

city of saint paul
planning commission resolution
file number
date

WHEREAS, Wingspan Life Resources, File # 17-019-179, has applied for establishment of legal nonconforming use status to use the house as an office for two employees (along with use of the house as a residence for two people) under the provisions of § 62.109 (a) of the Saint Paul Legislative Code, on property located at 1239 Sherburne Ave., Parcel Identification Number (PIN) 34.29.23.13.0085, legally described as Syndicate No 5 Addition Lot 26 Blk 25; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Committee of the Planning Commission, on March 30, 2017, held a public hearing at which all persons present were given an opportunity to be heard pursuant to said application in accordance with the requirements of §61.303 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Planning Commission, based on the evidence presented to its Zoning Committee at the public hearing as substantially reflected in the minutes, made the following findings of fact:

1. According to the applicant, the subject property has been in use as office space since 1999. Prior to 2016, as many as nine employees worked from the location. Since that time, the number of employees working from the location has been two, with two separate employees of Wingspan Life Resources living at the property. Small (1-4 Wingspan clients) life skills training and social gatherings are also held at the subject property, sometimes during evening hours. A November 30, 2012 letter from a Saint Paul fire safety inspector notified the applicant that the use of the property as office space was not allowed under the R4 single-family zoning.
2. Section 62.109(a) of the zoning code provides that the Planning Commission may grant legal nonconforming status to uses or structures that do not meet the standards for legal nonconforming status in section 62.102 if the commission makes the following findings:
 - (1) *The use or a nonconforming use of similar or greater intensity first permitted in the same zoning district or in a less restrictive zoning district has been in existence continuously for a period of at least ten (10) years prior to the date of the application.* This finding appears to be met. The applicant has stated that the property has been in use as office space since 1999, but no documentation to this effect has been submitted.
 - (2) *The off-street parking is adequate to serve the use.* This finding is met. On a floor plan provided by the applicant, two rooms totaling approximately 260 square feet are designated as office space. The off-street parking requirement for office uses is 1 space per 400 sq. ft. of gross floor area. The two unrelated adults currently living at the

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in favor _____
against _____

property are considered a family for occupancy purposes, and the off-street parking requirement for a single-family residential unit is 1.5 spaces. The property currently includes paved, off-street parking for three vehicles, plus a garage. To ensure compliance with this condition, approval of the application should limit the number of employees that can use the subject property for office space, limit on the combined number of residents and office users, and should restrict the storage and/or overnight parking of Wingspan Life Resources vehicles at the site should also be a condition of approval.

- (3) *Hardship would result if the use were discontinued.* This finding is met. While office space is available at many locations, the applicant does not currently have alternative locations equally well-suited to providing like skills training and social gatherings that are a vital part of the services provide to their clients.
- (4) *Rezoning the property would result in "spot" zoning or a zoning inappropriate to surrounding land uses.* This finding is met. Administrative office space and mixed residential and commercial uses are first allowed in the OS office service district. The subject property is located within an area of uniformly R4 single-family residential zoning, and rezoning to OS to accommodate the proposed use would result in spot zoning.
- (5) *The use will not be detrimental to the existing character of development in the immediate neighborhood or endanger the public health, safety, or general welfare.* This finding can be met. While not documented, it is likely that previous use of the property for office space for as many as nine employees likely resulted in overcrowding and traffic and parking impacts to the immediate neighborhood. This is supported by a comment letter received that cited previous problems with vehicle parking in the immediate neighborhood of the subject property. To ensure compatibility with surrounding residential uses, a limit on the number of employees that can use the subject property for office space and a limit on the combined number of residents and office users should be a condition of approval. Restrictions on the storage and/or overnight parking of Wingspan Life Resources vehicles at the site should also be a condition of approval.
- (6) *The use is consistent with the comprehensive plan.* This finding is met. Strategy H3.4 of the Housing Chapter of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan directs the City to *Assist in the preservation and production of homeless and supportive housing*. The applicant provides support services that allow developmentally disabled individuals to live full, healthy lives in a variety of settings, including independently, in group homes, and in some cases with their families. The use of the subject property to provide services to those individuals is a vital part of that work.
- (7) *A notarized petition of at least two-thirds of the owners of the described parcels of real estate within one hundred (100) feet the subject property has been submitted stating their support for the use.* This finding is met. The petition was found sufficient on March 9, 2017: nineteen (19) parcels eligible; thirteen (13) parcels required; thirteen (13) parcels signed.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Saint Paul Planning Commission, under the authority of the City's Legislative Code, that the application of Wingspan Life Resources for the establishment of legal nonconforming use status to use the house as an office for two employees (along with use of the house as a residence for two people) at 1239 Sherburne Ave. is hereby approved with the following conditions:

1. The number of employees working at the location shall be limited to no more than two (2) individuals at any time.
2. Work duties of employees using the property at 1239 Sherburne as office space shall be directly related to use of the property by Wingspan Life Resources to provide client services to developmentally disabled clients.
3. The total number of individuals residing at or working from the property shall not exceed four (4) at any one time. An employee using the property at 1239 Sherburne as office space and residing at the property shall count as two (2) individuals for purposes of this condition.
4. No more than two (2) vehicles owned or used for commercial purposes by Wingspan Life Resources shall be parked overnight at 1239 Sherburne. These vehicles shall be parked in an off-street parking space. No other storage of vehicles owned or used for commercial purposes by Wingspan Life Resources shall be allowed at 1239 Sherburne.
5. Employees will display placards identifying their vehicles as belonging to an employee of Wingspan Life Resources when parked at 1239 Sherburne or on adjacent or nearby streets. Placards shall be individually numbered and a list of all placards with the name of the employee to whom a placard is assigned and a corresponding vehicle description shall be maintained by Wingspan Life Resources.
6. Employees shall park in off-street spaces when available.

ZONING COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

1. **FILE NAME:** Wingspan Life Resources **FILE #** 17-019-179
 2. **APPLICANT:** Wingspan Life Resources **HEARING DATE:** March 30, 2017
 3. **TYPE OF APPLICATION:** NUP - Establishment
 4. **LOCATION:** 1239 Sherburne Ave, between Syndicate and Griggs
 5. **PIN & LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** 342923130085, Syndicate No 5 Addition Lot 26 Blk 25
 6. **PLANNING DISTRICT:** 11 **PRESENT ZONING:** R4
 7. **ZONING CODE REFERENCE:** Sec. 62.109 (a)
 8. **STAFF REPORT DATE:** March 20, 2017 **BY:** Josh Williams
 9. **DATE RECEIVED:** March 13, 2017 **60-DAY DEADLINE FOR ACTION:** May 12, 2017
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- A. **PURPOSE:** Establishment of legal nonconforming use status to use the house as an office for two employees who do not live in the house (along with use of the house as a residence for two people).
- B. **PARCEL SIZE:** 4791 sq. ft.
- C. **EXISTING LAND USE:** R One-Family Dwelling and Office
- D. **SURROUNDING LAND USE:**
North: One-Family Residential (R4)
South: One- and Two-Family Residential (R4)
East: One-Family Residential (R4)
West: One-Family Residential (R4)
- E. **ZONING CODE CITATION:** §62.109(a) lists the conditions under which the Planning Commission may grant a permit to establish legal nonconforming use status.
- F. **HISTORY/DISCUSSION:**
- G. **DISTRICT COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION:** The District 11 Council had not commented as of the date of this report.
- H. **FINDINGS:**

1. According to the applicant, the subject property has been in use as office space since 1999. Prior to 2016, as many as nine employees worked from the location. Since that time, the number of employees working from the location has been two, with two separate employees of Wingspan Life Resources living at the property. Small (1-4 Wingspan clients) life skills training and social gatherings are also held at the subject property, sometimes during evening hours. A November 30, 2012 letter from a Saint Paul fire safety inspector notified the applicant that the use of the property as office space was not allowed under the R4 single-family zoning.
2. Section 62.109(a) of the zoning code provides that the Planning Commission may grant legal nonconforming status to uses or structures that do not meet the standards for legal nonconforming status in section 62.102 if the commission makes the following findings:
 - (1) *The use or a nonconforming use of similar or greater intensity first permitted in the same zoning district or in a less restrictive zoning district has been in existence continuously for a period of at least ten (10) years prior to the date of the application.* This finding appears to be met. The applicant has stated that the property has been in use as office space since 1999, but no documentation to this effect has been submitted.
 - (2) *The off-street parking is adequate to serve the use.* This finding is met. On a floor plan provided by the applicant, two rooms totaling approximately 260 square feet are designated as office space. The off-street parking requirement for office uses is 1 space per 400 sq. ft. of gross floor area. The two unrelated adults currently living at the property are considered a family for occupancy purposes, and the off-street parking requirement for a single-family residential unit is 1.5 spaces. The property currently includes paved, off-street parking for three vehicles, plus a garage. To ensure compliance with this condition, approval of the application should limit the number of employees that can use the subject property for office space, limit on the combined number of residents and office users, and should restrict the

storage and/or overnight parking of Wingspan Life Resources vehicles at the site should also be a condition of approval.

- (3) *Hardship would result if the use were discontinued.* This finding is met. While office space is available at many locations, the applicant does not currently have alternative locations equally well-suited to providing like skills training and social gatherings that are a vital part of the services provide to their clients.
 - (4) *Rezoning the property would result in "spot" zoning or a zoning inappropriate to surrounding land uses.* This finding is met. Administrative office space and mixed residential and commercial uses are first allowed in the OS office service district. The subject property is located within an area of uniformly R4 single-family residential zoning, and rezoning to OS to accommodate the proposed use would result in spot zoning.
 - (5) *The use will not be detrimental to the existing character of development in the immediate neighborhood or endanger the public health, safety, or general welfare.* This finding can be met. While not documented, it is likely that previous use of the property for office space for as many as nine employees likely resulted in overcrowding and traffic and parking impacts to the immediate neighborhood. This is supported by a comment letter received that cited previous problems with vehicle parking in the immediate neighborhood of the subject property. To ensure compatibility with surrounding residential uses, a limit on the number of employees that can use the subject property for office space and a limit on the combined number of residents and office users should be a condition of approval. Restrictions on the storage and/or overnight parking of Wingspan Life Resources vehicles at the site should also be a condition of approval.
 - (6) *The use is consistent with the comprehensive plan.* This finding is met. Strategy H3.4 of the Housing Chapter of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan directs the City to *Assist in the preservation and production of homeless and supportive housing.* The applicant provides support services that allow developmentally disabled individuals to live full, healthy lives in a variety of settings, including independently, in group homes, and in some cases with their families. The use of the subject property to provide services to those individuals is a vital part of that work.
 - (7) *A notarized petition of at least two-thirds of the owners of the described parcels of real estate within one hundred (100) feet the subject property has been submitted stating their support for the use.* This finding is met. The petition was found sufficient on March 9, 2017: nineteen (19) parcels eligible; thirteen (13) parcels required; thirteen (13) parcels signed.
3. ~~§62.109(a) states that the Planning Commission, in approving nonconforming use permits, may "allow a nonconforming use for a specified period of time and then require its removal by attaching an expiration date to the permit if the commission makes the following findings: (1) termination of the nonconforming use or the continued vacancy of the building in which the nonconforming use was located would cause significant hardship; (2) permitting the nonconforming use for a period of time will facilitate the transition to a conforming use; and (3) permitting the nonconforming use for a period of time is consistent with the public health, safety, comfort, morals, and welfare. The period of time for which the permit is valid shall be determined in each case by the commission and shall be based on the extent of the hardship."~~ These findings are met. The termination of the use would leave the applicant without a site well-suited to provision of life skills training and social gatherings for the organization's client. The applicant has agreed to propose a reasonable timeline for the organization to transition the property to a permitted use or divest of the property. Provided a limit is placed on the number of employees that can use the subject property for office space and on the combined number of residents and office users is a condition of approval, and restrictions are placed on the storage and/or overnight parking of Wingspan Life Resources vehicles at the site, the continued use of the property for a limited period of time is consistent with public health, safety, comfort, morals, and welfare. Restrictions on the storage and/or overnight parking of Wingspan Life Resources vehicles at the site should also be a condition of approval.

- I. **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Based on the above findings, staff recommends approval of the establishment of legal nonconforming use status to use the property at 1239 Sherburne as an office for two employees (along with use of the house as a residence for two people) subject to the following conditions:
1. The number of employees working at the location shall be limited to no more than two (2) individuals at any time.
 2. Work duties of employees using the property at 1239 Sherburne as office space shall be directly related to use of the property by Wingspan Life Resources to provide client services to developmentally disabled clients.
 3. The total number of individuals residing at or working from the property shall not exceed four (4) at any one time. An employee using the property at 1239 Sherburne as office space and residing at the property shall count as two (2) individuals for purposes of this condition.
 4. No more than two (2) vehicles owned or used for commercial purposes by Wingspan Life Resources shall be parked overnight at 1239 Sherburne. These vehicles shall be parked in an off-street parking space. No other storage of vehicles owned or used for commercial purposes by Wingspan Life Resources shall be allowed at 1239 Sherburne.
 5. Off street parking for at least one (1) private vehicle shall be provided at 1239 Sherburne. Employees will display placards identifying their vehicles as belonging to an employee of Wingspan Life Resources when parked at 1239 Sherburne or on adjacent or nearby streets. Placards shall be individually numbered and a list of all placards with the name of the employee to whom a placard is assigned and a corresponding vehicle description shall be maintained by Wingspan Life Resources.
 - 5.6. Employees shall park in off-street spaces when available.
 6. The property shall be vacated or returned to a use permitted in the R4 One Family Residential district on or before <DAY MONTH YEAR>.

