

Russ Stark – Ward 4 Councilmember  
310-D City Hall  
15 Kellogg Blvd., West  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

RECEIVED  
June 8, 2012

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COUNCILMEMBER  
KATHY LANTRY

Dear Russ

At the upcoming June 20th City Council Meeting, one of the agenda items will be consideration of a proposed 50 foot high, 5 story, student apartment in the Mac-Groveland neighborhood at the corner of Grand and Finn. On May 10, the Zoning Board voted to deny this project as planned after carefully reviewing documents and hearing lengthy testimony from neighbors and a representative of the MacGroveland Community Council. However, on May 18, the Full Planning Commission, without the benefit of sufficient time to properly examine all the issues, voted to approve this project. The neighborhood promptly filed an appeal to the City Council on this in the hope that a decision be made that is not strictly based on technical limits of an out-dated (1970's) zoning code but considers impacts on the neighborhood and compatibility with the city's comprehensive plan, the MacGroveland Community Council land use plan, and the 2004 UST CUP. The neighborhood directly south of this project believes, if built as proposed, will have a devastating impact on the neighborhood. You will likely be receiving the appeal document that the neighbors have put together carefully outlining how this apartment just does not fit. We do not accept the argument that "you can't have it both ways" with regard to this project in light of the ongoing student housing ordinance debate. We are willing to do our part to accept increased density but going from 12 residents to 80 residents (guaranteed to be students based on the apartments design features) is too much of hit to absorb.

The main purpose of this letter is to present a copy of the petition opposing this development that was signed by 96 individuals and represents over 75% of the owner/occupied homes in the two blocks directly south (Lincoln and Goodrich between Cleveland and Cretin). The neighborhood is appalled that the city is considering approving a structure of this size and has expressed this in the form of this petition, several neighborhood meetings, letters and emails to the zoning board, and public testimony by several people thus far at 2 zoning meetings. In speaking with Tom Beach, the person responsible for the site review and compiling of material for the appeals, this project has had zero support in the form of letters/emails/public testimony. This is simply a case of a developer maximizing the zoning code and taking advantage of the fact that the University of St. Thomas has not untaken its student housing development/village as described the 2004 CUP. On the reverse are a few visuals that show the overwhelming impact this proposal would have on the neighborhood.

We hope that you will be able to take the time to carefully review all details of this appeal and do what is best for the neighborhood. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Pete Cooper  
2129 Lincoln Avenue

cc: (w/o attachment)  
Melvin Carter III, Councilmember Ward 1  
Dan Thune, Councilmember Ward 2  
Chris Tolbert, Councilmember Ward 3  
Amy Brendmoen, Councilmember Ward 5  
Dan Bostrom, Councilmember Ward 6  
Kathy Lantry, Councilmember Ward 7



Figure 1 - Architect's Bird's Eye View Looking West Along Grand

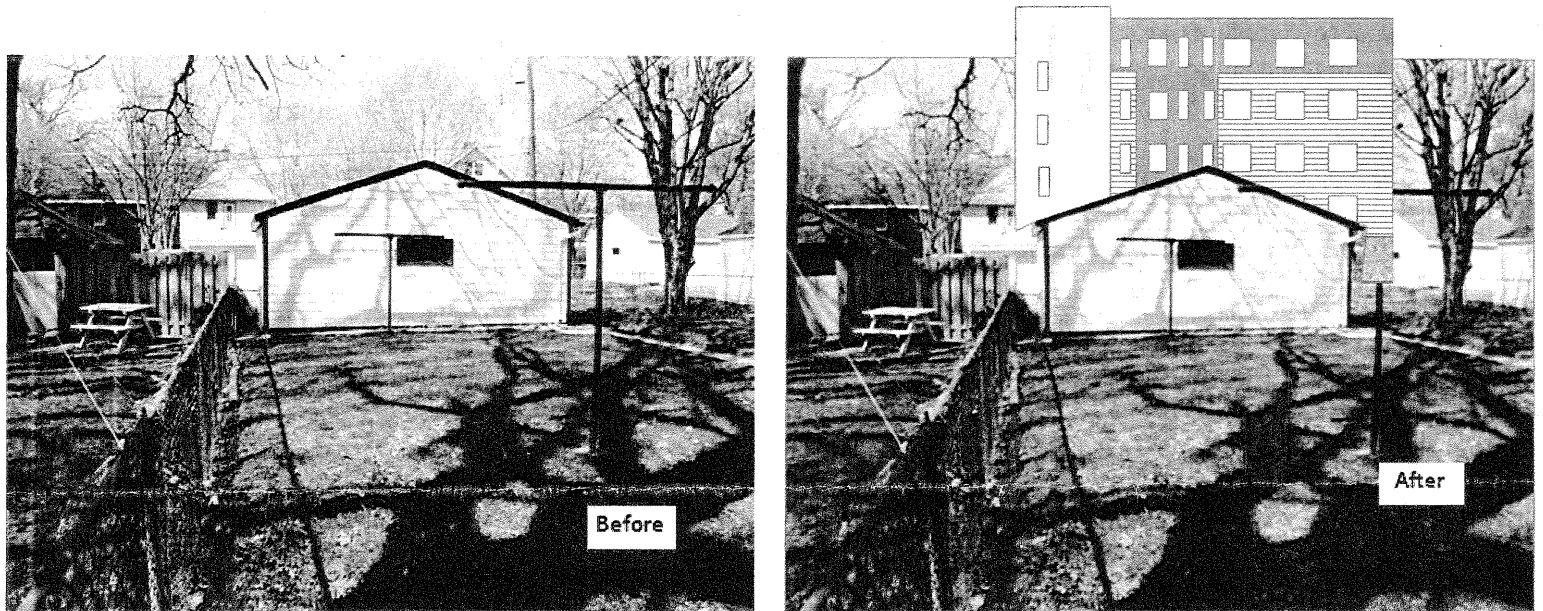


Figure 2 - Before and After Views from 2129 Lincoln Backyard