

**From:** [privateartmn](#)  
**To:** [Noecker, Rebecca \(CI-StPaul\)](#)  
**Date:** Monday, June 28, 2021 11:08:54 AM

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**Think Before You Click:** This email originated **outside** our organization.

Please find the letter below outlining our neighborhood protest of the development plans for 695 Grand Avenue and the implications of this kind of development for the future of Grand Avenue as a vibrant neighborhood and small business center in St Paul.

The treatment and the publications we have witnessed and received from leadership of the SHA is not representative and Does not reflect the overall view of the majority of Summit and Crocus Hill residents. This is disturbing. We have evidence of the leadership bias and unprofessional action re this project.

To: Peter Kenefick

VIA EMAIL

cc Summit Hill Association, Ari Parritz

RE: 695 Grand Proposaler below

We are writing to express our objection to the complete disregard you have shown for feedback from the neighbors. We expressed concern regarding the scale of the project, and you have returned with an **even taller building**. You **increased the ceiling heights on the main floor and for the penthouse**, so now the building height is 59' -10" instead of 56'-8" (to the top of the fifth floor roof). The first floor does not adjust for the hill, so the height at the corner of Grand and St Albans the building will be 3'-6" higher, rising 64'-4" from the sidewalk, just a person's height (5'-8") shy of **double the height limit**. We would welcome a mixed use development that would enhance Grand Avenue and Summit Hill, but this **proposal will severely alter the essential character and damage the livability, and harm the property values, and the locally designated historic district located across the alley**. Moreover, there are no practical difficulties preventing compliance with the zoning code. There are no unique circumstances or hardships caused by this large, evenly sloped parcel. This proposal is clearly and grossly **out of scale for the size of the lot and its location**.

We are a group of neighbors who have met and had many discussions in these three weeks since the first meeting. We represent our "Block Club" –households with frontage on the one way stretch of St Albans (both sides) as well as on the "shared alley" block bounded by Grotto-St Albans-Summit-Grand. It's a "one and a half block" sized block club. Our block club has had input from homeowner, renter, multi-generational, and co-housing households. Our block club includes varied household types: traditional 2-story and 3-story multifamily flats, a modern 4-unit multifamily with an elevator, converted mansion multifamily, townhouse, carriage house (with windows right on the alley), single family, duplex. The dominant form is multifamily. We have had three meetings: two outdoor socially distant meetings and a zoom meeting to increase our reach. We have had robust discussions on the sidewalk and in the alley, as well as on the computer via shared online tools and polls.

We can't in this letter fully summarize all the issues expressed. But we can convey the dominant themes.

The biggest concern and criticism of this proposed design center on four areas: building bulk and form, negative impacts on the neighborhood, lack of compliance with existing zoning rules and

regulations, and market concerns.

Among those, the underlying, most repeated concern is the building size and form. And, it bears emphasizing that **the too-large scale** (extra tall height combined with near complete lot coverage) **creates or contributes to all the other problems.**

If there can be one overarching recommendation it is this: **the project should be scaled to match the neighborhood**, within the zoning requirements including the East Grand Avenue Overlay district requirements.

Thank you for time and consideration

**SAGGS Block Club**

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone