read all the submitted comments and the transcript for the April 27th BZA meeting, which is very troubling in its tone and content.

First, I'd like to offer my wholehearted support for this project. The developer did their homework and this is exactly the sort of infill development that St Paul needs to promote as we look to fulfill our 2030 Plan, 2040 Plan, MGCC's own Neighborhood Plan, and meet our adopted housing and transportation goals. The only issue I have is that this project still requires 12 parking spaces, which is nearly 50% of the lot area. With a region-wide 2% vacancy rate, we need to be working to house people, not cars. I hope that going forward, city staff works with city council to remove parking minimums outright for the entire city.

Second, on May 18th at the BZA's meeting, they approved a rear-yard setback and a lot-width variance for a Single Family Home at 897 Snelling Ave S. I fail to see any measurable difference between these two projects except one is for Multi-Family housing and one isn't. One also backs up to Summit Ave mansions who's owners seem to wield additional power within city hall.

Third, this project does have the support of the neighborhood as shown in the 12-4 MGCC HLU vote on April 22nd. It is very hard to get people to show up and support a project for new housing compared to having folks who oppose new neighbors in their back yard, hence the term "NIMBY." But time and again, people support plans to generally allow development near them, and when asked, they vote to support said development.

Finally, the only finding that the BZA used to deny all three variances is Number 4: "The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner." This finding literally could be applied to every single variance request submitted to the BZA and is extremely arbitrary in nature. Why was this not applied to the Single Family Home at 897 Snelling Ave S? That owner could easily have built a smaller home. The BZA even mentions in finding Number 3 that "the applicant has established a practical difficulty in complying with the density, setback, and off-street parking requirements" and then supports that finding with two bullet points. The disconnect between findings 3 and 4 are grounds enough to grant this appeal.

Again, it is hard to rally oneself for housing that I'll likely never use or need, but our region is strained beyond comprehension and our city needs to step up to the plate and allow in-fill project just like this one all over our city. It is tiring to continually have to fight at every level - the district council, the BZA, the planning commission committees, the planning commission, and finally city council - every time a new housing project is proposed. Those against new neighbors only have to show up to protest the projects near their homes (note: they are housing-stable and likely haven't been in the housing or rental market for years, possibly decades).

Please support our adopted city and neighborhood plans and grant this appeal.

Thank you,
Micheal Sonn
1458 Wellesley Ave

Dear Council President Brendemoen and Councilmembers Thao, Noecker, Jalali Nelson, Tolbert, Yang and Prince;

I am writing to ask you to deny the appeal of the Board of Zoning Appeals decision regarding 1769 Grand Avenue. There are several reasons not to support this appeal:

1) The requested variances do not meet the criteria set forth in the zoning code on several counts:

- *Criteria #3: The applicant has established that there are practical difficulties in complying with the provision, that the property owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by the provision. Economic considerations alone do not constitute practical difficulties.* The applicant has clearly not met this criteria. There is nothing that precludes the applicants using this property for a building which conforms to the zoning code, and it is clear that in fact, economic considerations are driving their desire to build a structure that is too large for the lot, cannot support the parking requirements attendant on the proposed density, and would be grossly out of character with the surrounding area (see below). A three-story building would be a more suitable use for a lot this size and would not require the requested variances to function on this particular property.
- *Criteria #4: The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner.* As above, the developer proposes a building which is clearly out of scale for the size of the lot and its location. They state that they initially wanted to rehab the duplex that was on the lot when they purchased it but for unspecified reasons, were not able to do this. However, in lieu of a duplex, they propose a 5-story, 35 bedroom multi-family building that would be out of character and scale compared to the rest of the surrounding area, with potentially large negative impacts with regard to parking spillover into an already parking-challenged area, increased alley traffic, potential water run-off issues, as well as blocking light/creating shadows across nearby properties due to its height and smaller setbacks, and almost entirely eliminating green space. The plight of the landowner with regard to the variances they allegedly need is entirely of their own making and does not preclude

them from building a structure that is more appropriate to the size and location of this lot.