PARKING PLAN: 1239 SHERBURNE

Proposed Plan:

We propose the following parking plan for consideration by the St. Paul Planning Commission and to be put into effect immediately.

Company vehicles:

- *Two of the Wingspan 4 vehicles (Wingspan's In Home program has just been gifted with an additional vehicle, making the total 4, not 3 as we originally reported) will be parked in the rear of the house whenever they are not in use. The two other vehicles used for this program will be relocated to the office at 30 East Plato Blvd.*
- *The 2 staff using the home as office space will keep their vehicles parked in the back parking area and off the street.*
- *Resident vehicles: Each of the two residents will get parking permits for their vehicles so they may be parked either on the street or in back.*
- *Resident's visitors' vehicles: A visitor who comes to see the 2 residents may park on the street but will follow the parking limits posted on Sherburne Ave. They will not leave a vehicle on the street overnight.*
- *All employees that visit the house regularly will be required to display a card that identifies them as Wingspan employees. Each card will be numbered and a list of employee's card numbers will be maintained at the office and available for review at any time. If there is a complaint or any neighbor expresses concern about a vehicle we can identify it as our problem and quickly rectify the matter. We will maintain vigilance in this matter to assure that we are not **disrupting the neighbors**.*
- *If an employee is parked on Sherburne they will comply with the posted time limits on Sherburne Ave.*
- *The entire team and the young men who live at the home will be meeting at our Plato office on April 22nd where they will be informed of the rules we now have in place and issued their numbered card to identify their vehicle.*
- *There are several parking spaces in the rear of the house and all staff will be advised to use these spots whenever possible.*

Therese Davis

Executive Director

April 13, 2017

Re: File 17-023-698, Conditional use permit to expand the campus onto lots zoned RT1 two-family residential to expand a parking lot, 381-393 Bates Ave, NW corner on 6th Street East and Bates Ave

Dear Zoning Committee of the Saint Paul Planning Commission,

Hello, my name is Danielle Winner. I'm a resident of the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood in Saint Paul and live at 355 Bates, about a half a block from the site in question, 381-393 Bates Ave. I appreciate the opportunity to submit comments on this matter, and appreciate Mr. Reilly's help in answering my questions about this meeting.

I have three things to say about the proposal:

1. The proposed parking lot seems unnecessary; has the school demonstrated, with data, that the additional parking is actually needed to meet the current and future parking needs of the school?
2. The proposed parking lot would not be aesthetically pleasing to nearby residents; has the school demonstrated that it considered more residential-friendly uses, and that these uses were found to be not in the best interest of both the school and the residents?
3. The proposed parking lot does not help address current traffic needs of the neighborhood, and in fact might exacerbate them; has the school considered measures that might help reduce the need for transit-by-car in the first place?

The following sections are discussions of each of these items in detail.

1. The proposed parking lot seems unnecessary

The University's proposal would add 42 spaces to the existing 966 spaces. Isn't 966 enough to meet the existing and future need? I walk by those lots multiple times every day, and I have never seen them even close to capacity. In fact, I'm often surprised by how empty they are.

My observations of the parking lots are clearly anecdotal, and maybe it would be good to have some evidence. I would love to see some data from Metro State on this. The data should show not simply how many cars move through the lots in a day, but specifically: how often is the parking lot actually close to capacity? What does the University expect in terms of future enrollment growth, and is there going to be a student housing option that might mitigate the need for future parking due to less commuting to the campus? Has the need for this parking lot really been fully revisited, or is it just being pursued because that's what was in the original plan?

I know Saint Paul has some weird parking rules that I don't fully understand, so it could be that Metro State is required to get more. But I don't think it's entirely unreasonable for Metro State to seek a variance to those rules if the data does not show an actual need for this additional parking.

2. The proposed parking lot would not be aesthetically pleasing for nearby residents

A surface parking lot is certainly one of the least aesthetically pleasing things that can be done with an empty lot. It sits empty most of the time and doesn't look nice. When I'm in my backyard at night, I can see the bright stadium lights from the existing parking lot. When I have my windows open, I hear a loudspeaker announcement every night stating that the parking ramp is closing (although I haven't heard it in a while, so they may have stopped this- in which case, thank you, Metro State). It's kind of like living next to a small ball park, but without the fun part.

Before the parking ramp was built, I had heard that the top of the very ramp would be at the same street level as Bates, with green space on top that would be accessible to residents. I was really excited. I don't know why that didn't happen, but it was a let down. On top of this, Metro State isn't considered part of the Historic District, so they don't need to worry about integrating their spaces into the neighborhood. But this type of visual integration is really important to residents.

As I'm sure the Committee has heard before, Dayton's Bluff is a neighborhood that cares a lot about aesthetics. People live here because they like the old buildings and old spaces. My own house is one of the flashy new 1924 models, but I live next door to recently renovated, *beautiful* Victorian with amazing landlords and tenants. I live across from a house with stonework that came from the leftovers of the James J. Hill House. I live down the street from the childhood home of United States Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun. Dayton's Bluff is really an incredible place to call home.

I don't want to be a NIMBY type; I know nobody wants to live directly across parking lot. But when you live in a Victorian house that you can see in the background of old black and white pictures of the Saint Paul, one which you've are spending years carefully restoring and making sure is in line with the Historic Preservation guidelines, and your new view from the porch is a 42 space surface lot that was just slapped down? It's disheartening, to say the least.

The transition between the proposed parking lot and the existing residential area is just too abrupt. There needs to be some kind of buffer parking and residences. Has the University considered all options? Some potential options could include:

- A small park, similar to the one Metro State developed on the other side of the ramp.
- Something maintained by an existing neighborhood organization, like a garden managed by Urban Roots, a youth-focused organization whose mission is "to cultivate and empower youth through nature, healthy food, and community."
- Something that could save the University money on utility bills, such as an interactive clean energy or energy storage demonstration area.
- Something that ties into an existing course of study at the University, or one of the "Community Engagement" courses listed on the University's website- maybe something like an outdoor student and community art gallery.

I wonder if the parking lot is a temporary holdover until the funding is there for a new building; but if this is the case, does this really necessitate something ugly in the meantime? I have not heard any other types of proposals about this space, and it seems like no others were considered. I find this troubling. The University says that the parking lot will be a good thing for the neighborhood, but has the school really demonstrated that it looked at other residential-friendly options?

3. The proposed parking lot does not help address current traffic needs of the neighborhood, and in fact might exacerbate them.

It sounds like this site was originally part of the 2011 parking garage plan, which then got derailed by the adobe house. I can understand why the school wants to build a parking lot here, because it's close to the original plan. And I would imagine that when the parking lot was proposed, residents were generally okay with it, because it meant that students wouldn't be taking all the street parking.

In its proposal, Metro State mentions that the proposed parking lot would be good for residents because it would provide additional parking opportunities. But things have changed since the original plan was approved in 2011. We've had three major developments in the immediate area: the expansion of Metro State, the new Senior Living facility, and the new Mississippi Market. All of these developments have been great, but they have brought more people, with more cars, resulting in more congestion on the existing streets.

The lack of street parking isn't the main problem anymore; it's the traffic. We are all feeling the stress on the existing street design from the influx of cars. For example, I attended a neighborhood community meeting last month that allowed residents to vote on a maintenance-free improvement project in the area. The overwhelming winner? A pedestrian traffic light on East 7th.

Every day, I walk down Bates, across 6th street, past the proposed site, and across East Seventh; and every day, I walk back home along the same route. Here is what I see: when I cross 6th street, cars are coming directly off the freeway, not stopping for pedestrians, and sometimes turning into the Metro State ramp. When I cross East 7th, which is considered Highway 61 in that stretch, it's even worse for pedestrians.

For example, last month, I missed my bus and was late for work because people would not stop for me at the crosswalk at Bates and 7th. There was ample time, it shouldn't have been a problem; but it didn't matter, and I just watched my bus drive by as drivers continued to not stop, even though I had one foot in the crosswalk and was clearly trying to wave the bus down.

This last Monday was much more serious: I almost got hit by a car on this same crosswalk. The only reason I didn't get hit was because I stopped, not because the driver stopped. It was terrifying. And I'm a thirty year old, healthy, handi-capable adult. What would have happened to someone else?

Again, this is all anecdotal, but three days ago, the Pioneer Press reported that in 2016, 188 pedestrians were hit by drivers on Saint Paul streets, and another 54 have been hit in 2017 so far, including 35-year-old Scott Spoo who was killed in late February. Traffic is clearly a problem in Saint Paul, and Dayton's Bluff is no exception.

I understand that Metro State isn't the sole reason for our traffic problems. But Metro State's expansion coincided with these other expansion projects, meaning there's more people and more traffic, but the same street design (the exception to this is the pedestrian lights on Maria that allow Metro State students cross from the parking lots to the main building, but this does little for the surrounding residents). Urban design decisions that make spaces more car-centric, like the proposed parking lot, do not help alleviate traffic problems, and might actually exacerbate them by normalizing transit by car.

I work in energy, and one of the things we worry about is whether we have overbuilt capacity to meet demand. We build extensive networks of transmission lines and generation plants, sometimes just to accommodate a couple of peak days in the summer, during those times when everyone is running their air conditioners. But if that capacity is only needed a couple of times a year, is it really worth it to make those capital investments? It's often more cost effective to do what we in electricity call "peak shaving," and try to curtail the peak demand on those couple of days through measures such as energy conservation.

Maybe, rather than planning for more cars, the University should be working on some of that "peak shaving" by encouraging other forms of transit. For example, it's no secret how dangerous it is to bike around Metro State; what can the University do to meaningfully change this?

I'm lucky for my generation; I was able to buy my house on Bates when I was 26. Now I'm about to turn 31, and am planning for kids. But I don't want to raise kids on our street, simply because there's just too much traffic for me to feel like it's safe for kids. I want a street that's more pedestrian-friendly and makes all forms of transit easy. Bates isn't cutting it, at least not near the intersection of Bates and 6th, the location of the site. I'm not saying I'll move if this parking lot happens, but it seems like the parking lot is representative of a bigger trend that only continues to encourage driving and discourage other forms of transit in our neighborhood. What does it say if decisions like this encourage young working families like ours to leave?

In Sum:

1. The proposed parking lot seems unnecessary; has the school demonstrated, with data, that the additional parking is actually needed to meet the current and future parking needs of the school?
2. The proposed parking lot would not be aesthetically pleasing to nearby residents; has the school demonstrated that it considered more residential-friendly uses, and that these uses were found to be not in the best interest of both the school and the residents?
3. The proposed parking lot does not help address current traffic needs of the neighborhood, and in fact might exacerbate them; has the school considered measures that might help reduce the need for transit-by-car in the first place?

Final thought: that little park that Metro State built on the other side of the parking ramp on Bates- I rarely see it unoccupied. Students and the new senior residents are using it every single day. In my opinion, this space has resulted in a lot of goodwill between the University and the residents. That's the kind of use I would like to see for this spot, and that's the kind of relationship I would like to see between our neighborhood and the University.

Thank you,

Danielle Winner
355 Bates Ave
Saint Paul, MN 55106

city of saint paul
planning commission resolution
file number _____
date _____

WHEREAS, Turk Trust et al, File # 17-015-513, has applied for a rezoning from B2 Community Business to T3 Traditional Neighborhood under the provisions of § 61.801(b) of the Saint Paul Legislative Code, for property located at 246-286 Snelling Ave S, Parcel Identification Numbers (PINs) 10.28.23.22.0164, 10.28.23.22.0164, 10.28.23.22.0165, 10.28.23.22.0166, 10.28.23.22.0167, 10.28.23.22.0168, and 10.28.23.22.0169, legally described as Sylvan Park Addition to the City of Saint Paul, Lots 1-10, Block 4; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Committee of the Planning Commission, on April 13, 2017, held a public hearing at which all persons present were given an opportunity to be heard pursuant to said application in accordance with the requirements of § 61.303 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Planning Commission, based on the evidence presented to its Zoning Committee at the public hearing as substantially reflected in the minutes, made the following findings of fact:

1. LeCesse Development has a purchase agreement for all properties proposed for rezoning. They are proposing a mixed use building that would cover nearly the entirety of the properties.
2. The proposed zoning is consistent with the way this area has developed. The surrounding area and subject property is currently characterized by a mix of commercial and residential uses. The subject property is currently occupied by commercial buildings. Two lots at the southern end of the Snelling face of the block on which the subject property is located were recently redeveloped into a new, one-story commercial building. The two lots were previously occupied by a former service station and a single family residence. Two-story buildings with first floor commercial space and second story residential units occupy the northeast and southwest corners of the intersection of St. Clair and Snelling Avenues, and several multistory commercial buildings occupy the St. Clair block face just east of the subject property. Single family homes are located to the east of the subject property across the north-south alley that bisects the block on which the subject property is located. There are also single family homes across Snelling Avenue and south of the mixed use building at the corner with St. Clair, although these homes are oriented toward the intersecting residential streets rather than Snelling Avenue. The campus of Macalester College occupies the northwest corner of the intersection of Snelling and St. Clair Avenues. The subject property is currently zoned B2, which allows for a range of commercial uses. The proposed T3 traditional

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in favor _____
against _____

neighborhood zoning allows a similar range of commercial uses, along with a range of residential uses. The stated intent of the T3 district is to "provide for higher-density pedestrian- and transit-oriented mixed-use development". In addition to larger sites that can accommodate new mixed-use neighborhoods, it is also intended for use on "smaller sites in an existing mixed-use neighborhood center" which include "a mix of uses, including residential, commercial, civic and open spaces" and a "mix of housing types" within "a reasonable walking distance". The subject property is also located on the A Line BRT, a high-frequency transit line with off-board ticketing. There is an A Line station on the north side of St. Clair Avenue.

