

18 August 2021

TO: Rebecca Noecker, Ward 2
Dai Thao, Ward 1
Chris Tolbert, Ward 3
Amy Brendmoen, Ward 5

RE: ORD 21-31
File #21-271-810 Rezone 695 Grand to T3
File #21-269-061 695 Grand CUO and Variences

Dear Council Members,

Thank you for taking the time to read the many letters, emails, petitions and phone messages detailing the reasons for the opposition to this project as it has been presented to date.

As a part of the community very close to the project site, I especially want to express that mixed-use development on the property to increase density and enhance the pedestrian appeal for the street and corner is very welcome. But within existing laws and rules, at a reasonable scope, and with respect to the character of this historic neighborhood.

Thank you for your continued dedication to understanding the complex problems of this city, made up of its many varied, unique and valued neighborhoods. It is appreciated.

With Respect,

Linda Makinen
24 Saint Albans St. So. #1
Saint Paul, MN 55105
lamakinen2@gmail.com
612 619 5165

Good morning,

I'm writing this morning to express my support of the conditional use permits and variances requested for the development project proposed for 695 Grand Ave. I am concerned that the volume of objections from a small percentage of my neighbors is consistently misrepresented as the majority view.

This is a project that is a positive for our neighborhood and adds much needed housing stock to our city. As Councilmember Tolbert shared during the August council meeting, if we're going to be a city that says it supports housing then we need to vote for housing.

Thank you,
Emma Burns

From: grtodd@comcast.net <grtodd@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 10:09 AM
To: *CI-StPaul_Contact-Council <Contact-Council@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: 21-289-699 695 Grand CUP & Variances Appeal

Councilmembers,

My name is Gary R. Todd. I live at 682 Summit Avenue. My comments are for the #21-289-699 – 695 Grand CUP and Variances Appeal.

Attached is my letter asking you to reverse the decision by the Planning Commission and **DENY the 695 Grand CUP and Variance requests**. The CUP and variances are clearly in conflict with the explicit standards defined in the Code for placing an T3 district adjacent to an RT2 district. Allowing these developers to be exempt from the zoning laws sets a precedent that will negatively impact the livability of neighborhoods all across our City. Once other developers see that the zoning code is not being enforced, they will pursue developments that only maximize financial returns regardless of the impact to neighborhoods.

Please apply our zoning code to protect our neighborhoods and deny the 695 Grand CUP and Variance requests.

Thank you.

GRT

Gary R. Todd
682 Summit Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105
grtodd@comcast.net
651-470-4720 – cell

“... the sum of us can accomplish far more
than just some of us.”

THE SUM OF US by Heather McGhee

Ward 2 resident

City Council Members,

The Traditional Neighborhood (T Districts) Density and Dimensional Standards Table Footnote (e) of the City's zoning code clearly states:

Title VIII – Zoning Code – Chapter 66 – Article III – 66.330 – Traditional Neighborhood District Density and Dimensional Standards – Section [66.331](#) – Density and Dimensional Standards Table – Footnote (e)

(e) Except in the river corridor overlay district, height of structures may exceed the maximum if set back from side and rear setback lines a distance equal to additional height. Structures shall be no more than twenty-five (25) feet high along side and rear property lines abutting RL-RT2 residential districts; structures may exceed this twenty-five (25) foot height limit if stepped back from side and rear property lines a distance equal to the additional height.

The Zoning Committee and Planning Commission approved a CUP and variances for the 695 Grand proposal (#21-289-699) that are in direct violation of this part of the zoning code. The developers of 695 Grand are asking to build a structure in a T3 zone that abuts an RT2 residential district to the rear of the property. The developers are asking to be allowed to build a 60-foot wall adjacent to the lower density residential district **without any step back from the rear property line**. The zoning code, which applies city-wide and is not just part of the East Grand Avenue Overlay, only allows for 25 feet which can only be exceeded if stepped back from the property line by a distance equal to the additional height. Per the code, this project would have to step back almost 35 feet from the rear property line to be in compliance. The asked for height is 140% over what is allowed by existing zoning code.

The CUP and variances requested by the developers are not minor adjustments to the existing zoning code. The developers have asked you to invalidate and make them exempt from these sections of the zoning code, which are applied all across the city, only to meet the economic expectations that “work” for them. Referencing the zoning code again, “Economic considerations alone do not constitute practical difficulties (Section 61.601 (c))”.

The Zoning Code is explicit in identifying the standards for the layout of putting a T3 district adjacent to an RT2 district. Based on the specific language in the zoning code, I respectfully request that you reverse the decision by the Planning Commission and deny the CUP and variance requests for the 695 Grand proposal.

Thank you.

Gary R. Todd

Dear Council Members and Mayor Carter,

As 45+ year resident of Saint Paul, I ask you to **approve APC 21-2** (filed #21-269-061, August 2, 2021): Public hearing to consider the appeal of Friends of A Better Way St. Paul LLC to a decision of the Planning Commission approving a conditional use permit for building height and variances for front setback, building footprint, total building size above-ground, including parking, and building height at 695 Grand Avenue.

I also ask you to **oppose the 695 Grand CUP with variances: File # 21-269-061.**
I support the East Grand Avenue Overlay and the existing zoning rules.

Thank you for each of you, as Saint Paul City Council members, for taking a closer look at what constituents are saying. We want development, but development that fits into our neighborhood. The blocks of Summit to Grand/Grotto to Dale already have considerable density, higher than most areas in all of Saint Paul. What are your definitions of satisfactory density? The developers have not been realistic about the impact of increased traffic, parking difficulties, affordability, and livability at Grand and Saint Albans.

I send again the email (below) that I wrote to Council Member Noecker on August 10, which states my concerns in more detail. I hope all of you have the time to re-read it. My concerns remain the same as I stated more than a month ago.

Please add this email to public comments. Thank you.

Respectfully and sincerely,
Marit Lee Kucera
30 Saint Albans Street South #5
55105

On 08/10/2021 11:05 AM Marit Lee Kucera <maritleekucera@comcast.net> wrote:

Dear Council Member Rebecca,

As one of your constituents, I write another appeal to urge you to **vote against** the rezoning of the Dixie/695 Grand project.

Ord 21-31 Rezone 695 Grand Property from B2 to T3 File #21-271-810
695 Grand Rezone File #21-269-061 695 Grand CUP and variances

The zone-change and the variances are very interwoven, so it is difficult to talk about one without the other.

You've heard (multiple times) from many of us here in the East Grand Overlay District in opposition to the proposed 695 behemoth. I was happy to hear that you finally had the opportunity at your picnic last Sunday to see the scale model. It is a shocking revelation to see what such a big **behemoth warehouse-sized building**, plunked down here at Grand and Saint Albans, will actually look like.

The diagrams offered by the developers/architects do not begin to show the monstrous-sized reality of this proposed building.

Plus, the developers' attempt to justify the size and height because 745 Grand is over 60' does not take into account the huge setbacks both on Grand and the alley, as well as Grotto at 745. This comparison is invalid, in fact, it is just plain phony.

Saint Albans is a lovely, but very narrow street. It becomes a goat trail of deep ruts in winter. It is totally misleading and a joke for the developers to claim their traffic studies show there will not be an increase of **traffic on Saint Albans**, with 60-something (ever changing number) underground parking places for the 80 new apartments, with entrance/exit on Saint Albans. The proposed 30-something patron parking places for the four businesses (exit onto Saint Albans) do not begin to cover their **business parking needs**. And not to forget, there are no provisions for employee parking for the four businesses. Patrons to the current restaurants come from far and metro-wide, not just from the walkable neighborhood. These restaurants need lots of patrons, many of whom will not come anymore if they cannot find a place to park.

You have heard all same these arguments many, many times over the past weeks and months. But one issue not often discussed is affordability.