- *Criteria #6: The variance will not alter the essential character of the surrounding area. In granting a variance, the board or commission shall make written findings stating the grounds upon which the variance is justified. Inadequate access to direct sunlight for solar energy systems constitutes a practical difficulty in the third bullet point [Criteria 34] above.* This property sits in the midst of a largely residential area, with a lower-profile and smaller sized multifamily on that block and nearby blocks of Grand Avenue, and single family homes on the blocks to the north and south. Furthermore, it sits across the alley from a locally-designated historic district--the West Summit Avenue Historic District. As proposed, this building would be grossly out of character with the surrounding area: 1) It would be the tallest building by far for several blocks, looming over adjacent properties, eliminating privacy in back yards for at least a block in all directions, blocking light and air flow, and creating shadows across entire lots because of its height; 2) Aside from its height, its narrow massing, even with the proposed setbacks, would be a notable anomaly and interrupt the texture and flow of the adjacent blocks and neighborhoods; 3) It virtually eliminates green space between its footprint, parking area in the back, and the impervious materials used in the very narrow area between the sidewalk and proposed building; 4) The materials used to clad the building are, for the most part, out of context with the surrounding historic structures consisting primarily of brick and clapboard.

2) The building, without an elevator, is for the most part inaccessible to any potential tenants who are handicapped or have other physical or medical disabilities that would make navigating stairs impractical or impossible on a normal day, much less during an emergency situation. This building, as proposed, perpetuates inequities and excludes many potential residents, which goes against the letter and intent of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

3) The provision of just one parking space per unit is inadequate at best; the claim that most residents of the building would use transit or use bikes exclusively (not likely in Minnesota winters) is disingenuous. This will contribute greatly to the large parking shortfall that already exists in that area.

There is no defensible reason to allow a building of this size (in height and massing) and without adequate parking to accommodate the vehicles that would surely accompany 3- and 4-bedroom units, to be built in this location and on such a small lot in the midst of an area that is already struggling to accommodate the density that is already in place. Please deny this appeal and require the developers to formulate a plan that is more appropriate to the size and location of the property.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lori Brostrom
710 Summit Ave

Good afternoon Council members,

I am submitting this comment as a resident of St. Paul. While I am a member of city's Planning Commission and Zoning Committee, the following statements are a reflection

of my opinion and do not represent the views of the Planning Commission or the Zoning Committee.

I believe that technical errors were made in the BZA's decision to deny the proposal at 1769 Grand Avenue. Additionally, based on the arguments made by BZA members, their stated reasons for denial could set the city up for a potential lawsuit if the denial is upheld. BZA members in their stated reasons, mentioned objections to building height (which the height of this building did not require a variance) and for "neighborhood character" which absent of context is not an adequate "finding". I wanted to go through each variance and add comment;

Lot Size Minimum: This building's lot size and density meets the stated goals of the 2040 Plan and will be in compliance of the RM Zoning Study, which is currently underway. The argument of neighborhood character for denial is misguided given that the adjacent multifamily buildings are non-conforming and would not meet current zoning guidelines. In other words, this development is 'in-character' with the neighborhood (it should be noted that the neighboring apartment building's owners that opposed this development would require the same (and more) variances if they tried to build the same building today).

Side Yard Setback: This is a small variance request of 3 feet. Due to the skinny nature of the parcel, abiding by the code's side yard setback would create a condition where, if following building code, you would be unlikely to construct a functional multifamily building considering parking, basement egress, and ADA accommodation reasons. Our city's stated goals and plans are guiding this property for medium density housing, but the nuance of the zoning code would make accomplishing those goals and plans legally impossible when building codes are taken into consideration. Additionally, the adjacent properties have established non-conforming side yard setbacks; therefore, the use of the argument "neighborhood character" for denial is misguided because the small setback would appear to be 'in-character' with the adjacent properties.

Parking: The staff report does a good job out outlining in clear terms why this project meets this variance requests, including being in close proximity to a transit line (including the A-Line), the projects addition to on-site bike parking, and its proximity to Summit Ave's bike lanes. Additionally, this building's parking setup is in line with the 2040 Plan and would likely be in compliance of the RM Zoning Study.

The variance requests for the development fall within the margin of error for which the BZA typically grants variances and this project received support from the Mac-Groveland Community Council and from city staff, which produced a report that outlines how these

conditions are met. I encourage you to support the application for this development and overturn the denial from the BZA.

Thank you, and hope you had a great Memorial Day weekend.

Nathaniel (Nate) Hood
1879 Montreal Ave
St. Paul, MN 55116

Hello,

Sorry for the confusion regarding my comment - I, like you, am working on several projects at once and sometimes things get out of whack...

That said, my original comment was to speak in favor of this development and to ask that the BZA decision be overturned and to allow the variances. I'm not sure what the justification "The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner" actually means since it can literally be applied to any project that requires variance. I have to question the validity of this objection.

