

Testimony

WILLIAM MILLER
VINCENT BUILDING, LLC

At the Corner of University and Raymond Avenue
Historic Twin City State Bank Building
2388 University Ave.
St. Paul, MN. 55114

CITY COUNCIL
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE, ET AL.

In response to the proposed development of the historic General Motors Truck Building into the C & E Flats Apartment Building, it has come to my attention that the desire by the developer is to substantially change and build up five stories above the existing structure. From the limited plans that have been available, the proposed structure does not appear to blend or have any matching historic affects that accompany the character of the adjacent building or the C & E Lofts building that did maintain the original architecture during renovation.

In the presentations that have been shown, the plans only show this prominent corner historic bank building labeled as "existing" and not showing the degree of historic architecture that prevails with this significant location. The contrast of the modern and trendy proposed project vastly overshadows what now is a corner with a truly historic St. Paul presence. The corner of University and Raymond is filled with history and to this day maintains a substantial presence that represents what St. Paul was built on: commerce, prosperity and neighborhoods with vibrancy and character.

I expected to hear from the St. Anthony Park Community Council about this proposed project, and in fact, was never given formal notice that this development was on the fast track for being approved. It would be important to consider planning for first floor space to be available for retail and service businesses. My understanding is that the proposed plan is presented as indoor parking, with the lack of (mixed use) at street level. There will be a need for available space to offer services and support hundreds of residents on this corner.

While I support development along the corridor, it's critical that we take the time necessary to protect the character of the existing neighborhoods. I believe with some refinements to the plans focusing on scale and architectural details, this project could be beneficial to the city. Please, let's take our time to make sure it's done right the first time.

Sincerely,
William Miller

Testimony

Spong, Amy (CI-StPaul)

From: Sandy Jacobs <sandy@updatecompany.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2015 12:54 PM
To: Spong, Amy (CI-StPaul)
Cc: Boulware, Christine (CI-StPaul)
Subject: RE: 2390-2400 University Avenue 735 Raymond

I took a look at the report.

1. The loss of the brick chimney is not an issue, it does not diminish the neighborhood.
2. The additional mass/volume is large, but the setback helps to not overwhelm the other buildings. The additional mass is needed to offset the huge investment in the corner.
Property development in an existing block such as this is very expensive.
3. The materials being used are different in nature from the existing, but there is a large variety throughout the district and we shouldn't expect all building to be the exact same. Buildings have a variety of materials besides brick.

It's important for the HPC to understand that our neighborhood cannot sit on old buildings just for the sake of sitting on them. Progress can be made that respects the historic nature of the neighborhood and still moves us forward.

I still strongly support and encourage the project and hope that it will be approved.
Sandy Jacobs

From: Spong, Amy (CI-StPaul) [<mailto:amy.spong@ci.stpaul.mn.us>]
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2015 11:28 AM
To: Sandy Jacobs
Cc: Boulware, Christine (CI-StPaul)
Subject: RE: 2390-2400 University Avenue 735 Raymond

Hello Sandy,

Thanks for your testimony, however, I'm wondering if you read the staff report and have testimony that directly relates to the Historic District considerations which the HPC is authorized to uphold?

The packet in on the website at the link: <http://www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx?NID=1831> scroll down for all of the attachments. It would be more helpful if the testimony more directly related to the charge of the HPC as opposed to welcoming development—the HPC must apply the guidelines related to the historic significance and classification of the building the addition is being proposed too.

Thanks,



Amy H. Spong

Historic Preservation Specialist

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Not submitted as
testimony

Spong, Amy (CI-StPaul)

From: Brad Engelmann <bradengelmann@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 02, 2015 9:08 AM
To: Spong, Amy (CI-StPaul); Boulware, Christine (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Exeter/D12 development/University Ave

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hello Amy, Christine.

I am involved in St Paul District 12 development discussions, serve on the D12 Land Use committee. I heard Exeter's proposal for development near University Avenue to add apartments.

I have been made aware that they might be having difficulty getting plans approved because of concerns over historic preservation in the Raymond district.

I hope that St Paul can make accommodations to figure something out with Exeter. We've all invested a great deal in the Green Line and it would be great for many if investment could proceed along that corridor. I respect that there are guidelines but I hope you can work something out with Exeter.

Thank you both, have a great day!

Brad Engelmann
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