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**2/18/16 Proposed Condo Variances for:
1174 Grand Avenue, St. Paul MN**

After meeting with City Planners, neighbors and other involved local and neighborhood committees, we have taken their concerns, requests and feedback into consideration for this development. The biggest two desires and requests from the aforementioned are the off street parking and keeping consistent with the historical development patterns of the area and Grand Avenue. We believe that these proposed variances and the proposed building meets and exceeds these most important concerns. Along with these variances, our building will take the materials, designs and appearances of the many historical buildings on Grand as well as the new and fresh buildings into consideration for the final product selections and building exterior design.

It is our goal to redevelop a condemnable home that sits between 4 large apartment buildings into a fresh and appealing building that will be desired by condo buyers, as well as the community that makes up Grand Avenue. It will bring a green construction philosophy to the area with its products and design. We will achieve to avoid adding pressure to an already high parking demand by having underground parking and having a design that fits into the streetscape of the existing area.

A- Alley Setback Variance: Change the alley setback requirements to 22 feet from the alley for the stair tower and trash room which will only span 17 feet of the building. The balance of the South side will be at 25 feet, or further, from the alley.

- 1- The previous garage on the subject site was at a 5 foot setback.
- 2- The existing alley setback average is 12.5 feet.
- 3- At a 22 foot alley setback we would be further from the alley than 19 of the 22 buildings on the alley. The balance of the building at 25 feet would be further back than all but 2 properties.

The 22 foot setback from the alley for the stair tower and trash room would allow the garage to be large enough for 8 stalls and also allows us to have the trash containers enclosed. There would also be an additional 3 stalls available on the surface behind the stair tower.

B- Side Lot Setback Variance: Change setback allowance to 7.5 feet on both sides of the building. This would be an 18 inch difference per side.

- 1- The Grand Ave side of the block averages 12.75 feet between structures.

54

2- The previous building on the subject lot had a 0 foot setback on the West side.

3- After our new building has been erect, there will be 17.5 feet of space to the West and 16.5 to the East, 25% more space than the average on the block.

This change in the setback can be reasoned to the historical development pattern of the 4 buildings immediately surrounding the subject site. An allowance of a 7.5 foot setback would follow the actual and visual pattern of these 4 buildings. The change in the setback would allow the building to get the square width needed for off street, underground parking. The proposed parking ramp would be just wide enough to allow vehicles to enter, park and turn around with this 18 inch setback variance. We have identified building materials and designs to narrow the parking garage as much as possible and still meet the City requirements for the drive lane and parking stall dimensions.

C- Street Side Setback Variance: Change the setback requirement to 22 feet.

1- The adjacent 4 buildings are setback an average of 22 feet.

2- The balance of the buildings are at, or close to, 22 feet as well.

We are requesting this variance to address the City's request to keep the visual aspect of the block in line. This would allow us to keep in that straight visual line while enhancing the current historical development pattern.

D- Buildable Footprint: Increase the buildable footprint to 47.5%.

1- The existing 4 apartment buildings have a buildable footprint nearly identical to this at 47.3%.

2- The proposed footprint that would allow the underground parking would be 4,528 square feet.

3- The square footage of the existing 4 apartment buildings is an average of 4,515 square feet. A total difference of 0.0029%.

4- The current lot size with the alley allowance is approximately 9,540 square feet or 159' x 60'.

This buildable footprint would allow the off street, underground parking for 8 vehicles. This would also follow closely to the historical development pattern of the existing 4 buildings adjacent to the subject site with differences of less than 1/1000 of a percent.

E- Code Requirements for findings before a grant of variance:

1- The variance is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the zoning code;

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The variances will allow the site to build a structure that complements and compares nearly identically to the 4 adjacent buildings and will also allow for a parking garage.

2- The variance is consistent with the comprehensive plan;

These variances are consistent with the 2030 St. Paul Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Policy 1.1 Guide the redevelopment of housing in Established Neighborhoods, Commercial areas within Established Neighborhoods, and in Residential Corridors. As shown above, the proposed setback allowances are well within the block averages and nearly identical to the 4 adjacent apartment buildings.

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;

The current setback allowances would not allow a structure to be built that could fit in with the four adjacent buildings or the comprehensive plan. Building a similar building in both use and size to the 4 adjacent apartment buildings will maintain not only the comprehensive plan, but also the visual sight lines of the block and Grand Avenue as well as allowing the off street parking requirement for an underground garage.

4- The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property and not created by the landowner;

In order to follow the pattern of the block and area, the variances are needed to complete the sightlines and follow the historical development pattern of the block and area and also allow enough off street parking.

5- The variance will not permit any use that is not allowed in the zoning district where the affected land is located;

The variance will affect the size of the foundation and not change the use as established in the RM2 zoning code.

6- The variance will not alter the essential character of the surrounding area;

The variances will actually allow the subject property to be built up in order to match the character of the surrounding area with a difference of less than 0.001%.