There is clear public support for this project given the Mac-Grove District Council 12-4 vote in support of it - as well as the 3 variances as well as city staff support. This area is especially in need of more housing and especially multi-unit housing as it lays squarely new a high use node as well as several campuses. Quite frankly this is a developer who seems to have done things right and is creating a project that aligns with the objectives the district plan, the City's 2040, and the Climate Resiliency plans. Blocking it with no valid reasoning results in no gain for the City and is contrary to its objectives.

I urge you to support this appeal and allow this project to continue as proposed.

Thank you,
Robert Wales
1727 Race St
St Paul, MN 55116

Council member Tolbert,

I'm writing in strong support of the appeal of the BZA's very questionable ruling on 1769 Grand Avenue.

The proposed development is exactly the sort of project that the Macalester Groveland Community Council and the City of St. Paul has expressed a desire to see. The 2030 Plan, 2040 Plan, MGCC's own Neighborhood Plan, and our pedestrian and climate change mitigation plans all call for denser, walkable development in commercial/arterial nodes like the one at Grand and Fairview (in which this property falls). It thoughtfully matches the setback norms of the other structures on the block, includes on-site renewable energy, and most impressively manages to add a significant number of housing units WITHOUT requiring a height variance. That last aspect of the proposal is almost unheard of at this point in Ward 3.

Reading over the BZA discussion, it seems as though the central objection to the proposal was not side-yard setbacks or parking, but height. This is frankly shocking. I'm struggling to recall an instance in which the BZA or the City Council rejected a proposal because of a height that actually fell within code. While I'm not a lawyer, I have to assume that such a decision is highly illegal and would open the city up to liability that I doubt we want. The job of the BZA is not to make decisions based upon the members' personal aesthetic preferences. That seems to be what happened in this case, and I very much hope that the City Council overrules the decision.

Mac-Grove needs housing. We need renewable energy. We need walkable streets and populated business nodes. A building that matches the character of its neighbors better than what is currently there, and does so without needing one of our most overused and maligned variance requests (height) should be applauded, not rejected.

Please support our city and district council plans and approve the appeal.

Thank you,
Colin Fesser
1417 Jefferson Avenue
Ward 3

Good morning,

I wanted to write a quick email to express support for the development at 1769 Grand Avenue and to support granting the three variances requested to make this project a reality. While I sit on the Housing and Land Use Committee of the Macalester Groveland Community Council and serve as an at-large residential member of the council, these comments are submitted in my personal capacity and not on behalf of the committee or council in any way.

First, I've read the comments submitted, and I wanted to note that I wholeheartedly endorse the comments of Cathy Plessner and Mike Sonn. I really hope that the council reads these messages and takes them to heart in deciding the kind of community that we want to be going forward.

Second, I think that any criticisms of the MGCC HLU process are unfair. HLU held a lengthy meeting that attempted to listen to everyone who had comments, which was calm, polite, and inclusive. Yes, the meeting was held via Zoom given the current pandemic and dangers of in-person meetings, and I'm sure that made some connections difficult. But community member comments were solicited, feedback received and read, and certainly taken into account when voting. The fact that the committee did not ultimately agree with the criticisms offered by some neighbors does not mean that they were not heard and considered. It simply means that the committee disagreed. I, for one, very much heard the criticisms offered, and then attempted to square them with my understanding of the purpose of and requirements for variances, the requests being made, and the needs and character of the community.

Third, consistent with that description above, I believe that the council should overturn BZA and allow the variances proposed. The building offers a kind of housing for which there is a direct need in the community - larger spaces for families and long-term renters - and is definitely consistent with the

character of the neighborhood. I believe they have met the variance criteria, that the need for parking should not outweigh the need for housing, and that we would all be better served if this building is built.

Happy to answer questions if you have them.

Thanks,
Kate Baxter-Kauf
1739 Palace Ave, St Paul, MN 55105

Good morning,
We recently were made aware of the proposed multi-unit building plan for 1769 Grand which would replace the current duplex with apartments. As a neighbor and a merchant that would be in view of the new building we would welcome an increase in housing in this area and this project seems to be appropriate to the neighborhood and supportive of the city's 2040 vision for growth. We encourage the city to allow the project to move forward.

Scott Fares and Darin Rinne

Co-Owners
Wet Paint Artists' Materials and Framing

1684 Grand Ave | St Paul, MN 55105

Hey Everyone,

I just want to say how much I really hope that you approve this appeal. Not only do I think this is an enormous opportunity to draw in chefs and other likeminded, motivated workers from across the metro- and let's be honest, these are exactly the people who you're going to want living around you when covid-19 really eases up -but I think that the optics on denying this right now without a far less flimsy excuse than was used before, given our current social context and climate, would be deplorable.

Thanks
Michael