

From: [Christopher Tyndall](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Project for 695 Grand Avenue
Date: Thursday, August 5, 2021 10:56:36 AM

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed construction project for 695 Grand Avenue in its current form. I am a resident of the Como Park neighborhood in Saint Paul but am a frequent visitor to the area around the site of the proposed project.

I am a strong proponent of creating in our city increased options for "high-density" living. However, entirely missing from the vast majority of discussions about "high-density" housing is the implied goal of such development, which we might appropriately call, "high-density lifestyle." This higher-density lifestyle would allow residents to live a greater part of their lives closer to home, to waste less time just getting from one remote location in the metro area to another, to interact more with their neighbors living around them and to consume fewer of the world's natural resources in so doing. "High-density housing" needs to be an integral part of a coordinated plan of development such that other essential resources are offered to this increased number of residents living in a particular geographical area. The problem with the current proposal is that it is not part of any sort of coordinated development plan at all and does absolutely nothing to promote this changed lifestyle. Whether there is one family living at 695 Grand Avenue or one thousand, the fact of the matter is that the neighborhood and transportation resources remain the same as before. For example, there is no reason why the tenants of the proposed over-sized apartment building will use transit alternatives any more than any of the other residents of the neighborhood. The project will serve only to increase automobile and commercial-vehicle traffic to an already over-burdened area.

There are other very important considerations as well. Grand Avenue is one of the few areas of the Twin Cities Metro Area with a very distinct architectural and developmental aesthetic. The moderately-proportioned buildings and ample sidewalks provide a pleasant environment for shopping, dining out and carrying out other forms of recreation or the simple activities of daily life. Grand Avenue is one of the few areas in the Metro Area where pedestrians actually represent a visible presence and the environment is not completely dominated by motor vehicles. The proposed structure for 695 Grand Avenue makes not the slightest effort to acknowledge in its design the existing aesthetic and patterns of usage of the surrounding neighborhood. The high, rectangular structure is in stark contrast with all of the other surrounding buildings. The vertical sides of the structure, pushed right up to the margins of the sidewalk, leave little open space for the comfortable movement of pedestrians, leaving them feeling confined and claustrophobic. The above-mentioned increases in vehicular traffic will further compromise pedestrian comfort and safety. Grand Avenue is a desirable destination in great part because of its unique and characteristic atmosphere. There is long-term cultural and economic value in trying to defend and preserve its particular aesthetic.

High-density housing projects need to be part of a coordinated plan that truly leads to a change in our wasteful, "low-density" lifestyle. This ideal can be applied to development along Grand Avenue by encouraging projects that reflects its rich history, are pleasing to look at and help create a welcoming and safe environment for foot traffic so that people can move about freely without there being risks to life or limb. None of these goals would deny opportunities for businesses in the area. On the contrary, they will guarantee a future supply of customers, for these developmental goals will truly turn Grand Avenue into a unique destination, both for residents of the neighborhood as well as visitors from outside (hopefully arriving by bus or bike). Please vote to protect and improve Grand Avenue. Please do not allow this development project as currently proposed.

Sincerely,
Christopher R. Tyndall
1247 Osage Street
St. Paul

From: [Christopher Tyndall](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)
Cc: [*CI-StPaul.PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)
Subject: ZF#21-269-061 695 Grand
Date: Monday, July 12, 2021 10:22:31 AM

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the current proposal for development at 695 Grand Avenue (ZF#21-269-061 695 Grand CUP and variances). I am a resident of St Paul living in the Como Park area. however, I am a frequent visitor to Grand Avenue and a longtime patron of many of the businesses in this area.

I should emphasize that I am a strong proponent of increasing areas of high-density living within the city limits. The purpose of high-density housing should be to mitigate the high-energy and natural-resource demands of our current sprawling lifestyle. High-density housing must be an important component in a general plan whose overall purpose is to provide residents of a particular neighborhood with all of the resources they need to live their lives, as much as possible, closer to home. In other words, we need to promote and encourage, not just "high-density housing," but a true "high-density lifestyle."

Whether 1 family or 100 families live at 695 Grand Avenue, the neighborhood resources remain the same. Let us consider as an example of my point just the question of transportation. Because viable transit options have not been provided and because other necessary resources are not available close by, the vast majority of residents at this location will still need to use cars to get to work, to appointments and for making other necessary trips to locations outside of the neighborhood. This disproportionate number of cars in such a small area will only increase traffic congestion and air pollution and greatly compromise safety for the many pedestrians who walk there. We also need to consider that the high number of residents will attract a constant flow of delivery trucks and vehicles. Just as they have always done, the vast majority of patrons to the three restaurants will drive in from outside the neighborhood. These restaurants will also require a steady flow of delivery and maintenance vehicles, while restaurant employees will drive to and from the location throughout the long work day that will extend late into the evening.

This building project is simply too big for an area that is already over-burdened by high traffic and has limited potential for the development of transit. It does nothing to encourage the use of transportation alternatives. It is not part of any sort of coordinated development plan for the area at all. Please respect the current zoning rules for this area of Grand Avenue. Please vote to deny a variance for this project in its current form.

Thank you very much for your consideration of my views on this important matter.

Sincerely,
Christopher R. Tyndall
1247 Osage Street
St Paul 55117