One of the most important facts about the Summit Hill neighborhood is its current affordability (average rent is just over \$900). We want to keep it that way. **The 695 project will have an adverse effect on affordability.**

Again, I want to reiterate the **negative impact such a huge edifice will have on the entire neighborhood.**

Grand is not University Avenue nor is it Uptown. We do not want to copycat them! Please hear what most **(10 to 1)** in Summit Hill are saying: We want development. But not a massive five-story Big Box.

Please vote to **Keep the current Zoning and keep the East Grand Overlay.**

If the zoning code were followed, the project would have a positive impact on residential neighbors, local businesses on Grand Avenue, and provide more housing. The only reason given for the increase is “economic viability,” i.e. to increase the profits of the developer. [https:// abetterway-stp.com](https://abetterway-stp.com)

Thank you for serving as our Ward 2 Council Member. I also thank all your colleagues on the Saint Paul City Council and all the staffs.

With extra appreciation for your time to read this letter and the hundreds of other letters!!!

Respectfully and sincerely,
Marit Lee Kucera
30 South Saint Albans #5
55105

From: Linda Makinen <lamakinen2@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 11:50 AM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Noecker, Rebecca (CI-StPaul) <Rebecca.Noecker@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward3 <Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward4 <Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward6

<Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward7 <Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: 695 Grand Cup and Variences Appeal #21-289-699

Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

Dai Thao, Ward 1

Rebecca Noecker, Ward 2

Chris Tolbert, Ward 3

Mitra Jalali, Ward 4

Amy Brendemoen, Ward 5

Nelsie Yang, Ward 6

Jane L. Prince, Ward 7

Dear City Council Members:

I have written several letters as this project has progressed through the Summit Hill Association, Zoning Committee, Planning Commission and City Council. and again I am asking that you consider the precedent that allowing this building to be built as proposed will mean for the future of the Summit Hill neighborhood and Grand Avenue.

1. **The Kenefick, Reuter/Walton plan has made no attempt to adhere to the current building codes** or sincerely work with the neighborhood to resolve contested code issues. This has been documented for your consideration in the hundreds of letters, public testimonies and petitions you have received. Their only argument for building this egregious building is based on their economic considerations.

2. **The process has been flawed throughout.** The current Vice President of the Summit Hill Association promoted to the Zoning Committee at the first meeting regarding the project, the assumption that objections to this project were only from residents close to the project. That was proved not true by the

many petitions and letters from all over the Summit Hill neighborhood and beyond.

Please vote to appeal the Variances and CUP request for this project, and show that the codes, guidelines (2040 Comprehensive Plan) and laws for building in this city will be fairly administered.

Thank you,
Linda Makinen
24 Saint Albans St. So. Unit 1
Saint Paul, MN 55105
612 619 5165

From: Mya Honeywell <myahoneywell@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 11:59 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Noecker, Rebecca (CI-StPaul) <Rebecca.Noecker@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward3 <Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward4 <Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward7 <Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Please Vote NO to 695 Grand Variances

Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

Dear City Council Members,

As a local realtor working in all of your wards, I place constituents in Saint Paul on a weekly basis.

- I own a business at 177 North Snelling.
- A residence at 457 Portland
- A residence at 635 Summit
- I reside at 790 Summit.

I hear more and more people leaving the city.

The complaints of high taxes. Low services, public safety.

I am choosing to stay and fight for our city.

But I have a hard time understanding how selling Grand Avenue to 6+ story buildings via spot zoning will improve where we live.

We will be setting a precedent.

How many taxpayers along Summit and Lincoln will make choices to pay our \$20,000+ per year in taxes to live with our homes sitting in the shadow of apartment buildings?

PLEASE fight for our city. Don't sell us to a developer that can't afford to play by the rules.

Thanks!

ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us; rebecca.noecker@ci.stpaul.mn.us; ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us;
ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us; ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us; ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us; ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us

SUPPORT OF FILE NUMBER 21-289-699, 695 Grand CUP and Variances Appeal

To: Council members , City of Saint Paul

From: Marilyn Bach, Resident , Saint Paul, Minnesota

Saint Paul, Minnesota is known nationwide for its desirable livability. But now the city is faced with the challenge of affirming that it is a city whose officials stand for the rule of law and ethics in government.