3. The proposed zoning is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The future land use map of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan (2010) identifies Snelling Avenue and the portion of St Clair Avenue including the subject property and properties immediately to the east as a Mixed-Use Corridor. Mixed-Use Corridors are intended to accommodate a mix of commercial, residential, civic, and institutional uses, with residential units at densities of 30-150 units per acre. Policy LU 1.2 of the Macalester-Groveland Community Plan (2016) expresses a strategy to "maintain and/or establish zoning that encourages higher-density (taller) development at the intersection of mixed-use corridors and lower-density (shorter) development at mid-block of mixed-use corridors."
4. The proposed zoning is compatible with surrounding commercial and residential uses. The proposed zoning will allow mixed use development in an area that is already characterized by a similar mix of commercial and residential uses. The proposed zoning would allow for greater density of development as measured by building height and floor area ratio (FAR). The current B2 zoning allows a maximum FAR of 2.0 and a height of 30 feet, with greater height allowed with increased setbacks. The proposed T3 zone allows a maximum FAR of 3.0 and a height of 55' for mixed use buildings, with greater height allowed by a CUP or with additional setbacks from side and rear property lines. However, allowed building heights are reduced to 25' at the property line where T3-zoned properties abut RL, R1-R4, and RT1-RT2 zoning districts (in this case the subject property abuts properties zoned R4 single family). Allowed height at the property line in these situations can be increased with approval of a conditional use permit (CUP) by the Planning Commission.
5. Court rulings have determined that "spot zoning" is illegal in Minnesota. Minnesota courts have stated that this term *"applies to zoning changes, typically limited to small plots of land, which establish a use classification inconsistent with the surrounding uses and create an island of nonconforming use within a larger zoned property."* The proposed zoning would not constitute spot zoning. Although no T3 zoning exists in the immediate proximity of the subject property, it is used elsewhere along Mixed Use Corridors and the existing B2 and the proposed T3 district are reasonably similar in terms of the range of uses and intensity of development allowed.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Planning Commission recommends to the City Council that the application of Turk Trust et al for a rezoning from B2 Community Business to T3 Traditional Neighborhood for property at 246-286 Snelling Ave S be approved.

Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul)

From: Lisa Maloney-Vinz <maloneyvinz@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 11, 2017 10:36 PM
To: Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul)
Subject: too tall proposed development on Snelling Ave

Hi Mr. Williams,

I am adding my message to you along with many of my neighbors to simply say that I am in favor of improved development on the southeast corner of Snelling and St. Clair, BUT 6 floors is much, much too tall. If you drive around St. Paul, up and down Snelling as well as on Grand, newer housing developments have 3 floors of units and many provide parking within the development. Anything larger than that will just be an eyesore and not safe nor a mark of responsible and sustainable development. We are counting on you to represent the residents of our MacGroveland neighborhood (that we all greatly adore and care about!) and ensure that the development as proposed is not approved. We need a new and revised, especially smaller plan.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Respectfully,
Lisa Maloney-Vinz
1552 Goodrich Ave (resident since 2000)
541-238-2154

Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul)

From: Sean Ryan <seanrryan@googlemail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 11, 2017 8:58 PM
To: Thompson, Lucy (CI-StPaul); Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Fwd: LeCesse Development Corp. at St Clair and Snelling Aves

Dear Saint Paul City Planners,

My family and I are 5 year MacGroveland homeowners and this letter is against the proposed development by the LeCesse Development Corp. at St Clair and Snelling Aves. Let me start by saying that I am not against the redevelopment of that section of Snelling Avenue, but the proposed building is wrong for that location. It is too big compared to the surrounding single family homes and commercial buildings, it reduces the number of retail business from 5 to 1, and it detrimentally takes away from the character of the neighborhood.

The proposed building will be 5 ½ stories, 61'6" tall, and nearly a block long. The surrounding area has 2 and 3 stories commercial/retail buildings and 2 story single family homes. The proposed building is way too big. This will not blend in or add to the character of the neighborhood. Supporters will point out that nearby Maclester College has buildings of this size, but Maclester College is cohesive campus of complementary architecture styles and sizes. There are no complementary style or sized buildings of the proposed building at the corner of St Clair and Snelling Aves. The proposed building is the equivalent of an elephant. It would be appropriate in a tent full of other elephants (i.e. University Ave, West Seventh St, and Highland Village), but the proposed location is a house full of people. It would not be appropriate there. You wouldn't allow an elephant in your house and you shouldn't allow the LeCesse Development Corp. proposed building at the corner of St Clair and Snelling Aves. Build this somewhere else in St Paul where it will fit in or scale it down significantly. The developer claims that they need to make it that tall and big to recoup the cost of construction. I don't believe that. There are plenty of other 2 and 3 story apartment and mixed use buildings in the MacGroveland neighborhood that blend in and add to the character of the neighborhood. Do all those buildings operate at a loss? If they could scale the building down to max 3 stories, I would support it, but not 5 ½ stories.

My next point of contention is the reduction of retail businesses from 5 to 1. Currently that strip of Snelling Ave is home to 5 businesses: a dry cleaner, a florist, a bakery, a salon, and a lamp store. The plans of the proposed building show a single retail space at the corner of St Clair and Snelling Aves. This is an 80% reduction in retail businesses on that block. One of the great things about the MacGroveland Neighborhood is the mix of business and residential. I often walk in the neighborhood with my family and support the local

businesses. The proposed building will reduce what makes MacGroveland great. Many will say that the current businesses are old and failing and should be redevelopment. I do not disagree with that. I am not against redevelopment for that location. I am against the details of the proposed project. The developer claims that they may be able to add more retail in the future if there is need for fewer parking spaces, but there is no guarantee that that will come to pass. If they reduce the number of apartments, they would need fewer parking spaces and would have room for more retail spaces. Currently there are contiguous businesses from Stanford Ave to St Clair Ave along the east side of Snelling Ave. Pedestrians are able to go from business to business. In the proposed building, there is a single retail space at the corner of St Clair and Snelling Aves which will leave a huge gap between Mac's Fish and Chips and the new retail space. Pedestrians, myself included, will be less likely to walk along that section of Snelling and will frequent all the businesses in the area less often. Having more retail businesses along Snelling Ave will drive more foot traffic and help all the businesses in that area. Replace the current businesses with spaces for at least the same number or more new businesses.

Finally the proposed project will be detrimental to the character of the neighborhood. St Paul is a city of neighborhoods and micro-neighborhoods. MacGroveland is known for quaint single family homes, small apartments, and small commercial/retail buildings. The buildings of the MacGroveland neighborhood are an essential piece of what makes this neighborhood one of the best and most desirable in St Paul. This proposed building will be a giant brick and metal wall that stretches along Snelling Ave for nearly a block. There are no other buildings, outside of the Maclester College campus, of this height and scale in the MacGroveland neighborhood. No matter how much brick and other architectural features the developers add, the proposed building is still going to be a giant wall devoid of retail businesses stretching for most of a block. This will reduce the desirability of the immediate area and the neighborhood as a whole causing property values to go down and reduce taxes for the city. Supporters of the project claim that high density is necessary to increase the tax base. I'm not against high density. Instead of one single giant apartment building as proposed, build a few reasonable sized 2 and 3 story apartment buildings spread around the neighborhood. Or move this project to a different part of the city where it will fit in with the neighborhood (i.e. University Ave, West Seventh St, Highland Village, etc...).

In conclusion, the proposed building by the LeCesse Development Corp. at St Clair and Snelling Aves should be denied permission to be built based on being too big, reduction of retail businesses, and being detrimental to the character of the neighborhood. If the LeCesse Development Corp. can reduce the height and scale of the building and keep the same number of existing retail spaces, I would be in favor of it, but with the current design, I am not. Please vote no on this project.

Sean and Brandi Ryan

612-244-6917

1610 Palace Ave, St Paul 55105

seanrryan@gmail.com, mamaneedsjava@gmail.com

Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul)

From: Margaret Flanagan <flanagan@iphouse.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 11, 2017 6:43 PM
To: Anderson, Tia (CI-StPaul); Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Snelling / St Clair Proposed Development

Please enter the following letter into the public record re: the proposed Snelling/St Clair development advanced by LeCesse Development. Thank you.

DATE: April 11, 2017

TO: Josh Williams/Tia Anderson

RE: Proposed Snelling Saint Clair Development

The Macalester Groveland Housing and Land Use Committee (MG HLU) recently voted to accept and approve a zoning change and site development proposal for a six-story 128-unit apartment development on Snelling and Saint Clair Avenues – *without having a final design plan available* from Florida-based LeCesse Development to guide its decision. Further, Committee leadership effectively dismissed and/or silenced the majority of the neighbors who came to the Committee meeting to voice their concerns.

This was the latest in a long line of MG HLU meetings re: the LeCesse development project that began last August. Since that time, LeCesse has returned again and again to the Committee with essentially the same plan. Meetings with the neighbors have yielded few changes to the original, nondescript “design” – a plan that makes no effort to be architecturally interesting or correspond to the scale and look of nearby structures. If approved, LeCesse’s massive wall of concrete will extend nearly a full city block – completely overshadowing 1.5-story bungalows and backyards, immediately to the east.

The Housing and Land Use Committee’s vote to accept LeCesse’s proposal contradicts the Mac-Groveland’s own Community Plan Recommendations for Urban Design, particularly those that call for “housing and commercial properties that are compatible with the character of the neighborhood.” The MG HLU Committee did not fulfill their mission to represent their constituency – and turned a deaf ear to their own guiding principal to “*apply City guidelines for land use in a way that recognizes the unique nature of our Macalester-Groveland residences, businesses and institutions and enhances the livability of our neighborhood.*” 128 apartment units, space for 206 cars and minimal retail (1800 sq. ft.) that displaces five existing businesses will essentially create a garage for human beings who, as renters, will have no long term investment in the neighborhood. **Additional traffic, congestion, exhaust, noise, and pedestrian safety are public health concerns no one has yet addressed.**

Those who have attended the Housing and Land Use Committee’s meetings understand and welcome redevelopment of a blighted corner. The neighbors recognize that high density housing along the Snelling Corridor, an increased tax base and visually attractive development (that enhances and complements the scale and character of properties nearby) will contribute to the neighborhood’s long term well-being and vibrancy.

THIS project will adversely affect the Snelling/Saint Clair intersection and adjacent blocks for generations to come. If zoning changes approved at the MG HLU Committee are passed at the City level, this and future developments can reach 55’ tall or up to 90’ with a conditional use permit. The LeCesse Development Plan now advanced to the Saint Paul

Planning Commission and City Council can proceed only with a conditional use permit, allowing LeCesse's six-story development to be built, complete with lighted towers at each end reaching to 71' feet. It will be *three times the height of other structures* at the Snelling/Saint Clair intersection, and notable architecturally only for its utter lack of design and unremitting wall of concrete.

The LeCesse proposal – an uninspired six-story 128-unit box – is simply too massive a project to impose upon one of Saint Paul's most desirable residential neighborhoods.

LeCesse representatives were clear last August that the development's height was not negotiable -to make the project financially viable *for them*. Are we, the tax-paying citizens of Saint Paul, concerned about a Florida-based developer's financial picture? Should we not, instead, be focused on the incalculable cost of this project's long term negative impact on our neighborhood?

I hope the Saint Paul Planning Commission recognizes that the majority of Macalester-Groveland neighbors welcome attractive, responsible zoning and development for this important property. Surely the City of Saint Paul can attract a quality developer that can work with Mac Groveland homeowners and businesses to respond creatively and responsibly to the unique opportunities this prized parcel of land affords.

Regards,
M.C. Flanagan
275 S Warwick

Saint Paul, MN 55105

Margaret C. "Peg" Flanagan
(651) 230.1233
flanagan@iphouse.com

Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul)

From: Lori Brostrom <lbrostrom@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:36 PM
To: Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul)
Cc: Lori Brostrom
Subject: Comment: Snelling/St. Clair Proposed Development

I am writing in opposition to the proposed rezoning and conditional use permit (CUP) for the development which is proposed for Snelling and St. Clair avenues. My reasons are several:

1. This would be a spot rezoning at a time when a much larger study is being undertaken to evaluate rezoning and development along Snelling between I94 and Ford Parkway. This is not only poor planning practice, but it may well result in a building which is inconsistent with the eventual zoning for those parcels both in terms of use and design, as well as other initiatives such as preserving affordable housing.
2. This building as proposed is at odds with the character of the surrounding neighborhood:
 1. It is way too massive compared to the buildings around it and would dwarf them.
 2. The height is excessive--it would be the tallest building for literally miles and create a bad precedent for future development.
 3. The contemporary style is inconsistent and jarring in the context of a largely small-scale residential and institutional use--which date back 100 years or more. Furthermore, potentially historic designations in Mac-Groveland as a result of the recent historic survey add even more reason to make the design more consistent.
3. The greatly increased size and density will result in negative impacts to the surrounding neighborhood:
 1. Increased traffic and noise
 2. Reduced sun and increased shadowing for residences to the east and north
 3. Increased parking burden on neighboring businesses and residences; even with off-street parking, it does not sufficiently account for multiple vehicles/unit, nor guest parking
 4. Decreased privacy for neighbors for blocks on all sides, especially those in the predominantly single-family residences with yards
4. It is at odds with the City's comprehensive plan which encourages mixed-use development along transit corridors. In this case, it replaces several small, locally-owned neighborhood businesses with a residential-only use.
5. It exacerbates the trend toward replacing more affordable housing with luxury housing, eliminating the possibility of alternative, viable options for the demographic that lives in this neighborhood, i.e., students, older, long-term St. Paul residents who wish to age in place, younger families, etc.

