

From: [Sandor Gallo](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#); [*CI-StPaul_Contact-Council](#)
Subject: OPPOSITION ZF#21-269-061 695 Grand/Dixies CUP and Variances
Date: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 3:42:42 PM

Dear Commissioners

I am making public comment in **opposition to the CUP and variances for 695 Grand** Please deny both the CUP and all variances. I also hope that the City Council will deny the rezoning request from B2 to T3, in favor of retaining the B2 or rezoning to the more appropriate T2 (Traditional Neighborhood). The "3" is all about a larger scale project. We have similar issue of out-of-scale buildings down at the West end of Grand, and I support my neighbors to the East.

I would like to bring your attention to the Dissenting Opinion that was published as an "Appendix" within the letter submitted by the Summit Hill Association regarding the rezoning of 695 Grand. There was significant and majority opposition to this proposal, despite the way the vote landed in Summit Hill.

Appendix

In the SHA special board meeting hosted on June 17th, the board also expressed a desire to include dissenting opinions in our recommendation as there are significant differences of opinion on this project.

In general, we support mixed use redevelopment at 695 Grand. The primary objections concerned the excessive building mass, height, scale and insensitive site planning.

The proposed project goes counter to the St Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan policies LU-29 LU-34 LU-35 LU-36 and H-47 ("Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan"), which require compatibility and sensitivity to context regarding building mass, height, scale, design, and required transitions in scale down to adjoining residential districts and property. The building mass, heights, solar orientation and site planning do not conform with required design standards for Traditional Neighborhood. The intensity of T3 is appropriate for major transit and transportation corridors with wider street widths, like University and Snelling. T3 is too intense for a neighborhood scale mixed-use corridor, with a narrow side street that has long standing parking and traffic problems. Both B2 and T2 zoning allow a mixed use project by right, and are supported by the Summit Hill Neighborhood Plan ("Summit Hill / District 16 Neighborhood Plan"). The plan endorses the EGAOD, and T2 design standards (G10, G3). G5 specifically names B2 and lower intensity BC zoning as appropriate for Grand, and calls for the curtailment and more intense zoning such as B3. G6 opposes "rezonings and variances in those areas where parking and traffic problems create undo hardship." Other concerns expressed were the 'human-scale' neighborhood, and concern for negative impacts on the historic districts.

This project should not be allowed to go beyond the zoning requirements of the East Grand Avenue Overlay District, which was designed expressly to limit the height and scale of buildings, as well as limit negative effects from traffic and parking overflows. The proposed development considerably outsizes all prior developments on Grand Avenue, including existing out-of-scale developments like the mid-rise condominium at 745 Grand and Oxford Hill. The developer has not considered a smaller scale project such as others that have been successfully developed on Grand, Selby, University, Lake Street, and throughout the metro.

Included in dissent of rezoning but supportive of adding Household Units including luxury units, is the desire for a standard variance process which can force a compromise with conditions such as that achieved in a recent downtown Stillwater development that included money to be used for municipal parking.

Source, page <https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/2021-06/Correspondence%20from%20Summit%20Hill%20Association.pdf>

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