

**From:** On Behalf Of Chad Skally  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 01, 2016 8:08 AM  
**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward4; Henningson, Samantha (CI-StPaul)  
**Subject:** Letter of support for project at 1174 Grand Ave, on today's Council agenda

Council President Stark,

I have reviewed the BZA approved project for 1174 Grand Avenue in Ward 2 and I think it would be a great fit for Grand Avenue.

I believe it is an excellent fit for several reasons. First, it provides a large amount of off-street parking as to limit the impact for visitors coming and parking on Grand Ave. Secondly, high quality residential units fit well with Grand Avenue. Lastly, the project for 1174 Grand Ave is a perfect location for a multi-unit building.

I ask that you support this project based on the numerous people in the neighborhood who support it and the positive impact it will have to the entire neighborhood.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my views,

Chad Skally

Ward 1 property owner and small business owner  
Ward 2 property owner and small business owner  
Ward 3 property owner, small business owner and resident  
Ward 4 property owner and small business owner

**From:** Linda Winsor  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 31, 2016 2:46 PM  
**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward4  
**Subject:** 1174 Grand Avenue Appeal

Dear Russ,

I will not be able to attend the public hearing on June 1 for the appeal of the BZA approval of the proposed development at 1174 Grand Avenue. However, I would respectfully request that the St. Paul City Council grant the appeal, as it did with the previous appeal for the same project, so that the developers can do what they should have done to begin with--design a building that requires no variances from the zoning code and respects the character of the neighborhood.

I served on the Summit Hill Association (SHA) board when we updated our neighborhood comprehensive plan, which was completed after extensive neighborhood input in 2005. One of the action items was to address development on Grand Avenue, after contentious fights with developers of properties at Victoria and Grand, and then Oxford and Grand. The SHA board subsequently worked with the City Council to implement the East Grand Avenue Overlay District (EGAOD), which was approved by the City Council and placed into the zoning code in 2006. The intent was to prevent more massive buildings on Grand Avenue and, by explicitly requiring the use of TN2 design standards, to preserve the unique character of the neighborhood.

This development, as currently proposed, not only does not respect the character of the neighborhood, but would set a dangerous precedent that would seriously undermine both the intent of the EGAOD and the specifics of the zoning code--and potentially and irreversibly change the fabric and historic character of Grand Avenue. Please support and respect the goals of the Summit Hill Association and the many neighboring residents and businesses--both in the immediate vicinity of this development and in the greater Summit Hill area--who have spoken out against this development as presented. The EGAOD acknowledges that development of Grand Avenue will occur, but asks that it be done in a thoughtful and planful manner that abides by the code and enhances the uniqueness that makes Grand Avenue appealing to residents and visitors, alike.

Thank you,

Linda Winsor  
7xx Goodrich Avenue

**From:** Christenson, Jeff

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 01, 2016 9:18 AM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward7; #CI-StPaul\_Ward6; #CI-StPaul\_Ward5; #CI-StPaul\_Ward4; #CI-StPaul\_Ward3; #CI-StPaul\_Ward2; #CI-StPaul\_Ward1

**Subject:** Writing in Support of BZA Approval of Variances for 1174 Grand Ave

Good morning,

I am writing to show my support for a planned 8-unit apartment building at 174 Grand Avenue. I believe the Council should support the requested variances.

I have seen renderings of the proposed construction and, to me, it looks to be completely in scale with the dwellings on either side of 1174 Grand. It's replacing a run-down single-family home.

I am sensitive to the concerns of homeowners that share the alley with the properties lining Grand Avenue about privacy and maintaining the character of the neighborhood. But the proposed development is more in character with the neighborhood than the single-family home it would replace, since there are many other apartment buildings like the one proposed. Also, any two-story dwelling on that property should give rise to the same privacy concern if it's a legitimate reason for opposing this development (rather than a pretextual one).

Also, St. Paul is, and aims to be, a city. We just surpassed the 300,000 population mark and that's a sign, I think, that people are expressing a desire to live in a more dense, walkable, environment. Developments like this one are just what St. Paul needs to continue the increase in population. A decision to grant the appeal and deny the variances approved by the BZA, on the other hand, signals that St. Paul doesn't value a dense, walkable, urban fabric and instead only values residents who can afford a single-family home. It would also signal that St. Paul doesn't

value a socioeconomically diverse community. In my opinion, St. Paul should support all types of housing so that it would be attractive for anyone from a college student to retiree to live and work here.

