

Dear Councilwoman Jalali Nelson,

I am a resident of Ward 4 and former chair of the Union Park District Council Committee on Land Use and Economic Development. I am deeply concerned about the proposed downzoning along Marshall Avenue and I ask you not support this proposal as currently written.

First, this downzoning proposal negatively affects one of the most transit connected multimodal corridors in our city. A downzone along this corridor will certainly have a negative ripple effect on all transit in our community. I currently live on a transit corridor in Merriam Park, and I have seen the tremendous value added to our neighborhoods by expanding transit access along the Green Line and the Snelling A-Line BRT route. These heavily traveled corridors are the routes that are most prime for housing development and development of neighborhood businesses in our city. I want to live in a place that supports neighborhoods and development that sustain a neighborhood corner store or coffee shop. This stretch of Marshall can do that – allowing for new and denser development at those nodes will create more viable businesses for the neighborhood.

Second, our vacancy rate in St. Paul is hovering at about 2% - we can't welcome new residents into our neighborhoods because there is simply no place to go. A zoning change that would further limit new housing development would simply not be in our cities' or it's residents' interest. Proponents of this Marshall downzoning plan have made the argument that this is intended to preserve the historic character of the neighborhood. If the city desires to support historic preservation, the zoning code is the not the means to this end. The only use in downzoning is to limit density, not to preserve the historic character of homes. This is not to say that historic preservation doesn't deserve a spot in our community – it certainly does – but there are a number of mechanisms whereby an individual can protect the historic nature of their property, either through restrictive covenants, designation of their home as an historic property, etc. Marshall Avenue gives us a unique opportunity to encourage thoughtful and more dense development to more effectively connect our major transit corridors and invite in new taxpaying residents into our neighborhood.

Lastly, the 2016 Community Plan specifically states one on the Land Use and Economic Development Goals (LU3) is to “encourage vibrant commercial development that takes advantage of increased transit availability in Union Park.” This potential downzoning has already driven development from this area, and investors have already said they have changed their plans to develop property along this stretch in response to the backlash they'd receive from a rather small group. This is not how our cities should operate – with pitchforks every time something or someone new wants to make a space for themselves or their business. I want more development in this neighborhood and I want more neighbors. I want our zoning code to allow for the transit oriented and denser development this city desperately needs. As written, this downzoning proposal will stifle our city's growth and have lasting impact. I ask that you not support this change to the zoning code as written.

I appreciate the council's consideration.

Sincerely,

Katie M. Jarvi

## Raza and Alia Hasan – Minority Business

4532 Alicia Drive, Invergrove Hts, MN 55077

September 30, 2018

Dear members of the Housing & Redevelopment Authority,

Subject: West Marshall Zoning Study - change of 1984 Marshall Ave from RM2 to RM1

### ***Background of zoning study***

- **Precipitated** by development pressures: proximity to transit, demand for housing, student housing, proximity to soccer stadium
  - Recently approved apartment project at Marshall and Moore raised concerns about preserving older homes, height, density, character, design, student housing

Issue - My house: 1984 Marshall currently located in RM2, i.e., multi-unit family units is next to next to an 11-unit apartment building.



# Wilder to Wheeler ~ Existing and Proposed Zoning



## ***Details of the proposal in question***

### ***Request for consideration***

The property west of my house is an 11 unit apartment building on the same size lot; it is now proposed as part of the RM1 area when it does not qualify as RM1, it does not meet the codes for it. I don't see how this proposed zoning change from RM2 to RM1 will affect them.

I am requesting that my property is kept as RM2 since it does not have any historical significance and it is next to the 11 unit building. This option will allow me to also construct a building similar to the one next door to me. My house is a student rental and the new five-story apartment building kitty-corner from my house will make it financially challenging to rent my place profitably. I am open to committing to limit the residents not to have cars with the help of the city to promote the use of public transport. I am also open to providing 2-3 electric vehicles for residents to share.

Current recommendations

# Primary Recommendations

- **Maintain** West Marshall, a transit corridor, as an appropriate **place for a range of housing options** including apartments
- **Strike a balance** of density and uses to maintain neighborhood character and mix of uses
- **Introduce more traditional neighborhood zoning:** transit oriented development has a mix of uses and traditional urban form to support transit
  - South of Town & Country Club
  - Key intersections and blocks
  - East of Snelling

## Definition of RM1 and RM2

Sec. 66.215. - Intent, **RM1** low-density multiple-family residential district.



The **RM1** low-density multiple-family residential district is intended to provide for an environment of predominantly one- and two-family, townhouse and lower-density multiple-dwelling structures, along with civic and institutional uses, public services and utilities that serve residents in the district, to provide for a variety of housing needs, and to serve as zones of transition between less restricted districts and more restricted districts.

Sec. 66.216. - Intent, **RM2** medium-density multiple-family residential district.



The **RM2** medium-density multiple-family residential district is intended to provide for more extensive areas of multiple-family residential development and a variety of congregate living arrangements, as well as uses that serve the needs of the multiple-family residential districts. It is intended to provide for comprehensive development of multiple-family uses and a balance of population concentration near major thoroughfares, transit, and related facilities.

