

October 7, 2020

Good evening,

My name is Daniel Choma and I live at 970 Thomas Ave. I am writing to comment on File#20-073-203 Ebisso Uka.

I welcome economic development in our neighborhood. However, I am concerned about some of the factors regarding this conditional use permit.

St Paul Zoning Code § 61.501 lists general conditions that must be met by all conditional uses. Item (c) indicates that the use “will not ... endanger the public health, safety, and general welfare” of the neighborhood surrounding the site.

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has designated small auto repair garages as being one of the land uses that significantly and negatively affects air pollution. (1) The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has indicated it is increasingly important for public health to reduce air pollution emissions from “scattered, less regulated sources such as transportation. (2) The Saint Paul Climate Action Resilience Plan shows that the location in question is at the highest risk level for air pollution related health risks. Generally, it says “Exposure to poor air quality can lead to an increased risk or severity of asthma, other respiratory illnesses, and can result in elevated risk of heart disease and stroke. Children and older community members, as well as those with pre-existing conditions, are more sensitive to poor air quality.” (3)

Respectfully, I would argue that continuing to facilitate a site that contributes to increased negative health risks of air pollution as well as other chemical pollutions implicit in the daily operation of an auto garage poses a significant and continue detriment to public health.

Furthermore, this site is zoned for both commercial and residential development. The Frogtown Small Area Plan has indicated that mixed use residential neighborhood development is a key goal of the surrounding community. Land use Goal L5 suggests supporting “Medium density Residential Apartments that are compatible with the scale of existing development.” Land use Goal L6 suggests supporting “rehabilitation of commercial, mixed use, and multifamily residential uses ... served by public transit.” (4)

While it is true that this land use exception would promote adding 3-5 jobs to the community, the neighborhood collectively has a greater need for housing to mitigate our housing crisis. Many grants exist to change formerly commercial buildings into much needed residential properties. (5) Facilitating an auto garage in a neighborhood that desperately needs housing is a profound missed opportunity. A simple google search shows there are 14 auto garages in the immediate area. Simply put, we need housing. We do not need another auto garage.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards,

Daniel Choma

970 Thomas Ave

- (1) <https://environmental-initiative.org/work/clean-air-minnesota/>
- (2) <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/air/minnesotas-air-quality>
- (3) <https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Mayor%27s%20Office/Saint%20Paul%20Climate%20Action%20%26%20Resilience%20Plan.pdf> pg 19
- (4) <http://www.frogtownmn.org/smallareaplan>
- (5) <https://www.allamericangrantguide.com/commercial-grants/>

Re: File# 20-073-203 Ebisso Uka

10/05/2020

Conditional use Permit for auto repair with modification of a ten-foot landscaped buffer requirement

Property Address: 1033 Thomas Ave, NE Corner of Thomas and Oxford

Dear District Council and Mr. Tony Johnson,

Upon receiving the note to the public, I, being a home owner at 1000 Thomas ask that this Conditional use permit include the previous condition that states that the personal and business vehicles all be kept on the property and not be allowed to use the streets surrounding the residential area of the property.

This has been a constant issue since this business took over the property. Our street, Thomas ave has been occupied almost entirely some days by personal and work vehicles from Rift Valley. I have had to walk down to the business several times and request that this practice be stopped. I have confronted staff several times when they park directly in front of our sidewalk leading to the street and have been told it is a public street.

Though I realize that, technically, it is a public street, I also know that the ORIGINAL permit to use this property stated that business and personal vehicles would be kept on the business property.

When I called the PED_Zoning Committee Secretary last week, Mr Johnson told me that this requirement was not listed in the new permit and that I needed to contact this Commission to request that it be included once again.

The neighbors of Thomas Ave between Chatsworth and Oxford would appreciate it is this requirement is added to the updated permit, please. If you have questions or comments, feel free to call me.

Thank you,

Judi Gordon

1000 Thomas Ave

Ph: 651 247 7579

From: Ron Phillips <ronphillips8@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 07, 2020 8:21 AM
To: *CI-StPaul_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary
Subject:File# 20-073-203 Ebisso Uka, Conditional use permit

Hello,

My name is Ron Phillips and I live and own the residence at 990 Thomas Ave , St Paul, MN 55104.

I'm writing today regarding the notification we received dated September 28, 2020 regarding the conditional use permit for the property address at 1033 Thomas Ave.

My wife and myself strongly oppose granting a permit for an auto repair shop on this property.

Thomas Ave is primarily a residential street that already has more traffic volume then it can reasonably accommodate.

Adding this type of facility will definitely increase daily traffic volume and lead to long term parking issues for those of us who need to use the street for parking and daily activities.

It is well known that auto shops typically have a large volume of cars that are simultaneously being worked on in various stages of disrepair.

These autos are usually parked for long periods of time and eventually Thomas Avenue and nearby cross streets will be used as a staging area with cars being stored on the streets for extended periods of time.

The increase in traffic, cars arriving via tow trucks and other large vehicle transport systems to and from the location will have a negative impact upon all who now must navigate an ever-increasingly crowded street. The potential for considerable noise, air and sight pollution is also of concern.

The surface of the road itself is in poor shape and the increased traffic will only hasten its demise and exacerbate its needed repair.

Thomas Avenue has been our home for the past 40 years. We, along with our neighbors, have fought hard to maintain the quality of life in our neighborhood. We have seen many changes in our neighborhood over this time, some better then others, but this change would definitely not be considered good.

Please do not grant this usage permit as it will be detrimental to our property values and the quality of life for many residents will be impacted negatively.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Ronald Phillips
Casey Peterson

990 Thomas Ave
St. Paul, Minnesota 55104

From: Romi Slowiak <romislowiak@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 07, 2020 1:38 AM
To: *CI-StPaul_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary
Cc: Daniel Choma

Subject: Comment on File#20-073-203 Ebisso Uka

Dear Zoning Committee,

I understand the case of and empathize with fellow citizen Dan Choma. He makes a compelling argument for NOT adding another auto repair shop to a neighborhood that already has 14 in the area. Air pollution is a crucial factor in urban liveability and planetary survival. Compounding it in an area already slated for housing development (Goal L6 of the area's land use plan) seems capriciously dangerous.

In harmony,

Romi Slowiak
1492 East Shore Drive
St. Paul, MN 55106