In short, I feel that this is a development which is not only out of place and out of character with the neighborhood in its design, size and likely negative impacts, but also represents an abrogation by the City to ensure planning for infill development that meets the needs of a broader range of its citizens.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lori Brostrom
710 Summit Avenue Apt. 1
St. Paul MN 55105

Englund, Cherie (CI-StPaul)

From: Erin O'Gara <ogara.erin@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2017 2:25 PM
To: Englund, Cherie (CI-StPaul); #CI-StPaul_Ward3
Subject: New apartment building at Snelling/St.Claire - public transportation

Hello,

I live at 1564 Sargent Ave. and wanted to provide one bit of input on the proposed building since I will not be able to make it to today's meeting. I raised this issue at one other meeting I attended last summer as well. My husband and I decided to purchase in Mac/Groveland in part, because of the access to wonderful public transportation in our community. I take the A-Line (and Blue Line) every day, and find it to be clean, fast and reliable. I would like to encourage the new apartment building (if it is approved for re-zoning) to please consider providing discount vouchers or other incentives for residents to be car-free or just take public transportation as much as possible.

Some options that I have seen for this include: providing free bike storage; providing multiple bike storage racks and locks with every parking space; providing discounted Metro transit cards (for example - a \$50 card for \$35); or providing slight discounts to individuals who do not have cars.

I know that part of the intent of the A-Line was that as an arterial road, Snelling could support high-density housing and it would provide transportation to people living in said housing. I am very supportive of our excellent public transit system and supportive of new construction, but think that anything we can do to encourage the utilization of these services (as well as our wonderful bike lanes!) would be a great step forward for our community and St. Paul as a whole.

Thank you,

Erin O'Gara

Re: April 13, 2017 Zoning Committee Meeting

Dear Zoning Committee Members,

I write in opposition to the zoning of the area to the southeast of the Snelling/St. Clair intersection down to Stanford as T3.

1. Compatibility with land use and zoning classification of property within the general area.

Zoning the area to T3 would not be compatible with land use and zoning classification of the property within the general area because it would be a drastic increase in the intensity of the use of the area. The area is currently B2, R4, and RM2. T2 would be a more appropriate zone for this area because it would be consistent with the current classification and use of the surrounding properties especially in terms of height of buildings and density. T3 zoning would increase in the intensity of density and height for the area by too much, causing the development to look out of place and thus incompatible.

2. Suitability of the property and surroundings for the uses permitted under the existing zoning classification.

The existing B2 zoning is suitable for the property and surroundings for the permitted uses but T2 would be more suitable. Zoning the area T3 goes too far in terms of density and height of buildings allowed.

3. The trend of development in the area of the property in question, with special attention to avoiding "spot zoning".

Zoning this area as proposed from B2 to T3 would constitute spot zoning as the only other area along the I-94 to Highland corridor that is T3 is the new Whole Foods/Vintage on Selby structure at Snelling/Selby intersection. Zoning this area as T3 instead of T2 would be inconsistent with the surrounding neighborhood and clearly an attempt to shoehorn in a development that does not fit. There is a significant difference between T3 and T2, a difference of about 20 feet or 2 stories. Zoning the area T3 to accommodate the developer's desires, as well as approving the proposed conditional use permit to go above and beyond T3, would be unfair to the current neighboring businesses and residents by singling out the southeast corner of this intersection to allow higher intensity use.

The trend of development in the area is for smaller mixed use buildings that fit in a B2/T2 scheme that are mainly restaurants, retail, and service providers. Inserting a 6 story apartment/condo building, with minimal commercial space, that takes up almost the full length of the block would not be staying with the trend of the area.

It is very difficult to see how zoning the area T3 would not be spot zoning when a developer comes to the City with a proposal that requests the increase to higher intensity and a

conditional use permit to go above and beyond those zoning requirements. None of which have previously existed in the area.

4. Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and District Plan.

The Comprehensive and District plans envision the major nodes of the corridor to be destinations for the neighborhood; places that will draw residents to the nodes for commercial and entertainment purposes by utilizing the A-Line.

The southeast area of Snelling/St. Clair needs a facelift and development to further the plans for the area and improve the neighborhood. Zoning T3 and the developer's proposal for the area will not further the Comprehensive and District plans. Rather the node will not become a destination spot but merely a stop on the A-Line without much to offer at the intersection to those travelling.

Consider this, the two newly opened restaurants on Snelling/Stanford have been thriving with lines out the door. This shows that the neighborhood is desperately in need of transit and pedestrian friendly restaurants to patron. Now consider what that increased foot traffic to those restaurants could mean to other business if they existed along the east side of the block along Snelling from St. Clair to Stanford. The proposed zoning of T3 and development will bring more residents to the area but not make the intersection a desirable destination. Contrast the intersection and area of Snelling/Grand that already has established businesses and restaurants and is a destination of many. The soon-to-be developed restaurants in the southeast portion of the Snelling/Grand node will further attract residents to the area via the A-Line.

This concept is exactly what the plans envision; utilizing the Snelling/St. Clair A-Line stop to its maximum potential by making the intersection a commercial destination. Unfortunately the proposed T3 zoning and development are not consistent with, and do not fit within the plans.

In conclusion, I ask that you deny the request to zone the area T3 as it would simply be inconsistent with the surrounding neighborhood and the City's vision for the area.

Thank you,

Christopher T. Nippoldt
304 Saratoga Street South

April 12, 2017

Dear Mr. Williams and Members of the Zoning Committee,

We are writing at this time to express our opposition relating to the proposal for zoning change at the intersection of Snelling Avenue and St. Clair Avenue. We want to be very clear that we are not opposed to appropriate development of that parcel. We believe that a well planned development of appropriate size, inclusion of green space, and utilization of quality design and materials, would enhance the business community at that intersection. However, we are strongly opposed to the size and scale of the proposed development, and we are opposed to the change in zoning to T3 as well as the conditional use permit. Reasons for our opposition are as follows:

- The proposed property development by LeCesse Development, is not appropriate in size or scale to the surrounding community. Other buildings at that intersection are one, two, and three stories, and surrounding structures do not have the mass that is proposed by LeCesse.
- The building that is proposed is enormous in length and height compared to other buildings in the area.
- The enormous length and height of this proposed property, with no provision for courtyards, setbacks, or green space, suggests that the priority of the developer is to maximize profitability at the expense of aesthetics and livability.
- Other structures in the area that have significant size and scale, are required to abide by setback requirements, but these requirements are being completely overlooked under the current proposal.
- The proposed property development is in sharp contrast to many of the goals and objectives of the Macalester-Groveland Community Plan. Specifically, the following:

EBD1. Strengthen the local business community. (The proposed plan will eliminate five local businesses and allows for only 1818 square feet of business/retail space.)

H1.5 Explore creating and implementing a set of design standards for single-family and multi-family structures that promote high-quality design and materials as well as construction guidelines that preserve the traditional aesthetic appearance and appeal of the neighborhood.

LU1.4 Promote the retention and recruitment of a diverse array of small locally owned businesses that provide a variety of goods and services and serve a range of income levels.

LU3.2 Create and implement a set of design standards that preserves the traditional aesthetic appearance and appeal of the neighborhood with appropriate scale and mass to the surrounding buildings.

HP2.1 Incorporate historic preservation considerations into housing, land use, and environmental reviews.

- We believe that the Housing and Land Use Committee of the Macalester-Groveland Community Council acted erroneously in voting to recommend the zoning change in spite of strong community opposition and in spite of the fact that the zoning change is in sharp contrast to many goals of the Macalester-Groveland Community Plan. At the meeting, the committee chair did state that both of these factors should be considered in the determination of the proposal. Nevertheless, the majority of the committee members seemed to ignore these requirements when casting their votes.
- The proposed property development will adversely impact existing residential properties in the area. Under this proposal, residents will incur drastic reductions to their property values, which they have worked to purchase, maintain, and improve for many years. A home is a financial asset, and people depend on the value of their home and its proceeds to support them in their retirement and senior years.
- As tax paying citizens of this community, all residents should be entitled to greater care and consideration, and the residents and their properties should be protected by the city rather than jeopardized by it.
- The proposed property development will adversely impact residents because their quality of life will be significantly impacted by a structure of this size. The huge, uninterrupted, structure of the proposed development will reduce sunlight and airflow to neighboring homes. Sunlight and air flow are life-sustaining attributes, and they are vitally important in the prevention of infectious disease.*
- Property developments of this nature will precipitate urban decline in adjacent neighborhoods.
- The citizens of Macalester-Groveland and other St. Paul neighborhoods are opposed to high-density development. High-density housing is detrimental to health, and happiness, and it is associated with higher rates of respiratory illness, cancer, heart disease, and health and behavioral issues in children. It presents a Public Health threat by infectious disease that spreads rampantly in crowded conditions. In light of antibiotic resistance and the prevalence of international travel among world citizens, high-density cities are at very high risk for the spread of life-threatening, pandemic disease. *
- At the March 22 meeting of the Housing and Land Use Committee of the Macalester-Groveland Community Council, Tom Hayden stated that the five plus story structure, of nearly one city block in length, needs to be of

that enormous scale to be feasible and profitable for his company. It is very likely that other companies may be able to successfully execute a development of more appropriate size and scale.

- Tom Hayden also stated that the high water table in St. Paul makes it impossible to excavate for underground parking, and yet construction companies, who are more familiar with the high water table in our area, are very accustomed to using dewatering techniques when excavating, though this can be more costly. Again, profitability cannot be the only objective in this project.
- The high water table is a well known fact among Minnesotans, and construction projects and homes have been built here successfully for decades. If the LeCesse Development Company is not able to manage this project feasibly, then perhaps the LeCesse proposal is not appropriate for this site.
- Saint Paul City Planners have misjudged population trends and have overestimated the need for high-density housing in Saint Paul. Several experts in urban development indicate that millennials will soon be leaving cities. As they become established in their careers and start families, they will flee to the suburbs in search of affordable single family homes and good schools. Furthermore, many developers feel that the surge in apartment development has reached the saturation point in the Twin Cities.*
- It is fiscally irresponsible for the City of St. Paul to race in the building of all this high-density housing without observing its sustainability, or lack thereof. Many young people who are initially attracted to the high-density urban housing are finding that the noise and activity levels are intolerable. The Twin Cities may be left with a multitude of abandoned monoliths, adding yet another example to the list of urban renewal projects gone awry.
- The proposed plan, in its present state, will eliminate five small business, and in its place, will provide space for only 1818 square feet of retail space. This does not seem consistent with T3 zoning, nor is it consistent with existing B2 zoning. Small business are vital to this community because they employ people.
- T3 zoning that is being pushed on the St. Paul Community should be reconsidered. While mixed use development is not a bad idea, the 55 foot height is inappropriate for St. Paul neighborhoods. Also, there should be stricter requirements for set-back, provision of green space for all, and green spaces/buffer zones adjacent to existing homes.
- Though the LeCesse Company claims that these will be luxury apartments, it seems very unlikely that people searching for a luxury apartment will seek residence just a few feet from the curb of a major traffic artery.
- Lastly, it is important to maintain transparency on the part of city planners and developers to disclose tax incentives and density bonuses that may be tied to high-density development under such programs as AFFH. While developers, construction workers, and tax bases for the city may profit from the construction of high-density housing, such benefits come at a tremendous cost to current residents and their neighborhoods.

For the reasons outlined above, we urge the Saint Paul Zoning Committee to deny this request for zoning change and conditional use permit. Furthermore, we propose that the city find a way to encourage this developer or other developers to build quality structures, of appropriate size and scale, compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods, and in keeping with the goals outlined by neighborhood community plans.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn and Dennis McGuire
2203 Fairmount Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105

<https://www.researchgate.net/file.PostFileLoader.html?id...assetKey>

<http://www.newgeography.com/content/003945-health-happiness-and-density>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4481042/>

https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/1/1/95-0102_article

<http://fortune.com/2016/03/28/millennials-leaving-cities/>

<http://www.citypages.com/news/bullish-twin-cities-housing-market-leaves-young-buyers-hating-life/411326625>

Englund, Cherie (CI-StPaul)

From: Sherri Hildebrandt <s_hildebrandt@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 12, 2017 7:08 PM
To: kmakarios@ncsrcc.org; adejoy@esndc.org; Dan.edgerton@stantec.com; ggelgelu@aeds-mn.org; blindeke@gmail.com; mamcmahon03@gmail.com; ecr@trios-llc.com; Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul)
Subject: St. Clair/Snelling development on April 13 agenda

Members of the Zoning Committee and the City Planner:

I am writing to comment on the LeCesse Development project intended for the corner of St. Clair and Snelling avenues in St. Paul.