56

FILE
16-012819

1174 Grand Ave City and Neighbor Concerns and Steps Taken

1-Off Site Parking (City and Neighbors)

We have proposed an underground parking ramp that will accommodate 8 vehicles, including a handicap stall. Additionally, we will have 3 spots available in the rear. The garage is as narrow as it can get. We have reduced the drive lane width and the length of the stalls as far as we could while still making it viable to use. This results in an 18 inch variance per side. To accommodate enough stalls, we have moved the trash room and stairwell to the back side of the building. This results in a 3 foot variance from the alley setback for 17 feet of the building. The balance of the building will be at the allotted 25 feet.

2-Maintain Historical Development Pattern (City)

We were asked by City Staff to have the building set back from the sidewalk to match the setbacks of the adjacent buildings. This results in a 3 foot variance on the front setback. The 4 adjacent buildings are 3 story apartment buildings with 14-18 units per building. They yield a car count of 16 vehicles per building, per City code. We will yield a car count of 11 vehicles per the same City code.

We are nearly identical to the size of these 4 buildings as well. The average foundation size of the existing 4 buildings is approximately 4,515 square feet. We are proposing a foundation size of 4,528 square feet, only 13 square feet larger to accommodate a parking garage. The height is a nonfactor and is below the code allotment of 40' and currently stands at 37' and 4". This makes our footprint a 0.0029% difference from the average of the adjacent 4 buildings while allowing three times the amount of off street parking.

3-Follow the City's Comprehensive Development Plan (City)

The focal point for this plan is increased residential density in the mixed use corridor's, such as Grand Avenue, (Strategy 1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.16, 1.23, 1.25 and 1.26 of the plan). We are proposing 8 units ranging from 1 bedroom to 3 bedrooms each, which is the maximum amount of allowable units per City Code for this site. This will increase the property taxes by nearly \$100,000 annually. Having privatized condos will also increase the disposable income along Grand Avenue by an estimated \$1.2 million per year over an apartment or rental use.

4- Privacy and Overall Size (Neighbors)

We pulled back our rear setbacks to accommodate the allowable 25' for most of the building along the alley. In order to ensure a parking garage could fit, we are 22' back for a portion, 17'8" of the building. We used this portion for the stair tower and trash room to further ensure privacy as opposed to using this wall space for livable areas with windows.

57

FILE
16-012819

List of Concerns from Neighbors and Actions Taken:

We have met with the SHA and the Neighborhood nearly a dozen times. We have taken their requests and concerns from those meetings, as well as the ones they addressed at the previous PED, BZA and City Council meetings. We also addressed emails that were sent to us. In every single case and with every single concern we have modified and/or made changes to our plans.

1- Parking, traffic on the alley and on Lincoln

- We added a parking garage to allow as much parking on site as possible.
- We also proposed condo's as opposed to apartments to limit the expected numbers of cars per the City to 11.
- We changed our proposed number of 9 units to 8 units after the second SHA meeting.
- We proposed residential as opposed to a high traffic commercial building type.

2- Privacy

- We minimized alley side patios for our plans.
- We limited the height to 3 stories as opposed to 5 stories as allowed in RM2.
- We agreed to minimize windows and/or use privacy windows on the alley side.

3- Alley setback

- We changed the original setback of 10 feet to 15 feet after the first neighborhood meeting.
- We changed the 15 foot setback to 19 feet after the first SHA meeting.
- We changed the 19 feet to 22 feet for only 17.75 feet of the building while the rest will be 25 feet after the City Council Appeals Hearing.

4- Side setback

- We changed the variance of 3 feet per side to 18 inches per side after the second SHA meeting.

5- Condition of the alley after construction

- We have committed to returning the alley to better condition that it currently is after our project is complete.

6-Height of the building

- We have committed from beginning to only go three livable stories, the same as the existing 4 apartments. RM2 zoning would allow 5 stories.

58

FILE
16-012819

- We eliminated the stair towers on the roof after the first SHA meeting and have now proposed roof hatches in their place.
- We have proposed a 37'4" height as opposed to the allowable 40' to address the height concerns of the neighbors.

7- Noise during construction

-Regardless of what type of building, noise will be a part of the project. However, we agreed to try and mitigate the noise during 'nap time' for neighboring kids by scheduling lunches and breaks, not having deliveries or large equipment running during these times.

8- Construction traffic in the alley

- We have agreed to hand out schedules of any blockages in the alley.
- We have agreed to have deliveries drop from the Grand side if and when allowable and possible.
- We have agreed to minimize any blockage during rush hour times when neighbors are most likely coming and going in the alley.