Thanks for your consideration

**Jeff Christenson**  
**14xx Lincoln Ave.**

**From:** Lori Brostrom

**Sent:** Tuesday, May 31, 2016 2:27 PM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward1; #CI-StPaul\_Ward2; #CI-StPaul\_Ward3; #CI-StPaul\_Ward4; #CI-StPaul\_Ward5; #CI-StPaul\_Ward5; #CI-StPaul\_Ward6; #CI-StPaul\_Ward7

**Cc:** Noecker, Rebecca (CI-StPaul)

**Subject:** June 1 Appeal--1174 Grand Avenue Development

To the St. Paul City Councilmembers;

I served two terms as a Summit Hill Association District 16 Planning Council (SHA) board member from 1998 through 2004, and am now currently back on the board and also sit on the Zoning and Land Use Committee. I am writing to ask for your support of the appeal of the BZA's approval of the proposed development at 1174 Grand Avenue which will be heard tomorrow, June 1.

In the period of my first tenure on the SHA board, we dealt with several controversial developments on Grand Avenue, about which there was widespread concern about potential negative impacts to the unique character of Grand Avenue. In the several public meetings we held specific to these developments, and also in the broader context of the Summit Hill Neighborhood Comprehensive Plan update, it was clear that both residents and businesses understood how valuable the historic nature of Grand Avenue was to the overall fabric of the neighborhood. As a result of this planning process, the East Grand Avenue Overlay District was proposed in the neighborhood plan, and then adopted into the Zoning Code in 2006 by the City Council. Its specific intent was to maintain the character of Grand Avenue as development occurred, avoiding the massive incursions of projects such as Victoria Crossing and the Oxford Hill development.

By maintaining the combined historic integrity of the residential neighborhoods and mixed residential/commercial corridor of Grand Avenue, it has not only enhanced overall property values, but has made this area a magnet for visitors and historic tourism unlike any other area in St. Paul and, one could argue, the Twin Cities. The carefully-preserved charm of Grand Avenue, with its accessible mixture of residential, commercial and mixed-use properties, and adjacency to historic residential areas, creates an ambiance that makes visiting Grand Avenue a much more pleasurable experience than visiting many of the same stores at a mall. For St. Paul,

it has meant a solid and stable base of sales tax and property tax dollars, employment opportunities and overall bragging rights for a top destination for visitors.

One need only look at the Uptown area of Minneapolis, which started out as a charming and popular adjunct to the historic surrounding neighborhoods, as an object lesson in uncontrolled development. Contemporary commercial and residential buildings, supplanting and often dwarfing the few remaining historic buildings, have irreversibly altered the area. The negative impacts can be seen in struggling retail businesses and restaurants, as evidenced by higher turnover and vacancies, as the increased residential density has not compensated for the loss of visitors who once viewed Uptown as a desirable destination.

The May 2016 "Best Neighborhoods" issue of Mpls/St. Paul magazine underscores this, focusing on the increased demand for neighborhoods providing "charming homes and walkable town villages" in urban settings, specifically calling out Mac-Groveland, Cathedral Hill and Highland Village in St. Paul, as well as the Linden Hills and East Isles areas of Minneapolis. This is why developments such as that proposed for 1174 Grand Avenue are out of place, both in terms of market demands and what the East Grand Avenue Overlay District explicitly seeks to avoid.

The precedent that would be set in approving a building as massive, non-compliant and at odds with the surrounding residential and commercial area as the 1174 Grand proposal is also of great concern. It would be an open invitation to other developers to tear down the early-20th century houses that are critical to the unique character of Grand Avenue and replace them with more massive structures that would not only destroy the ambiance, but strain the existing infrastructure and irreversibly damage what makes this area so special--killing the proverbial golden goose.

Aside from the substance of this development, the tactics of the developers in trying to push through this development have been distasteful, at best. They have repeatedly claimed that they have adjusted their plans after listening to the neighbors, City staff and City Council members, which has most decidedly not been the case. In fact, the footprint proposed has only declined by a few square feet, and their visual representations of the building have been very misleading in terms of its massiveness. The external design, which is a great departure from the context of the surrounding residential and commercial/mixed-use buildings, would be disruptive, despite their assertions that they are using similar materials. Poured concrete and sliding glass doors with industrial-metal balconies do not meet the letter or intent of TN2 zoning. And, the letter they sent to SHA and the neighborhood, dated March 21, ahead of the last BZA presentation--which threatened a vinyl-clad, 40-foot tall box that would not require variances should their proposal not go forward--did not speak to a good-faith effort to work with the neighborhood to achieve a mutually-satisfactory development that would enhance the fabric of the neighborhood.

I ask for your consideration in supporting the wishes of the Summit Hill Association and the many residents and businesses in the neighborhood who have been fighting for the past year and a half for a development which is respectful of and compliant with the EGAOD and TN2

zoning codes, the neighborhood comprehensive plan and the broader goals of enhancing a unique neighborhood.

Thank you,

Lori Brostrom  
7xx Summit Avenue