

From: Margaret Isom
To: "Contact Council" <contact-council@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Date: Tue, 05 Oct 2021 11:59:26 -0500
Subject: Public Comment for Hearing on Lot Space Open Coverage at Highland Bridge On Oct 6, 2021

===== Forwarded message =====

Dear City Councilmembers –

I am disturbed that the straightforward intent of open space in the Ford Master Plan has been dissected with what appears to be an easy bypass to increase lot coverage and floor area ratio (FAR). It feels inevitable the build will result in saturated blocks, distinctly different from a *balanced* environment that's been sought for years through community engagement with the city and Ryan.

While green roofs offer powerful benefits, they've unfortunately been couched as a solution to provide an open air balance, far up on rooftops only the few living there can observe. Tying green roofs to increased lot coverage further chips away at open space. And with no guarantee that the repeated variance requests for increased height and lot coverage will stop, building mass only grows beyond what was before determined as the appropriate *balance*.

Lastly, the public process was stunted by lately received and not readily available materials to get informed and contribute to the conversation at both the district council and community level. While the Early Notification System (ENS) was triggered, the topic was studied by only a small group within Highland District Council, there were no community meetings as expected for a controversial topic where broad community input is warranted. Instead, community members were directed to send comments to the Planning Commission.

As a result, I ask that you table this pivotal decision until

- the city can demonstrate a responsible balance between building mass and open space. Depictions of how the resolution would play out, via 3d graphics or models, would be invaluable.
- Ryan can commit to limiting variance requests re: lot coverage, floor area ratio (FAR), set backs, and building heights
- the community is given a genuine opportunity to understand and weigh in on the proposal.
- you can integrate the above information to come to an objective, well researched conclusion.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,
Margaret Isom
1477 Highland Parkway
St. Paul, MN 55116