I am in favor of enhancements to the block, but I am *not* in favor of this project. I have looked at the plans and have attended several meetings held by the Mac Groveland Community Council.

Here are several issues I hope you will take into account as you go forward with approval for this project, which I believe will be most disruptive and detrimental to the Mac Groveland community.

1. Height of the proposed development. It will tower over every other structure -- not only on that block but from I-94 to West Seventh Street. It is completely out of keeping with the size of other structures on the street, let alone on that block.

2. Size of the proposed complex. The influx of residents -- or rather, their vehicles -- will disrupt the neighborhood and will without question result in parking issues and further traffic headaches.

First, there will **not be enough parking** for all the residents and people who wish to visit shopkeepers in the area. (Don't fool yourselves that most of the residents will use public transit as the developer insists.) They will end up parking on the side streets. That means **residential street parking will be taken away**. As one who lives within half a block of the proposed complex, I am particularly concerned.

Traffic will exit from the complex onto Snelling and onto St. Clair and Stanford. Snelling is already a busy thoroughfare; wasn't that why the boulevards were put in place near Macalester -- to calm the traffic down? Making it one lane did that. Now imagine that extra traffic on one lane trying to go down Snelling.

That **intersection**, from about 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., is challenging *already* if you want to turn. Presently, about one car per light is able to turn safely. That will be made even more problematic with such an influx of vehicles. From what I have been hearing, no traffic study has been done by MnDOT on this intersection. That

should be a condition of allowing this project to go ahead.

3. Originally, the developer intended to create underground parking, then discovered that the water table would make that prohibitive. This shows me that the developer knows very little about the community. Within a year after I moved to the neighborhood (in 1996), I was told by multiple neighbors about underground streams, boggy areas, etc., in the neighborhood, which is why so many of us have drain tile and sump pumps in our basements. **He didn't do his homework**; I don't want someone who doesn't know or understand the area to implement these drastic changes.

In that same vein, I was stunned when during one of the community meetings the developer was oblivious to the need for **snow plowing** in the alley behind the complex. Plowing is paid for by individual homeowners, but the developer indicated that shouldn't be a concern of the complex. Homeowners on Brimhall should not solely be expected to pay for plowing.

4. The design **isn't in keeping with the homes and businesses** in the area. This is in addition to its size. It doesn't fit in aesthetically.

5. More traffic, less parking, a big clunky behemoth that blocks sunlight from the neighborhood and looms over a major thoroughfare could **drive down property values**.

As I said earlier, I am not opposed to development on that block. I think the addition of RaMN, Mac's Fish and Chips, and St. Croix Cleaners was a good one (despite the fact that an architecturally significant building was torn down to make room for those businesses; *not* a good move.) Why not encourage more businesses to establish on that block? Why not encourage another restaurant? A small office building? Bring in another Starbucks (especially since the new one at Marshall and Snelling is insanely busy all the time)! Or even build a smaller apartment or townhouse complex?

The project as it stands now doesn't seem to truly meet the Mac Groveland long range housing goals, which include:

- Ensure that Mac Groveland continues to be a clean, **quiet** and beautiful neighborhood for the next 10 years and beyond.
- Preserve Mac Groveland as a peaceful community while providing a **range** of housing types and **affordability** to meet the needs of **all people** throughout their life and changing lifestyle needs.
- Recognize and accommodate student housing needs while **respecting the rights and concerns** of all community stakeholders.

I appreciate your concern regarding this project and hope you will proceed carefully. I love my neighborhood and I want it to flourish, but I think this is not the way to make that happen. Allowing this project to proceed seems shortsighted.

Sherri Hildebrandt
1622 Berkeley Ave.
St. Paul MN 55105
651.690.2841(h)
612.616.6405 (c)

Englund, Cherie (CI-StPaul)

From: Erin O'Gara <ogara.erin@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2017 2:27 PM
To: Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul); liz@macgrove.org
Subject: apartment building at Snelling/St. Claire - public transportation

Hello,

I live at 1564 Sargent Ave. and wanted to provide one bit of input on the proposed building since I will not be able to make it to today's re-zoning meeting. I raised this issue at one other meeting I attended last summer as well. My husband and I decided to purchase a house in Mac/Groveland, in part, because of the access to wonderful public transportation in our community. I take the A-Line (and Blue Line) every day, and find it to be clean, fast and reliable. I would like to encourage the new apartment building (if it is approved for re-zoning) to please consider providing discount vouchers or other incentives for residents to be car-free or just take public transportation as much as possible.

Some options that I have seen for this include: providing free bike storage; providing multiple bike storage racks and locks with every parking space; providing discounted Metro transit cards (for example - a \$50 card for \$35); or providing slight discounts to individuals who do not have cars.

I know that part of the intent of the A-Line was that as an arterial road, Snelling could support high-density housing and it would provide transportation to people living in said housing. I am very supportive of our excellent public transit system and supportive of new construction, but think that anything we can do to encourage the utilization of these services (as well as our wonderful bike lanes!) would be a great step forward for our community and St. Paul as a whole.

Thank you,

Erin O'Gara

To John Williams, City Planner with the Dept of Planning and Economic Development

Mr. Williams we are writing to you to express our hesitations and real concerns with the development proposal for the corner of St. Clair and Snelling with LeCresse Development Corporation. My husband and I relocated to Saratoga St S (two blocks in from the proposed development) from Saratoga St N. where the recent Vintage on Selby was recently erected. While we do believe that this block would benefit from a major upgrade we know that the proposal from LeCresse is does not remotely fit our neighborhoods needs, aesthetic, and more.

As mentioned we recently relocated from Saratoga St. N where the Vintage on Selby was developed. While it was an exciting addition, the congestion from traffic which increased three fold was one of the numerous reasons for our relocation. The noise, lack of privacy, diminished view and loss of natural light caused us to consider purchasing a home in a single-family neighborhood. Obviously with such a small address change, you can see we love this area. It's quaint, quiet and filled with small business, all things that we and our neighbor's have been drawn too.

One of our issues with this development is the sheer size and proximity to single family homes is unprecedented and causes serious concerns with issues we dealt with at Vintage on Selby. LeCresse's examples of building height do not take account of where these buildings are actually located. Even Vintage on Selby is butted up against nearly all multifamily rental homes. When researching their building examples, Vintage on Selby, The Finn, The Waters, Wilder Park, Highland Water Tower, Cleveland High Rise and 740 Mississippi Blvd, you'll see that they are buffered by parks, parking lots, commercial buildings or multi family rentals as mentioned before.

We also believe that aesthetic does not appeal to our wonderful neighborhood and we feel that LeCresses as a company does not have any experience in creating an urban build such as this as they have worked mainly in suburbs with ample room for large scale projects. The sheer size of the building is nearly 1 1/2 blocks long and will simply tower over anything in the vicinity. There are no setbacks nor setbacks to create dimension along Snelling avenue, essentially having us walk along an unsightly 61 foot wall. The lack of retail is another cause for concern as there is no additional value or draw for residents or potential visitors.

Again, we would love to see this are refurbished. I recall a project on 1174 Grand Avenue with Ryan Burke who is developing a building between two brownstones. His renderings show an eight unit condo with three stories and a similar exterior to the buildings surrounding the lot. Not even remotely close to the behemoth proposed for our corner and even he was blocked from the project because the building was too large and exceeded the lot coverage and setbacks. But his building is something we would happily like to see more of in terms of the size and aesthetic because it fits the charm of our neighborhood.

On top of all these concerns are that this project is will set a precedence for other developers to build bigger and bigger essentially erasing the historical charin and quaintness of Mac-Groveland. As of now we already know that there are developers looking at Laurel and Dale, Carroll and Snelling, Grand Avenue and Syndicate, etc.

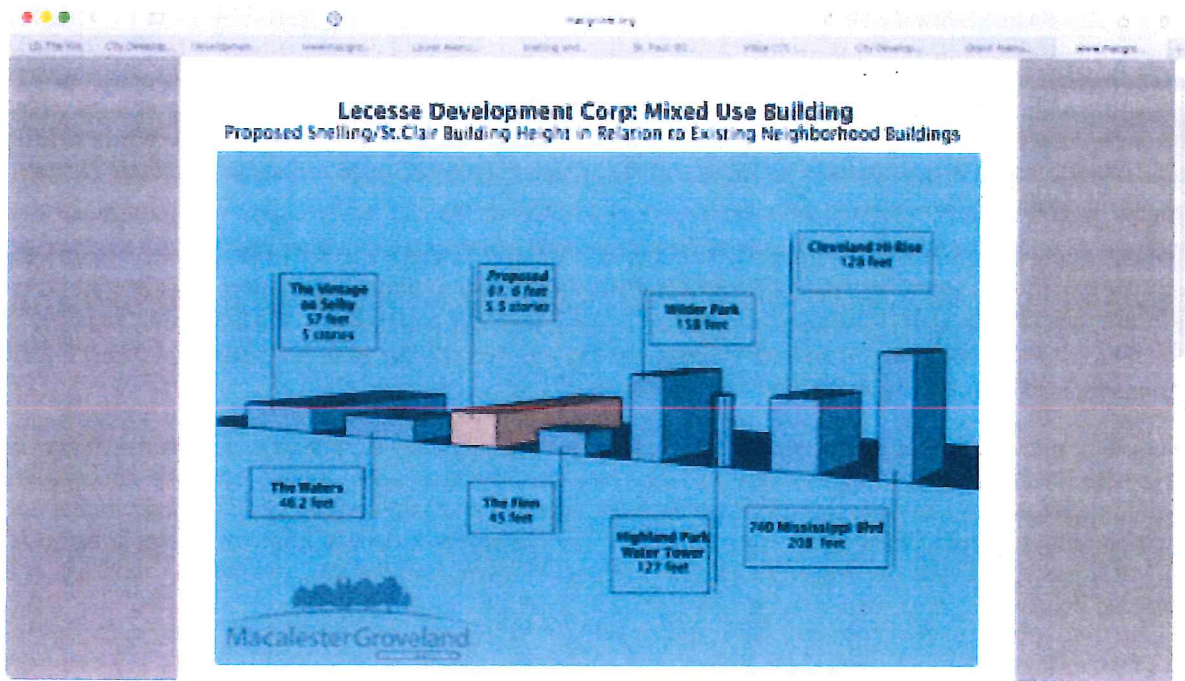
Overall, we are happy to see changes coming to the area. We have spent nearly eight years enjoying everything Mac-Groveland and Highland has to offer. The people, the stores, the architecture. We truly love it all, so much so that we have invested an great deal of money into creating a life here. We truly hope that you take these concerns seriously and that moving forward a vision to keep the integrity of Mac-Groveland/Highland Park/Merriam Park is made a priority as the area continues to flourish.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to email me with any questions.

Best,
Amanda Nippoldt

Also, I am aware of LeCresse's dilemma of it would not be economically feasible for them unless they have so many apartments which is why the building is so high, but from previous meetings I have been made aware that there are several solutions to that problem.

Below is the document I'm referring to that LeCresse used to differentiate their building heights to others in the area without mentioning that they are buffered by commercial spaces, rental homes, parks, streets, etc.



Minimum setbacks to all adjacent lots: 10 feet

Snelling St. Turn Right Movement 6 Lane

Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

08/24/2016



08/24/2016

08/24/2016





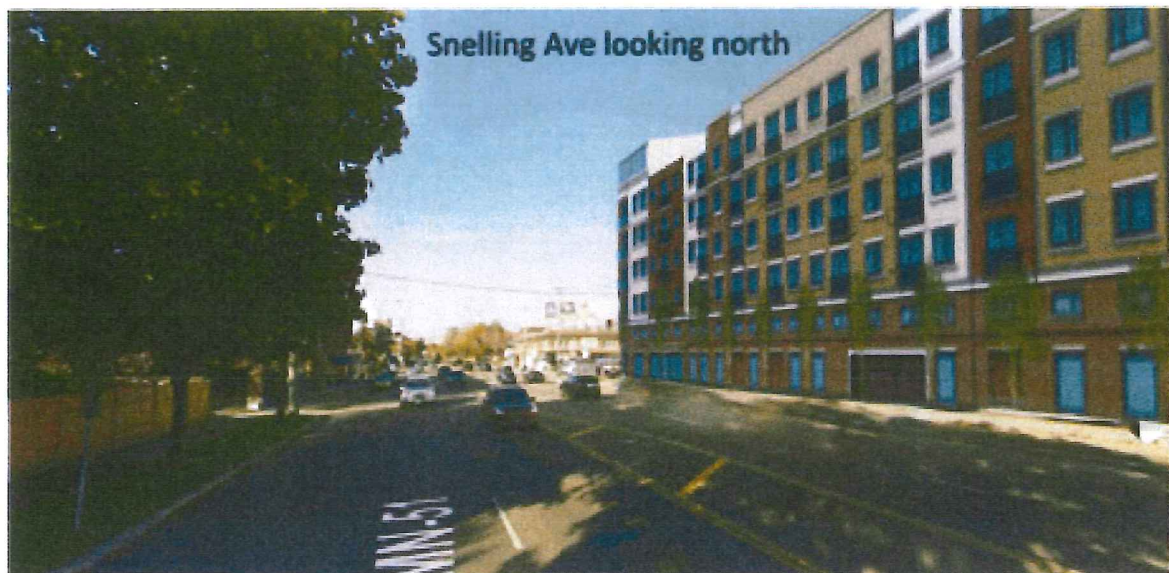
Manure, construction to 100% and/or to 100% to 100%

Trailing Hill - Saint Paul, Minnesota

View Elevation

08.04.2016

SG



Images are for visualization purposes only and not representative of materials to be used

*Below is Ryan Burke's rendering for his eight unit condo on 1174 Grand Avenue, while it was initially blocked by the city council of St. Paul who agreed with the neighbors that it exceeded lot size and setbacks, I've attached it to also give some visual examples of keeping the like in LeCresse's what a great example of historical integrity looks comparison to idea.



Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul)

From: Drummond, Donna (CI-StPaul)
Sent: Wednesday, April 12, 2017 10:13 AM
To: Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul); Johnson, Tony (CI-StPaul)
Subject: FW: Saint Paul Can and Should Do Better - LeCesse Proposal For St. Clair/Snelling
Attachments: Documentation of Scale (1).pdf

Josh and Tony – FYI. I see you weren't copied on this. Donna



Donna M. Drummond

Director of Planning

Planning & Economic Development

25 W. 4th St., Suite 1400

Saint Paul, MN 55102

P: 651-266-6556

donna.drummond@ci.stpaul.mn.us



The Most Livable
City in America

Making Saint Paul the Most Livable City in America

From: Jessica B. [mailto:jessica.burke216@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 11, 2017 5:24 PM
To: Liz Boyer; Kantner, Libby (CI-StPaul); #CI-StPaul_Ward3; kmakarios@ncsrcc.org; adejoy@esndc.org; Dan.edgerton@stantec.com; ggelgelu@aeds-mn.org; mamcmahon03@gmail.com; ecr@trios-llc.com; aquanettaa@gmail.com; christopher.james.ochs@gmail.com; oliv0082@gmail.com; perryman@csp.edu; tt hao@nexuscp.org; wendyLunderwood@gmail.com; Drummond, Donna (CI-StPaul)
Cc: Clayton Burke
Subject: Saint Paul Can and Should Do Better - LeCesse Proposal For St. Clair/Snelling

TO:

The Macalester-Groveland Community Council

The City of St. Paul Zoning Committee

The City of St. Paul Planning Commission

Chris Tolbert, Ward 3 Council Member

RE:

LeCesse Proposal for St. Clair and Snelling

My name is Jessica Burke and my husband and I live at 289 Brimhall Street. I am writing for a number of reasons, first of which is to get a document into your hands for review prior to the zoning meeting on Thursday where the zoning and CUP in relation to the St. Clair/Snelling site will be discussed. We submitted the attached document for the public record a few

weeks ago to Mr. Josh Williams, but after looking at the staff report which has been prepared for Thursday where all public record was to be included, we see that it has been omitted. The document is a detailed look at height comparisons and is something I will also plan to present on Thursday.

The second and more pressing reason I am writing boils down to this very straightforward question: **what are the chances at this stage of the zoning board actually considering a change to the staff recommendation to approve both the T3 and CUP based on the outcome of Thursday's meeting?** It truly feels like a futile argument even though the opposition seemingly far outweighs the support (by my count just in the emails and commentary submitted, there is a nearly 3-to-1 ratio of opposition to support and even a majority of the supporters include caveats to the existing plans). To that point regarding the voluminous skew towards the opposition, I would also like to add that the recommendations from the MGCC HLU committee do not reflect the sentiment of the neighborhood. The recommendation letter to the City conveniently avoids any mention of the disproportionate opposition in attendance and conspicuously avoided displaying / considering MGCC Land Use Objective 3.2 ("Create and implement a set of design standards that preserves the traditional aesthetic appearance and appeal of the neighborhood with appropriate scale and mass to the surrounding buildings") despite it being the primary driver of opposition.

The staff report as written also makes no effort to discuss options other than T3 zoning, simply because that is what this specific developer is proposing. What about T2 zoning for this site? T2 zoning has been discussed by many in opposition at the MGCC meetings as a more appropriate alternative as far as scale and density for this particular site and the omission of that piece of the discussion feels purposeful and frankly a bit unscrupulous. **T2 zoning, by definition, aligns with the Land Use and Housing goals as adopted by the City of St. Paul last August and it seems that T3+CUP is now the only consideration simply because the current developer cannot make his economics work otherwise.**

If you were to take developer's financial feasibility out of the equation and the developer had come to this council with a more reasonable proposal of scale, would this committee be content with a more neighborhood- appropriate, human-scale level of added density? For purposes of this discussion, I would like to define what would, in my mind, be a more reasonable scale. A property with a lower height and therefore with less residential units and less required parking which would, in turn, allow for more walkable retail on the Snelling frontage. Wouldn't something more reminiscent of the recent Finn in St. Paul (T2 zoned, 45 feet tall, 57 units, approx. 16,000 square feet of retail) achieve a larger number of the land use and housing goals as laid out in the adopted plans?

It is not the job of the City to take the developer's financial feasibility into consideration. Added density and maintaining a human, walkable scale/preserving the traditional feel of the neighborhood need not be mutually exclusive and if this developer cannot figure out a way to assemble this site and build something within more appropriate bounds of these defined goals, it should not be the burden of the City and surrounding tax-paying homeowners to absorb that unnecessary density. Density that actually takes away walkable retail (closing all of the businesses along Snelling for 1,800 SF retail in its place). Density that will undoubtedly decrease values of single-family homes that have stood for a century because of decreased privacy and views and lack of walkable amenities (Our home, and others long Brimhall). Density, like what is proposed, that is detrimental to the goals that have already been adopted and promised to be protected by this committee.

Jessica and Clayton Burke

289 Brimhall Street

To: John Williams, City Planner with the Dept of Planning and Economic Development

Mr. Williams,

My husband and I are writing to express our concerns with regards to the currently proposed development at the corner of Snelling Ave S and St Clair Ave by LeCesse Development Corp. We have lived on Birmhall Street directly abutting the proposed site for almost two years now and welcome redevelopment of the site as it has become quite blighted. However, we don't believe that the currently proposed plans address the needs of the neighborhood and do represent an unprecedented invasion of private property by any development of this scale in Mac-Groveland and Highland.

The following pages include several screenshots, the first of which is a building height comparison the developer has offered to substantiate that the building is within a reasonable scale to other neighborhood multi-family developments. I have included a Google map screenshot of the currently proposed site as well as all the comparative sites the developer presented in an effort to exemplify not only the unprecedented adjacency to residential this proposal reflects, but also the fact that these sites are in much more predominantly commercial corridors. The most comparable project location is likely the Finn project currently under construction in Highland which is nearly 20 feet lower in height than the proposed development from LeCesse. Currently, the proposed development will overshadow the back yards of 9 single family homes and presents no step backs on the Snelling Ave side or ground level aesthetics to offer itself up as more than just a nearly block-long brick wall.

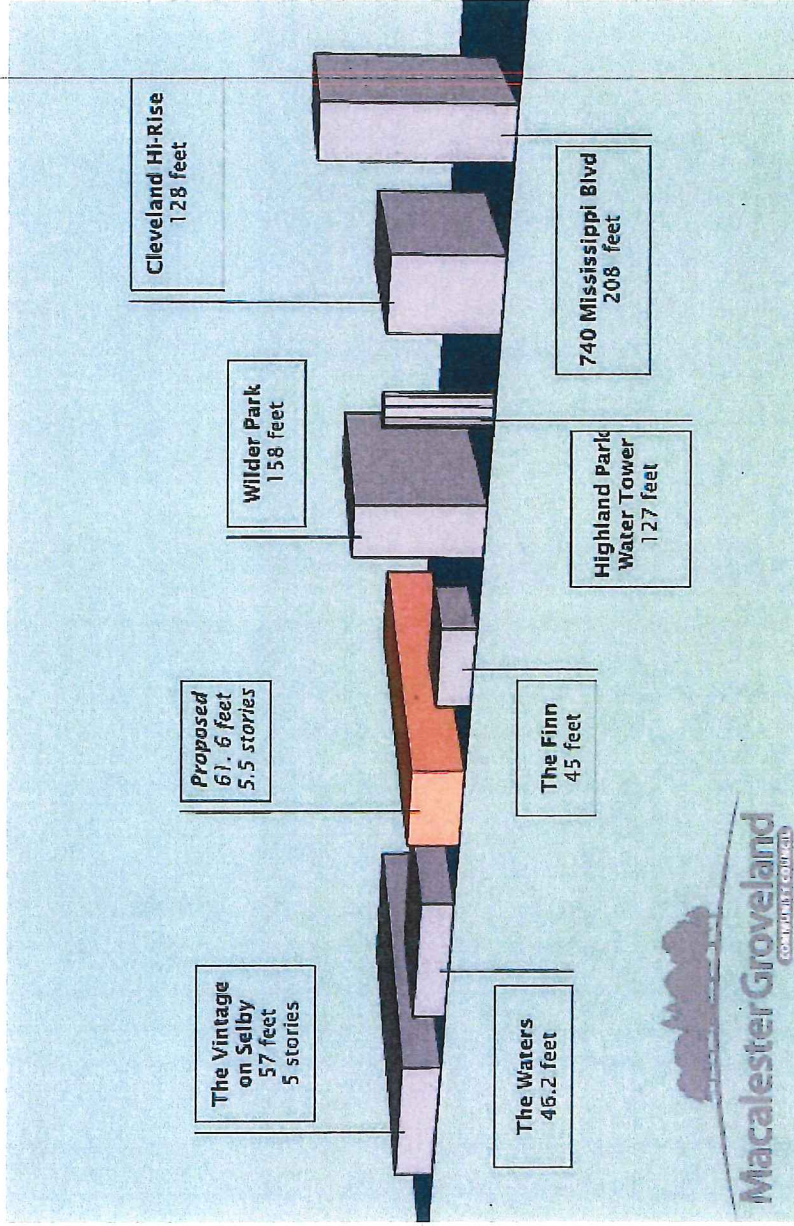
Our concern with this development is not the effort to find a higher use for this space but the immense scale and a lack of retail space that would actually drive a real benefit for the members of our community. Moreover, we struggle to reconcile how luxury apartments with rents starting at \$1,800 up to \$3,300 will attract residents who prefer to use the A-line bus service over personal vehicles and, without the retail, will drive non-residents to leverage the A-line to visit the site.

We moved to the Mac-Groveland neighborhood because we appreciated the small town feel with historic charm and accessibility to locally owned small businesses. To us, that's what neighborhood character means, and that's what drove us to invest a significant amount of our financial net worth to live here. We understand full well the benefit of redevelopment, density and the goals of the City of Saint Paul, however, this development is an affront to those of us who have already committed to making Mac-Groveland our home for the reasons indicated above.

We hope that you take these concerns seriously, and thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at the information below.

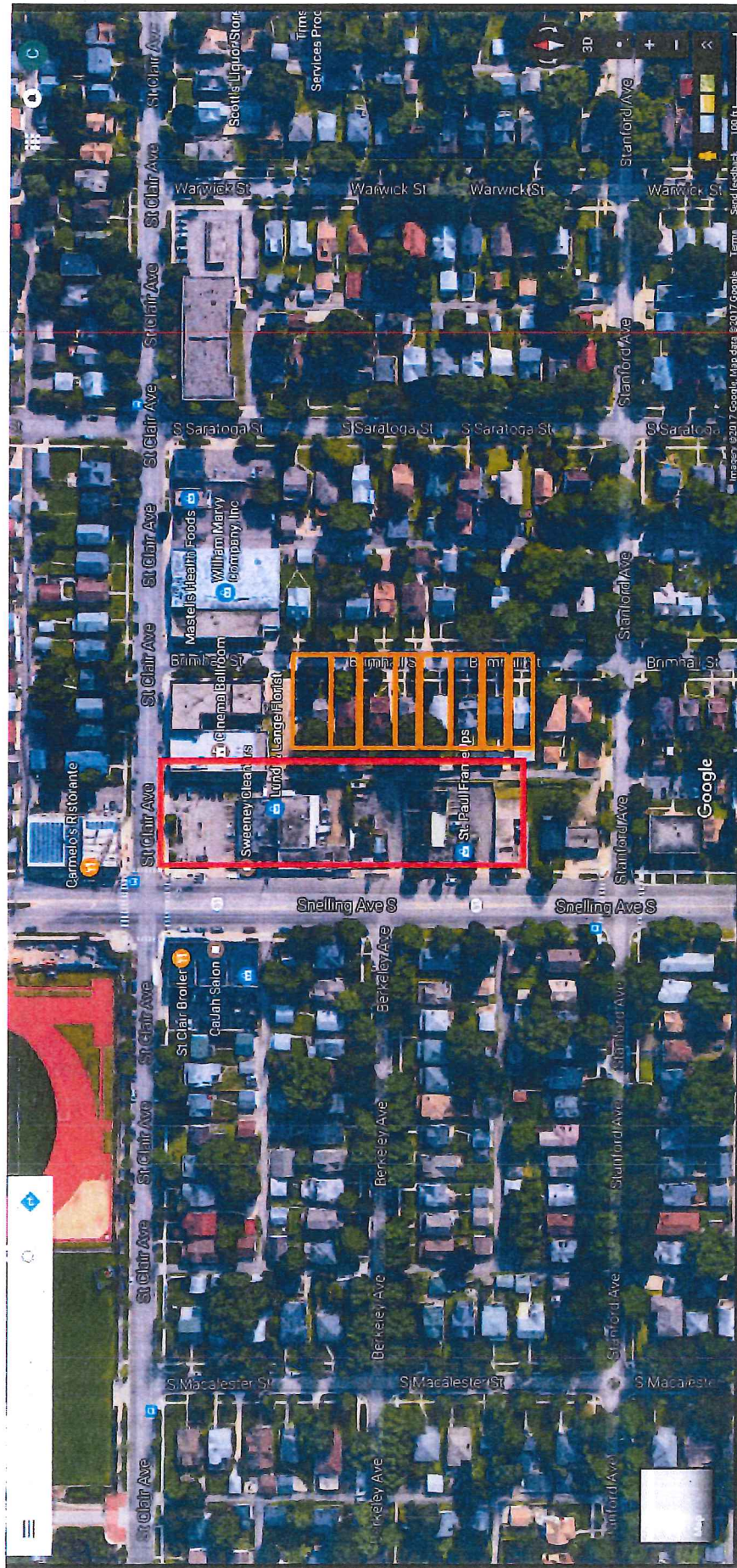
Lecesse Development Corp: Mixed Use Building

Proposed Snelling/St. Clair Building Height in Relation to Existing Neighborhood Buildings



Note: The Highland Park Water Tower was excluded from the following screenshots as it has no relevance to these comparisons – it houses no residents and has no relevant proximity to residential lots off of Snelling.

