

From: [Martin Moen](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)
Subject: public testimony - 470 S Lexington Parkway development
Date: Wednesday, December 29, 2021 8:00:27 AM

Could you reply to us with a confirmation that you received this? Also, could you provide a link to instructions for watching Thursday's hearing online? Thank you!

December 29, 2021

TO: St. Paul Planning Commission – Zoning Committee

FR: Martin Moen & Gail Tischler
1136 James Ave, St. Paul, MN 55105

RE: 470 S Lexington Pkwy site plan review

We are writing to express our opposition to the proposed site plan and requested conditional use permit and variances. Our opposition is based primarily on the building's scale relative to our neighborhood and to its expected impact on street parking.

1. As proposed, the 114-unit 470 S Lexington Pkwy project is the largest, most dense project on either Randolph Avenue (from West 7th to Fairview) or Lexington Parkway (from Elway to I-94). Only the nearby Wilder Park Condominiums development exceeds this density. The people-related impacts on our immediate area will be significant:
 - a. We understand and are supportive of the transition to a transit-oriented future, but we are not there yet. Street parking on our block in particular is consumed daily by employees of businesses in the nearby Trader Joe's development. Eventually, fewer people will own cars, but in the near-term most of the people moving into the proposed 470 S Lexington property will own a car. The proposed development's growing imbalance of units-to-parking stalls will greatly intensify the pressure on our block's street parking.
 - i. It has been stated multiple times that residents do not own the street parking in front of their home. If we do not own it, why are we required to pay annual assessments? Do large multi-family projects pay higher rates to account for their "spillover" use of adjacent public streets for parking?
 - b. A second example of increased infrastructure use is increased demand for public and private infrastructure such as electricity, natural gas, Internet, and water. These are not limitless resources. We have seen no consideration by city planning staff of these items.
 - i. Why are there no renewable energy requirements for this development...

- i.e. solar, wind or geothermal?
 - c. From a traffic safety perspective, the added vehicle traffic (renters, guests, deliveries, service providers, etc.) generated by this proposed development will eliminate the benefits derived from the recent re-design of the Lexington-Randolph intersection. Consequently, additional investment of our taxpayer dollars will be required to alleviate future congestion.
 - d. It is likely that the impacts of this development will be doubled when the southern half of this block is developed to a similar density.
- 2. We also oppose the 470 S Lexington proposal because of the developers' lack of transparency. Since first proposed in June 2020, the developers have increased the number of units from 60 to 114. Meanwhile, the number of parking stalls has increased by one. Their related decisions to minimize green space to extract greater revenue from the property help create a strong impression of a development team that "push" the boundaries and do only the minimum that is required. Their stated commitment to affordable units also reflects this minimalist mindset.
 - a. During their June 2020 presentation, the developers stated a desire to build a "gateway" housing project for our neighborhood. If their greed forces them to request exceptions to zoning standards, what can we expect in terms of construction quality? This proposed development does not meet our definition of a "gateway" project of which our neighborhood can be proud.

As stated earlier, this project represents the "tip of the iceberg" for our immediate neighborhood in terms of people- and property-density. We are primarily a residential community with very few walkable businesses. The impact of 470 S Lexington will be dramatic and largely negative. That the proposal has gone this far without "push back" from city officials shows a callous disregard for existing residents. Remember that the impact of decisions you make now will be doubled when the southern half of the block is re-developed.