The 695 Grand development team wishes to build a five-story luxury structure in Saint Paul's storied Summit Hill.

This proposal is in violation of multiple zoning codes including:

The East Grand Avenue Overlay District Sec. 67.600

The letter and intent of T3 zoning,

Sec. 66.344 (a). - Traditional neighborhood district planning requirements

Spot zoning , which is illegal in Minnesota

Violation of Sec. 66.633 footnote e, which provides that "structures shall be no more than twenty-five (25) feet high alongside and rear property lines abutting RL-RT2 residential districts.

Yet approval for this proposal has ' sailed through "the City approval process.

The process was flawed from the very beginning, with the illegitimate practice at the Summit Hill Association (SHA) District 16 Planning Council's support of only 9 of 21 members, followed by the pro 695 Grand lobbying of one key member of the SHA, simultaneously a Planning Commissioner, through the Zoning Committee and the Planning Commission.

This process initially attracted ethical questions when three members of the Summit Hill Association co-presented this project to the public alongside the 695 grand development team.

The groundswell of opposition among Ward 2 constituents to this proposal been unprecedented. Nearly 500 Saint Paul residents from a wide swath of the city have signed a petition in opposition to this proposal. Letters to city officials in opposition have outpaced letters in support by a ratios of 4 to 1 –to in some instances 10 in opposition to 1 in support. Yet City official have not listened. Do Saint Paul residents not have a voice? Are the laws of Saint Paul not our guiding principles? Do ethics in government not matter in Saint Paul.?

The decision by the Planning Commission to grant the 695 Grand development team Its application for CUP and Variances is now being appealed by citizens of Saint Paul.

I strongly urge City Council members to support this appeal: FILE NUMBER 21-289-699, 695 Grand CUP and Variances Appeal

Support of this appeal will affirm that indeed Saint Paul does stand for the rule of law and ethics in government.

Marilyn Bach
9 Saint Albans Street
Saint Paul, MN 55105

From: Elizabeth Gibba <gibbabiz@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 12:03 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward2 <Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward3 <Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward4 <Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; ward7@ci.stpaul

Subject: 695 Grand

Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

I am writing to request that you DENY the CUP and variance before you today. There are a myriad of facts, laws and guidelines which make this the correct decision. If you've studied the issue to the level it deserves, you each know this is true. The biggest question left unanswered is WHEN will all those facts, laws and guidelines actually matter? This has been an exercise in disregarding those facts, etc and that, combined with the seeming lack of interest or concern for the desires and requests of the countless tax-paying residents who have repeatedly and in large numbers expressed to you, our REPRESENTATIVES, have chosen to dismiss, to ignore, to smile, pat us on the head, and act in disregard for those who will most be impacted by your decision.

Please deny these variances and the CUP. Please listen to your constituents.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth Gibba
568 Grand Ave, St Paul, MN 55102

--

Liz Gibba
651.747.7172

From: Shannon O'Toole <sotoole.esq@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 11:43 AM

To: Noecker, Rebecca (CI-StPaul) <Rebecca.Noecker@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Prince, Jane (CI-StPaul) <Jane.Prince@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Brendmoen, Amy (CI-StPaul) <amy.brendmoen@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Thao, Dai (CI-StPaul) <dai.thao@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Tolbert, Chris (CI-StPaul) <chris.tolbert@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Jalali, Mitra (CI-StPaul) <Mitra.Jalali@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Yang, Nelsie (CI-StPaul) <Nelsie.Yang@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward2 <Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward3 <Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward4 <Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward7 <Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Cc: DeMello, Mariam (CI-StPaul) <Mariam.DeMello@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Support for Appeal # 21-289-699, 695 Grand CUP and Variances

Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

Dear Members of the City Council,

I write once again about the 80 units of luxury apartments plus commercial space planned for 695 Grand Avenue. I urge you to grant the appeal and not allow the CUP and variances sought. Other writers have succinctly and clearly set forth the law which mandates that you grant the appeal. Today I will make two points.

