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AUG 17 2021
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Historic Hill Homes, Inc.

Councilmember Rebecca Noecker

Re: ZF#21-269-061 695 Grand CUP and Variances

To: All that have the Power to HALT this Monstrosity

I have lived around Grand Avenue for over 75 years; have owned a business on Grand Avenue; and have re-developed and restored over 30 historic properties in the immediate neighborhoods during my real estate career – including multiple National Register of Historic Places properties on Summit Avenue. I have served on the Board of Old Town Restorations, and worked on many, many Ramsey Hill Association neighborhood rejuvenation and community building projects.

Our condominium restoration projects have been recognized and featured in "Better Homes & Gardens", and "Housing" Magazines nationally, and in "Architecture Minnesota" several times State-wide, as well as in multiple local publications.

I cry out to object in the strongest possible terms to this developer's complete disregard for everything most of us hold dear about Grand Avenue. This project is an abomination to Grand Avenue's fragile, character and the "Je n'ai sais quoi" charm that makes Grand a unique and special "attraction" within the entire Twin-City Metro Region. This desecration completely flies in the face of everything, that hundreds and probably Tens-of-Thousands of Saint Paul residents, voters, and citizens have worked for literally decades to preserve and rebuild.

How many of you would squirt a tube of Fire Engine Red paint onto a one-of-a-kind "Renoir Masterpiece" ??

Grand's Traditional Zoning, and the "Overlay" rules were carefully crafted as thoughtful expressions of the collective will of this Neighborhood's Residents to protect and preserve Grand's character and charm. Please use these wise rules to reject this greed-driven, overly massive project - better solutions exist.

My prediction is, should this overbearingly large Giant be built, it will be held up Nationally by future urban planners as an example of exactly what NOT to do to a traditional neighborhood.

My message to the decision makers who must vote yay or nay: I personally know of an architect who voted to approve the 6 story, grossly "out-of-place" tower at 745 Grand & Grotto. He has told friends, that he wishes – every day he drives by – he had had the wisdom & courage to speak and vote against it – what a burden to bear.

Please don't make the same error, & live with unnecessary regret.

Honor the wishes of the over 90% of survey respondents (ie: Voters) who are against this obvious mistake.

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