Snelling Ave Proposed Development Site



740 Mississippi River Boulevard Apartments (208 Feet - abuts no single family homes)



The Vintage on Selby – 1555 Selby Ave (57 Ft with significant step backs)

Vintage on Selby

4.8 ★★★★★ · 22 reviews

Apartment Building

SAVE

NEARBY

SEND TO YOUR PHONE

SHARE

1555 Selby, Ave, St Paul, MN 55104

vintageonsebyapts.com

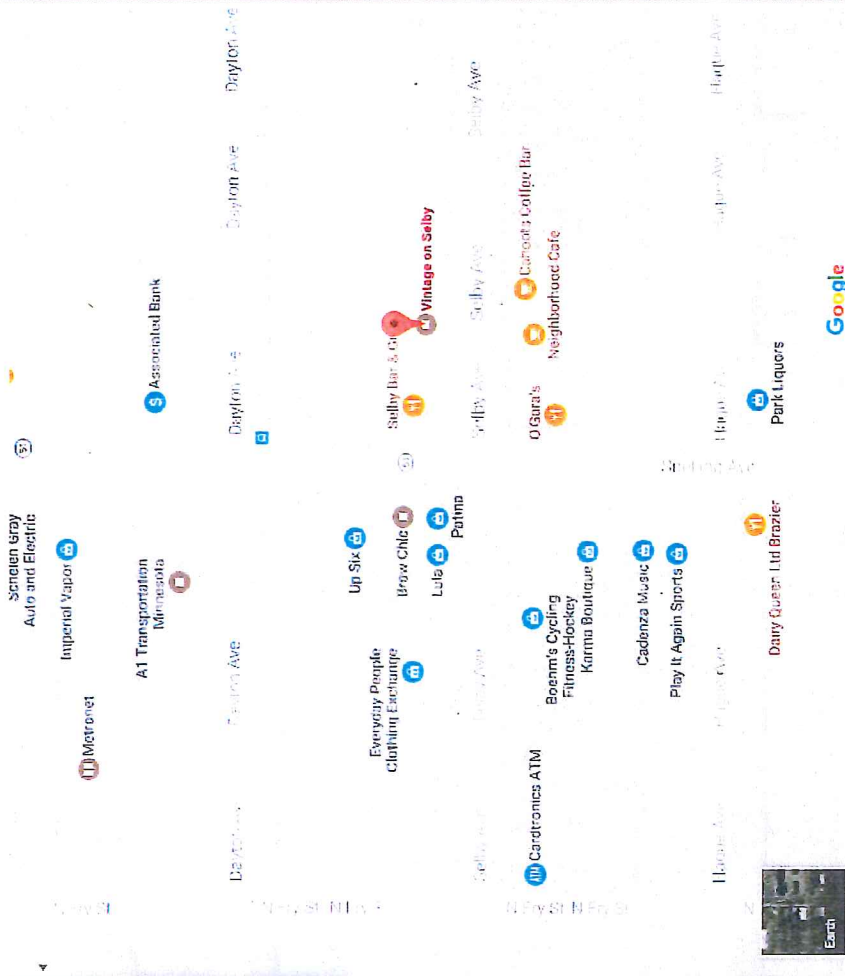
(651) 457-4075

[Suggest an edit](#)

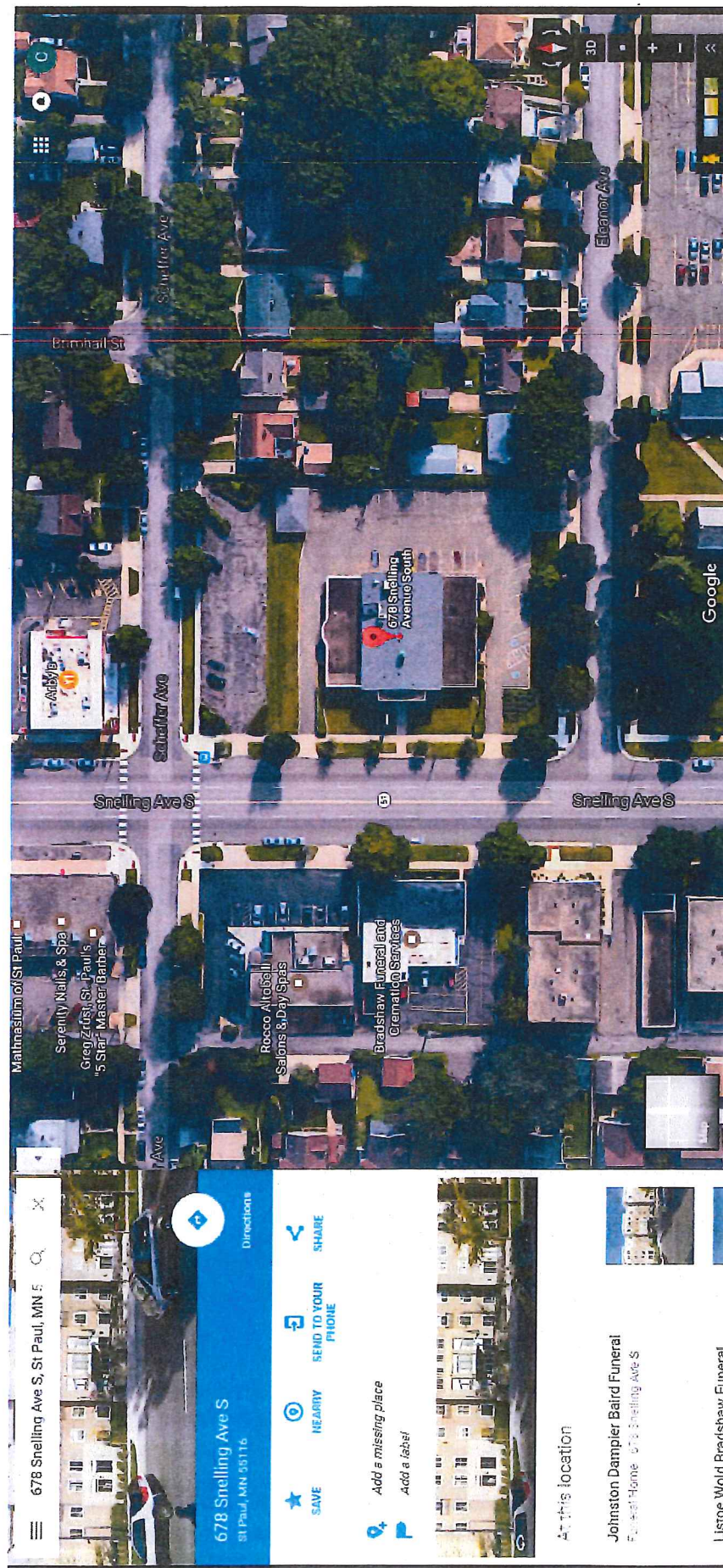
[Add a label](#)

45 Photos

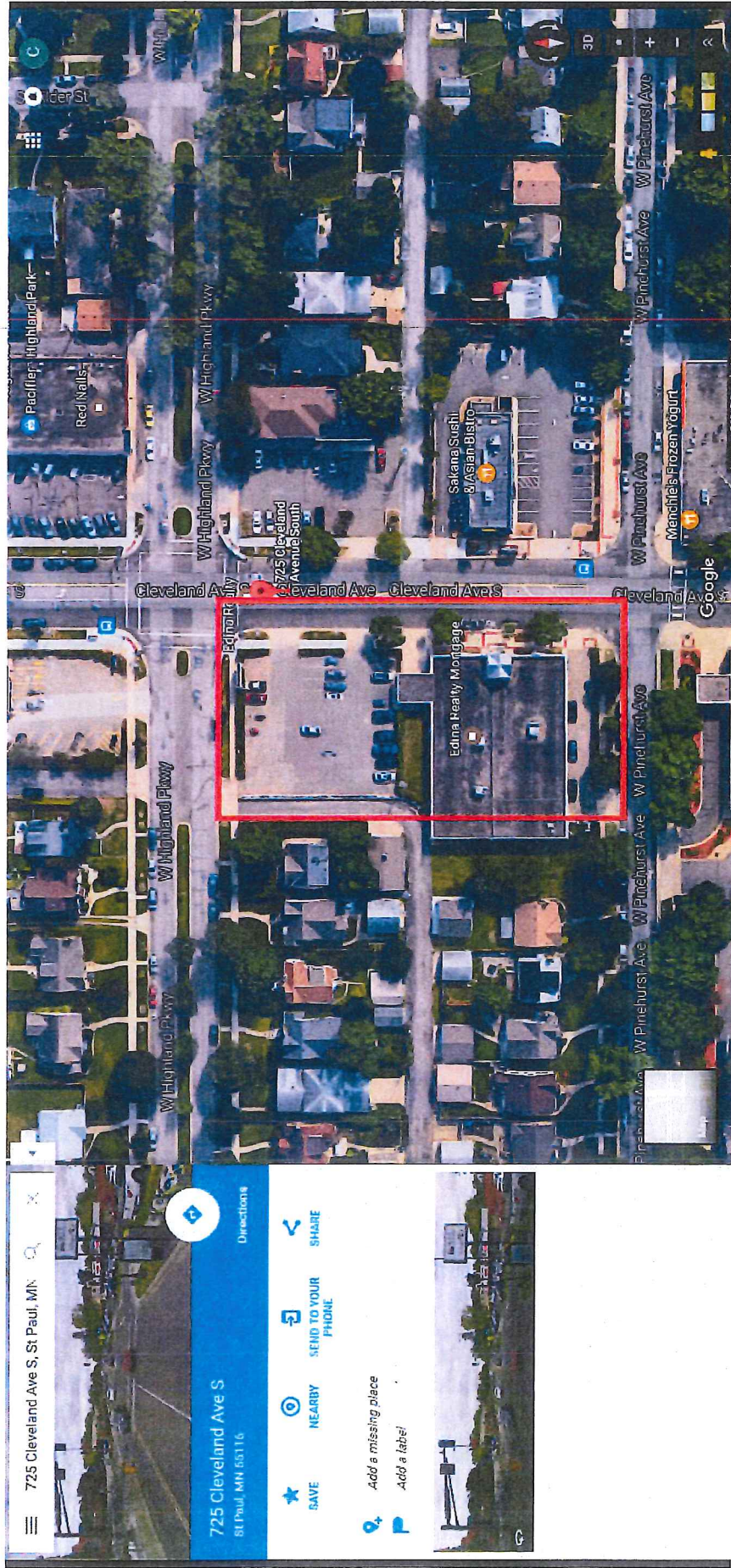
Add a photo



The Waters (Senior Living) – 678 Snelling Ave S (46.2 ft. with significant buffers from adjacent residential.)



The Finn - 725 Cleveland Ave S (SITE OUTLINED IN RED - 45 ft. with significant step backs - nearly 20 feet LOWER than proposed site.)



Wilder Park Tower - 1181 Edgumbe Road (158 ft. - abuts no single family residential)



Cleveland Hi-Rise 899 Cleveland Ave S (128 ft. – significant privacy and setbacks from other residential)



Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul)

From: Amanda Nippoldt <anippoldt18@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2017 7:12 PM
To: Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul)
Subject: St. Clair and Snelling Development
Attachments: St.CalireDevelopment.pdf

To John Williams, City Planner with the Dept of Planning and Economic Development,

We are writing to you to express our hesitations and real concerns with the development proposal for the corner of St. Clair and Snelling with LeCresse Development Corporation. My husband and I relocated to Saratoga St S (two blocks in from the proposed development) from Saratoga St N. where the recent Vintage on Selby was recently erected. While we do believe that this block would benefit from a major upgrade we know that the proposal from LeCresse is does not remotely fit our neighborhoods needs, aesthetic, and more.