First, the City Council hearing on this appeal falls on the commencement of Yom Kippur. If Councilperson Noecker will be unable to attend the hearing due to religious commitments, you should hold over this vote until she is available to participate fully.

Second, having secured rezoning of the 695 Grand parcel, the Keneficks and their developers still do not have enough room to make all of the money they want to make within the confines of the new zoning requirements for which they fought. They have shown not one practical difficulty with the parcel as is: their only difficulty is that they cannot make enough money if they must, like everyone else in the neighborhood, stay within the confines of the zoning law. Mere economic justifications are not sufficient for variances or a CUP.

It is unclear why the council has supported this luxury apartment project in the face of huge neighborhood opposition when the city's need is for affordable housing which this project will certainly lessen on Grand Avenue. Please uphold the law: support the appeal and deny the CUP and variances. Thank you.

--

Shannon O'Toole
223 Avon Street South
Saint Paul, MN 55105-3319
612-750-3393
sotoole.esq@gmail.com

From: Hillary Parsons <hparsons@caplanlaw.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 9:35 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward2 <Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward7 <Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward4 <Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward3 <Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Opposition to 695 Grand CUP - Dixies project

Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

Council men and women,

My name is Hillary Parsons. I live with my fiancé Jake Klisivitch at 42 Saint Albans Street South. I apologize for the formatting of this e-mail. IN addition to be very involved in the efforts against this project, I have been working 70 hour weeks at my job.

I am writing to you to urge you please to reject the CUP for 695 Grand. This project will dwarf the neighborhood, increase pollution and traffic on the narrow one-way street where the parking entrance/exit is for tenants (Saint Albans Street South), and is contrary to approximately 90% of the local neighborhood members who are vastly against it.

The Summit Hill Association failed to consider the wishes of the neighborhood having been persuaded by Peter Kennefick's excellent PR Team.

The project is direct violations of our own City code regarding rezoning, variances and conditional use permits.

- **Violates the East Grand Avenue Overlay District Sec. 67.600**—which mandates a maximum 3 stories/36' height for mixed commercial and residential use and 25,000 sf footprint, and maximum of T2 zoning—all of these requirements are violated with the proposed a 5-story/60' tall building and 30,200 sf footprint.
- **Violates the letter and intent of T3 zoning**, which is intended for “higher-density pedestrian- and transit-oriented mixed-use development” per St. Paul zoning code Sec. 66.314 and is grossly out context in a primarily residential historic neighborhood, and the site on which it would sit, which is at the corner of a 1-way/1-traffic lane street (St. Albans) that is barely passable in the winter and 2-lane Grand Avenue. Other than along Grand Avenue with B1 and B2 zoning, zoning for blocks to the north and south are R1-4 and RT1-2; these are not compatible with T3 infill zoning

- **Violates Sec. 66.344 (a).** - **Traditional neighborhood district planning requirements** which states: *Any pre-existing city-approved plans, such as small area plans, station area plans, precinct plans or master plans, prepared for the site or the surrounding area shall be incorporated as appropriate in preparing any development plan for a T3 or T4 traditional neighborhood district site.* Again, any rezoning to T3 would be inconsistent with the East Grand Avenue Overlay District which has the limits set forth in the first bullet above.
- **T3 zoning with the requested variances and CUP would clearly constitute spot zoning.** According to multiple recent City of St. Paul Zoning Committee staff reports: *Court rulings have determined that “spot zoning” is illegal in Minnesota.* *Minnesota courts have stated that this term “applies to zoning changes, typically limited to small plots of land, which establish a use classification inconsistent with the surrounding uses and create an island of nonconforming use within a larger zoned property.”* Plannersweb.com, citing Anderson’s American Law of Zoning, 4th Edition, § 5.12 (1995), refers to spot zoning as “the process of singling out a small parcel of land for a use classification totally different from that of the surrounding area for the benefit of the owner of such property and to the detriment of other owners.” The City of St. Paul, on its webpage regarding nonconforming uses, states that the Planning Commission must find whether “Rezoning the property would result in "spot" zoning or a zoning inappropriate to the surrounding land uses.” As noted earlier, this proposed zoning would clearly be (a) notably inconsistent with the surrounding use and (b) to the detriment of the surrounding property owners.
- **Violates Sec. 66.633 footnote e**, which provides that “structures shall be no more than twenty-five (25) feet high along side and rear property lines abutting RL-RT2 residential districts; structures may exceed this twenty-five (25) foot height limit if stepped back from side and rear property lines a distance equal to the additional height.” The rear of the proposed building abuts RT-2 residential districts on Summit Ave and does not step back. It is 60 feet high with no setback.

