

From: Paul Morrison
Sent: Monday, May 02, 2016 5:55 PM
To: Noecker, Rebecca (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Chase Apartments Phase 3 in Victoria Park

Dear Ms. Noecker,

Earlier this week I received a letter from Nova Community Concerns suggesting that I write to you opposing the apartment building proposed for the neighborhood, which happens to be adjacent to Nova Classical Academy's campus. My wife and I have lived in the neighborhood for over five years and witnessed all of the recent development from start to finish; what was two rows of townhomes (our unit included) when we moved here has evolved into over 200 apartment units and a K-12 school. The distractions of construction and uneasiness of large, new developments being built near one's home can be taxing for anyone, yet my wife and I remain in the neighborhood and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Despite our initial doubts and concerns, the neighborhood has come out better for it in the end. With that in mind, I find Nova's concerns about Chase Development's proposed Phase 3 of apartments to be grossly overblown.

Nova's letter states that the apartment building deviates from the Victoria Park Master Plan. While that may be so, the plan has been amended twice since its proposal in 2005, the most recent amendment being August 2011. The plan, as it exists today, makes no mention of the apartments that currently reside on Victoria and Mercer streets. For a developer to ask for a variance to build apartments instead of townhomes is not out of the question.

Another of Nova's arguments is added traffic. Their letter states that a 52-unit apartment will bring 100+ automobiles to the neighborhood. Having been a former resident of a property not unlike the one being proposed, I am confident that would not be the case. The general rule is one underground parking spot per unit. With the access we have to public transportation via Metro Transit Route 54, some people will opt to forego vehicle ownership. I can tell you from experience that the garage at my previous residence was far from full, being that there was access to public transportation in the neighborhood.

Pedestrian safety appears to be Nova's primary concern. Contrary to their opinion, the neighborhood is perfectly safe for pedestrians, and new housing development will not make a significant impact. My wife and I are avid walkers, and the only time we have felt unsafe walking was when Nova initially opened. We would frequently encounter people driving exceedingly fast through our private driveway on Victoria Street as a way to get around the congestion; checking the mail at that time was tempting fate. Given time, the traffic flows in front of our residence changed drastically; no longer were people taking shortcuts via our driveway or idling for extended periods in front of our unit. I applaud Nova for whatever traffic flows they implemented.

One benefit of the Victoria Park apartments is that the increased level of street parking has forced drivers to slow way down on Victoria Street, mainly due to the curvature of the street and parking on both sides. This is a drastic change from when Nova initially opened and there was excessive speeding on Victoria on a daily basis. Traffic currently being what it is, given that

everyone has had some time now to "settle in," is perfectly acceptable. The proposed apartments will not directly affect my safety, as Nova claims they will.

While Nova has been a good neighbor since autumn of 2012, they need to realize that the most dangerous time for pedestrians in the neighborhood is the beginning and end of the school day. Twice a day, their institution brings 13 buses and over 200 vehicles to the neighborhood that would otherwise not be here. Parents and faculty need to take responsibility for their actions by slowing down and teaching kids to look both ways before crossing the street. To accuse 50-100 theoretical new residents of being a major compromise to safety is offensive. Many of the Nova parents who have written to the City Council opposing the apartments don't even live in our Ward. While they may commit to the neighborhood for several hours a day nine months of the year, I am here every night year round. I am perturbed by non-residents trying to dictate policy for *our* neighborhood. If they are so vehemently opposed to this development, I suggest they propose a viable alternative.

Cordially,

Paul Morrison
7xx Victoria St S