9- South facing decks

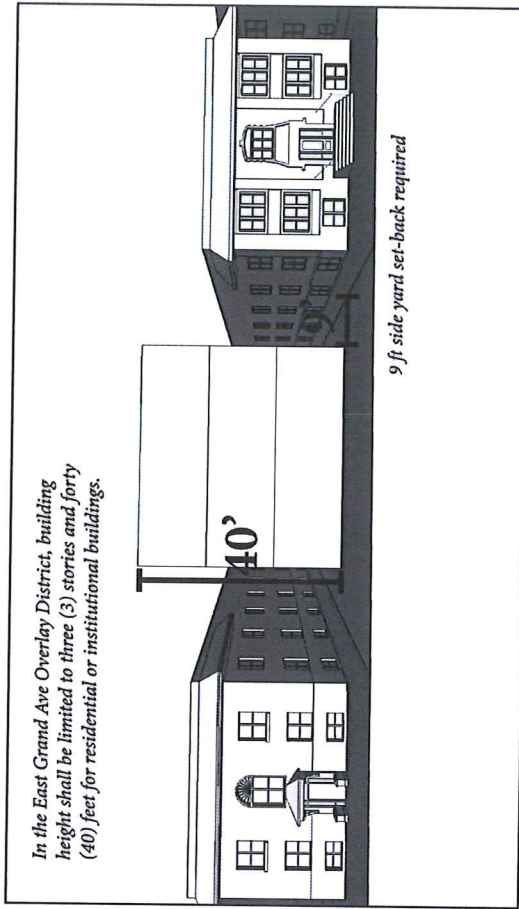
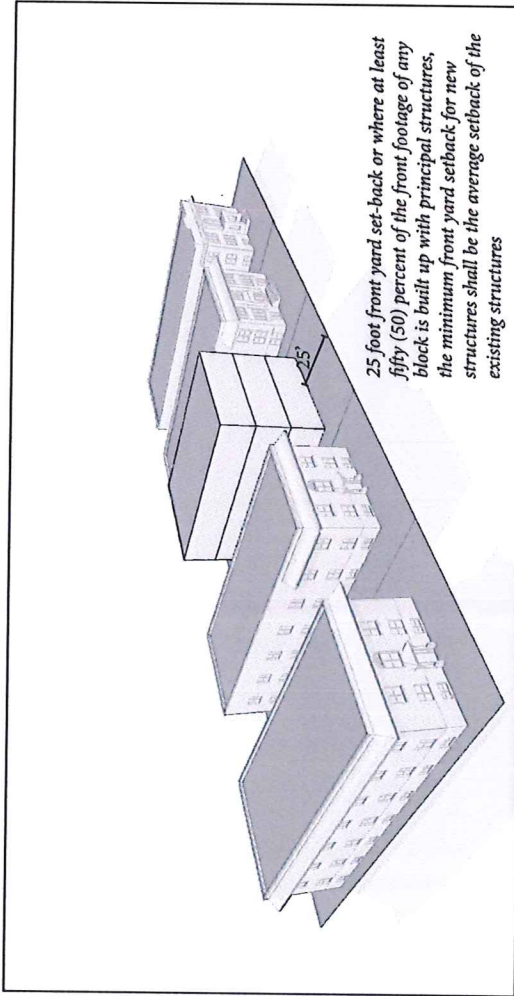
-We initially moved the ones on the first and second floors to the side. We met again with the SHA and neighbors on 2/16 and they asked that we shift the third floor one as well. We accommodated that request as well.

59

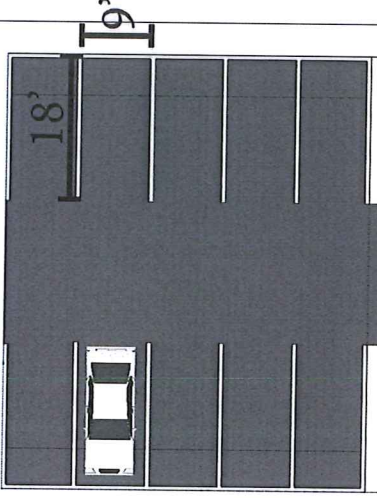
Comparison of Existing Multifamily Buildings on 1100 Block of Grand Avenue to RM2 & East Grand Avenue Overlay District Requirements

Requirements	Minimum Lot Size	Lot Coverage	Side Yard Setback	Front Yard Setback		Rear Yard Setback	Density	Parking	Height
	≥9,000 sf	35% of Lot Area	9 feet	Ave of block	25 feet	25 feet	1,500 sf per unit; bonus of 300 sq. ft. for struct parking	1 – 1.5 space per unit	40 feet
1160 Grand 									
1168 Grand 									
1174 Grand 									
1180 Grand 									
1185 Grand 									

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1186 Grand Ave	1180 Grand Ave	1174 Grand Ave	1168 Grand Ave	1160 Grand Ave
 Lot area is approximately 9000 sq. ft. The building footprint of 1186 Grand Ave is approximately 4,469 sq. ft.	 Lot area is approximately 9000 sq. ft. The building footprint of 1180 Grand Ave is approximately 4,469 sq. ft.	Lot area = 9000 Sq Ft. 35% of lot area and maximum building footprint is 3,150.	 Lot area is approximately 9000 sq. ft. The building footprint of 1168 Grand Ave is approximately 4,028 sq. ft.	 Lot area is approximately 9000 sq. ft. The building footprint of 1160 Grand Ave is approximately 4,494 sq. ft.
In residential districts, principal buildings shall not cover more than thirty-five (35) percent of any zoning lot.				

In the RM2 zoning district 1,500 Sq Ft of lot area is required per unit. 6 units could be built on a 9,000 sq. ft. lot.		For multi-family dwellings 1.5 off-street parking spaces are required per every 3-4 room dwelling unit. 6 three to four room dwelling units would require 9 off-street parking spaces.
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61

FILE
16-012819