Community input:

I have carefully reviewed every letter submitted to the City on this matter. There were 127. Of those, 70% were against the proposal. This is strong disapproval.

More significantly, 465 people from all over St. Paul signed a petition against the proposal, with broad representation. Residents: 215; Shopper/Visitor/Nearby Neighbors: 187; Bus. Owners/Employees: 63. The petition and geographic map showing the dispersion of people signing the petition can be found at this link - <https://abetterway-stp.com/a-better-way-petition/>

It took hours and hours and hours of neighborhood time to oppose this project. WE should not have to spend over 3,000 hours as a community on this matter. It detracts from productive engagement with our families and our businesses. The cost is simply too high.

I have now spent hours writing letters, sending e-mails, passing out flyers, attending meetings, doing research, and all to protect the neighborhood I love, simply because certain council members have not. I urge you to please listen, please read the law, please ensure that residents and businesses in the area can expect consistent zoning for our future lives. I will likely be forced to move if this project goes through as I work from home and the construction sounds will just be too much for that. I am scared to move anywhere in Saint Paul because changes in zoning appear to be monetarily based and arbitrary at best. Stop giving in to big developers. This project is a ridiculous addition for HIGH INCOME housing to a neighborhood that could use more, and not less, diversity. This is Spot zoning, at best, and at worst a violation of all existing zoning law in the area.

Very truly yours,

Hillary Parsons

From: Elaine Dunbar <c.elainedunbar@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 8:42 AM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward2 <Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward3 <Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward4 <Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; *CI-StPaul_CC-Ward6 <CC-Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward7 <Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: 695 Grand Avenue

Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

Re 695 Grand:

I support a mixed-use development at 695 Grand in compliance with current zoning rules.

Having been a Summit Hill Association Board Member when one of the early neighborhood plans was developed--the first to include the perspective of those who rent--I urge you to insist that the new use for the property conforms to the established plan.

Furthermore, there is a petition with over 2,000 signatures of folks expressing reservation about the current plan. The reservations are real and should be given more weight. Very few oppose development, however in this case, the development as proposed is outsidied in the extreme.

Thank you,

Elaine Dunbar

From: Judy Miller <jhm828@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 8:42 AM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward2 <Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; DeMello, Mariam (CI-StPaul) <Mariam.DeMello@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Dixie's

Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

I and the majority of your constituents are overwhelmingly opposed to this project. For years parking has been a huge issue on Grand Ave. So much so that there is not much shopping but many bars.

Thank you

Judy Miller

From: Paul Acito <paulstpaul@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 1:05 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Noecker, Rebecca (CI-StPaul)

<Rebecca.Noecker@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward3 <Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward4

<Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward6

<Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward7 <Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Oppose CUP and Variances 695 Grand; SUPPORT OF FILE NUMBER 21-289-699, 695 Grand CUP and Variances Appeal

Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

14 September 2021

Dai Thao, Ward 1

Rebecca Noecker, Ward 2

Chris Tolbert, Ward 3

Mitra Jalali, Ward 4

Amy Brendemoen, Ward 5

Nelsie Yang, Ward 6

Jane L. Prince, Ward 7

Dear City Council Members:

First, thank you for your service to the City of St. Paul.

I favor commercial development on Grand Avenue and look forward to increasing my patronage of new and existing businesses. It would be great to develop the property at 695 Grand Avenue which is just 3 blocks from our home. But **I oppose the deviation from existing zoning, districting and intent for spot zoning.**

I am compelled to reach out to you given what seems to be a non-**data** based process given the Summit Hill Association's drive to approve the Dixie's/695 Grand Avenue Project. There seems to be a disinclination of the **data** from the residents of Summit Hill and a non-**data** based decision-making process.

The SHA seems to be using opinions, rather than **data** to drive decisions. In fact, the SHA has repeatedly ignored valuable **data** in its decision-making process, instead favoring the board's views over their residents' views that it's supposed to represent.

Visionary leaders use data, not opinions to drive decisions. It must be recognized that the planning landscape that the board's viewpoint is based upon has shifted in the past 18 months. This often happens in strategic planning but never so much as for this post lockdown period. The residents' views reflect more contemporary information that should be listened to.

Some of the **data**:

- A petition with over **465 signatures against the project**;
- **70% of the 127 letters submitted to the City were against the project**;
- The project is in direct violation of **the East Grand Avenue Overlay District Sec. 67.600**;
- The project is in direct violation of **the letter and intent of T3 zoning**;
- The project is in direct violation of **Sec. 66.344 (a) - Traditional neighborhood district planning requirements**;
- The project is in direct violation of **Violates Sec. 66.633 footnote e, which provides that "structures shall be no more than twenty-five (25) feet high..."**;
- **T3 zoning with the requested variances and CUP would clearly constitute spot zoning which is likely illegal**;

Where is the **data** that the SHA is using? Resident surveys? Traffic studies? Voice of residents? Up to date data sets on COVID impacted density trends? Why isn't St. Paul listening to the **data**?

I look forward to your support of the Variances Appeal.

Sincerely,

Paul Acito
715 Goodrich Avenue
paulsaintpaul@gmail.com

From: Tom and Sally Patterson <skipatterson@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 8:15 AM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward2 <Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward3 <Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward4 <Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward7 <Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: 695 Grand Avenue

Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

We live just south of 695 Grand Avenue. We are writing again in the hope that the council will vote to deny the developers' variances and CUP. To those of you who have supported our position, THANK YOU! To the others, we ask that you take note of the fact that the project is wildly out of character for the neighborhood; that it provides no affordable housing and is in fact expensive housing; that the neighborhood disapproves the project by a wide margin; and that the SHA approval was a flawed process that did not represent the neighborhood feeling. The existing housing on St. Albans and Summit will be impacted in a highly negative way.

Density in St. Paul is a desirable thing - just not on the east end of Grand Avenue which is a unique street with a national reputation and which has been protected by the previous zoning. It wouldn't make sense to take one of the parks on St. Clair and turn it into high rise apartments and it doesn't make sense on east Grand Avenue either. Density should occur where it doesn't disrupt an existing asset of the city.

Thank you. Denying the variances and CUP are really, truly the right thing to do for St. Paul and the neighborhood.

Tom and Sally Patterson
703 Linwood Avenue 55105

> From: Jenny Skoglund <jennyskoglund@gmail.com>
> Sent: Wednesday, September 15, 2021 7:56 AM
> To: Noecker, Rebecca (CI-StPaul) <Rebecca.Noecker@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
> Subject: Grand & St Albans development

>
> Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

>
>
> Dear Ms. Noecker,

>
> I also wanted to urge you to approve the plan for the 5 story building on St. Albany's and Grand. One of the reasons my husband and I chose to buy in Summit Hill is due to the retail and dining options, and the walkability. The decline in the vibrancy of the neighborhood has been tangible. I would love to add some new neighbors and businesses to the mix, and give Grand Avenue a much needed boost of residents and commerce. And, of course, this could offset some of the increase in spending Mayor Carter has proposed. An added bonus would be more people out and about on the street, which hopefully would deter some crime, and restore Grand Avenue's reputation as a destination for great food, shopping, and fun.

>
> Thanks again for listening,

>
> Jenny Danielson