As mentioned we recently relocated from Saratoga St. N where the Vintage on Selby was developed. While it was an exciting addition, the congestion from traffic which increased three fold was one of the numerous reasons for our relocation. The noise, lack of privacy, diminished view and loss of natural light caused us to consider purchasing a home in a single-family neighborhood. Obviously with such a small address change, you can see we love this area. It's quaint, quiet and filled with small business, all things that we and our neighbor's have been drawn too.

One of our issues with this development is the sheer size and proximity to single family homes is unprecedented and causes serious concerns with issues we dealt with at Vintage on Selby. LeCresse's examples of building height do not take account of where these buildings are actually located. Even Vintage on Selby is butted up against nearly all multifamily rental homes. When researching their building examples, Vintage on Selby, The Finn, The Waters, Wilder Park, Highland Water Tower, Cleveland High Rise and 740 Mississippi Blvd, you'll see that they are buffered by parks, parking lots, commercial buildings or multi family rentals as mentioned before.

We also believe that aesthetic does not appeal to our wonderful neighborhood and we feel that LeCresses as a company does not have any experience in creating an urban build such as this as they have worked mainly in suburbs with ample room for large scale projects. The sheer size of the building is nearly 1 1/2 blocks long and will simply tower over anything in the vicinity. There are no setbacks nor setbacks to create dimension along Snelling avenue, essentially having us walk along an unsightly 61 foot wall. The lack of retail is another cause for concern as there is no additional value or draw for residents or potential visitors.

Again, we would love to see this are refurbished. I recall a project on 1174 Grand Avenue with Ryan Burke who is developing a building between two brownstones. His renderings show an eight unit condo with three stories and a similar exterior to the buildings surrounding the lot. Not even remotely close to the behemoth proposed for our corner and even he was blocked from the project because the building was too large and exceeded the lot coverage and setbacks. But his building is something we would happily like to see more of in terms of the size and aesthetic because it fits the charm of our neighborhood.

On top of all these concerns are that this project is will set a precedence for other developers to build bigger and bigger essentially erasing the historical charm and quaintness of Mac-Groveland. As of now we already know that there are developers looking at Laurel and Dale, Carroll and Snelling, Grand Avenue and Syndicate, etc.

Overall, we are happy to see changes coming to the area. We have spent nearly eight years enjoying everything Mac-Groveland and Highland has to offer. The people, the stores, the architecture. We truly love it all, so much so that we have invested an great deal of money into creating a life here. We truly hope that you take these concerns seriously and that moving forward a vision to keep the integrity of Mac-Groveland/Highland Park/Merriam Park is made a priority as the area continues to flourish.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to email me with any questions. I have attached a document with visual aids of what I have discussed within this email.

Best,
Amanda Nippoldt

Also, I am aware of LeCresse's dilemma of it would not be economically feasible for them unless they have so many apartments which is why the building is so high, but from previous meetings I have been made aware that there are several solutions to that problem.

I am writing to express my support for the LDC development project being planning at Snelling and St. Clair Avenues. It is my hope new investment on that corner will revitalize a long neglected portion of our neighborhood and infuse the area with a newer younger population. My support is not without concern however. Several aspects of the plan give me pause and prevent me from fully supporting the current development project.

With attacks to environmental funding, climate science and green transportation under continuous attack, not to mention a rapidly warming planet, it is more important than ever to fight for an infrastructure that lessens our dependence on cars. Increasingly this fight must be undertaken at a local level to enact change. This development is massively over designed for parking. In our highly dense neighborhood, ensuring a parking spot for every patron or citizen is a dying premise as more citizens move out of their cars and toward biking, walking, and public transportation options. I would like to see the parking areas scaled back to make room for more retail space.

The lack of bike parking is a great concern. Many younger urban professionals, who will buy at this development, rely on cycling as their main mode of transportation. Without proper bike storage, it will make the space less livable for them as well as for the neighborhood patrons who hope to visit the retail spaces via bike.

Hand in hand with my biking concerns, I would like to encourage a pedestrian safety plan be implemented at the time of construction on this development. Saint Paul is an urban environment and we must support and ensure the safety of our citizens as they walk to their neighbors, schools, local businesses, and parks. The livability of Saint Paul is its main perk; however it is becoming increasingly more dangerous to walk down the street with your family. An increasing number of our citizens are being injured and killed doing what every urban dweller does – walking. In Saint Paul, we can do better. Whenever we add more development to our city, we must see it as an opportunity to convert our streets for mixed use and away from the one focused solely on automobiles. I would like to see a median placed from St. Clair to Randolph Avenues with flashing crossing aides similar to what is already in place from Grand to St. Clair Avenues. This will ensure a visual continuity with the rest of Snelling Avenue since there is a median being built past Randolph on Snelling and help to create a safer environment for pedestrians, cyclists, and car traffic.

Finally a greener, more welcoming streetscape would have an additional benefit of helping to reduce our carbon footprint as well as making the corner more aesthetically pleasing.

With these simple fixes, I believe, the LDC development will be better suited for Saint Paul both from an environmental perspective as well as from a longevity perspective. We have one opportunity to get these developments right before they become a part of our city. I hope you will take my concerns as a long time Macalester Groveland citizen into account as you move forward with the planning.

Thank you,

Jessica Hauser

1312 Sargent Avenue

Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul)

From: Julia Earl <healthykidsmn@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2017 5:21 PM
To: Liz Boyer; Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul); Kantner, Libby (CI-StPaul); Dave Pinto; #CI-StPaul_Ward3
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Lecesse Development @ Snelling & St. Clair
Attachments: Opposition Ltr_Snelling Apt Bldg_3-22-17v2.pdf

Dear Mr. Williams, Council Member Tolbert and MacGroveland Housing and Land Use Committee:

Please find attached a letter of opposition to the proposed 55-foot tall, high density housing and retail development at the corner of St. Clair and Snelling Avenues. We oppose this proposal and the conditional land use permit. Additional comments may be found in the attached document.

Regards,
Julia Earl & Bill Moseley
Homeowners at 372 Macalester Street

Julia Earl / 372 Macalester St./ St. Paul, MN 55105 / 651-230-4751

Julia Earl & William Moseley
372 Macalester St.
St. Paul, MN 55105
healthykidsmn@gmail.com Moseley@macalester.edu

22 March 2017

HOUSING AND LAND USE COMMITTEE MEETING

Macalester-Groveland Community Council

Josh Williams

City Planner with the Dept of Planning and Economic Development, City of St. Paul, MN

Dear Committee Members and City of St. Paul:

We (Julia Earl and William Moseley) oppose the proposed 246-280 Snelling Ave S development by the LeCesse Development Corp. We are a neighborhood family and have lived in MacGroveland for the past 15 years. We have two school-aged children who travel by foot and bicycle to neighborhood-based Tae Kwan Do classes, lawn-mowing jobs and babysitting. We regularly rejoice with our quality of life enjoying St. Paul's multiculturalism; our ability to walk to neighborhood businesses; and the largely single-family housing and light business mixture of our neighborhood. As Mac-Groveland residents we are able to walk to nearby businesses to get prescriptions filled at St. Paul Corner Drug, see movies at the Grandview and catching a meal or ice cream cone at a nearby eatery/ice cream shop.

We find the proposed 5-story building (plus towers) COMPLETELY INAPPROPRIATE!! The proposed development comparing building height to "Existing Neighborhood Buildings" is also inappropriate and misleading given where they are placed and the quiet, low-density residential neighborhood that MacGroveland is. While the two illuminated towers might be acceptable in Florida developments, they are not welcome in St. Paul. We love taking in the evening sky and stars. We do not want any further urban light pollution.

While we find a degree of urban rejuvenation acceptable, the nature of this development is not. We would find a 2-3 story building is acceptable. We live in a quiet residential neighborhood with light retail. We are already extremely concerned regarding high traffic on Snelling Avenue with motorists regularly running red lights on Snelling and speeding as it is. More traffic due to more high density housing is not in keeping with *our* neighborhood. We add further as residents near the corner of Jefferson Avenue and Macalester Street that speeding motorists who run the stop sign and honk at pedestrians are already an issue. To have that further exacerbated by the proposed high-density five-story, 128 housing unit, 203 parking space development is unacceptable.

We unequivocally oppose the conditional use permit to allow for construction of a building over 55 feet tall.

Please respond to our concerns. St. Paul elected officials and those running for office, it's time to stand up to this inappropriate proposed development.

Concerned Residents,
Julia Earl & William Moseley
Julia Earl & William Moseley

Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul)

From: Wallinga, David <dwallinga@nrdc.org>
Sent: Friday, March 24, 2017 8:27 AM
To: Williams, Josh (CI-StPaul)
Cc: Liz Boyer; #CI-StPaul_Ward3
Subject: Deny Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for bldg taller than 55 feet at Snelling & St. Clair
Attachments: Wallinga Ltr Opposing CUP for LeCesse Building on Snelling.docx

Importance: High

23 March 2017

Josh Williams
City Planner
Josh.Williams@ci.stpaul.mn.us

Re: Deny CUP for LeCesse Proposal

Dear Mr. Williams:

I just returned from my third community council meeting regarding the proposed building of the mammoth, block-long apartment by Florida's LeCesse Development Corp. at 246-280 Snelling Ave S. I know I am just a single taxpaying, 4th-generation St. Paul physician, while Lecesse is company that manages 40,000 apartments nationwide (but so far as I know does not pay St. Paul taxes). Nevertheless, I and my family of four strenuously oppose the Conditional Use Permit or CUP for this project. The finished project should have a height no taller than the 55 foot maximum allowed without a CUP under the T3 zoning change being sought. I am not opposed to the zoning change itself.

My family has lived at 305 Brimhall St. since 2001. We've seen a turnover of the block from one where there were virtually no young families with kids to one where, at last count, we had over 20 children, attending Randolph Heights, Ramsey Middle School, L'Etoile du Nord, Holy Spirit and Cretin High School. My 11 year-old's two favorite things in the world are first to ride her pink scooter up and down the block, and second to walk to the Corner Drug for ice cream cones. I walk to the Bean Factory and to Defining You Pilates in one direction and to Shish and Dunn Bros in the other. We also take Lyft and public transit to avoid having or using two cars. When Mayor Coleman was running for office the first time, I met with him at Café Amore on Grand to talk about the link between walkable, bikeable neighborhoods and public health.

That background is all to say that we live here principally to create and enjoy a lifestyle that focuses on walking, biking, gardening and hanging out on the front porch. **This project as proposed would be detrimental to that lifestyle, and our neighborhood's quality and character.** As such it does not meet the criteria for granting a conditional use permit.

Clearly, we are not opposed to in-fill development or a more population-dense city; in fact, that corner has needed redevelopment. The problem is this particular project *does not deliver* development that respects the desires of the residents of this neighborhood – the project fails to reflect what it is that makes MacGroveland a place we want to live in. If built, it also is my personal opinion that this project would indirectly have public health impacts that are detrimental. Let me iterate these concerns, below.

- Most significantly, **the height of this building is overwhelming** and would create an oppressive environment for the entire block. A project going as high as 76 feet would create a canyon effect that would deprive pedestrians and

residents of access to light and visual space. On the alley, the elevations make it appear that the building actually would loom over the alley, further creating the sensation of a dark, canyon.

- One thing my family, and I believe my neighbors as well, treasure about our St. Paul neighborhood is that it allows us to see the moon and the night sky at night; this project would deprive us of that view both in its mass and in excessive light pollution. Building enormous 76 foot lighted towers is definitely not a solution to the looming mass of the project. In fact, it creates this second problem of **visual light pollution**.
- Not only the height, but **the uninterrupted length of the building is the problem**, because it will replace a busy commercial strip of active, taxpaying businesses with only a single retail store and parking. With parking being above ground, this is basically a parking ramp for just about the entire block. Unless your idea of a healthy city is people walking from their apartments to the ramp to the drive to their jobs in the suburbs, I cannot think of a bigger damper on the kind of busy, vibrant street life that most of us want for our neighborhoods. Putting a few window boxes on the street will not make this the bare Snelling facade friendly to pedestrians. That is what the Walgreens on Randolph and Snelling does, and it is pathetic.

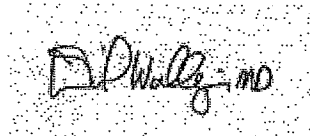
The best way to encourage walking and a pedestrian-friendly cityscape is to have actual retail at the street level, with doors located on the street and windows into actual business activity, not window boxes. As planned, the street level view of this building would be a fake curtain, hiding the parking ramp within, with one teeny little bit of retail (1800 sq feet) at one corner. If you want a resource that talks about what truly constitutes pedestrian-friendly urban development, I highly recommend Urban Sprawl and Public Health: Designing, Planning, and Building for Healthy Communities (Island Press) by two former director's the CDC's environmental health division, Drs. Howie Frumkin and Richard Jackson, along with Larry Frank. Frumkin, Frank and Jackson also point out that what creates pedestrian-friendly urban density is not a 6-story tall building which has a few token setbacks (which is what is being proposed) going up the entire height of the building. To lessen visual mass, the solution instead is to have graduated setbacks that get greater as one moves up the building – more like a pyramid than a canyon, in other words. This is a public health issue because people who walk more are healthier and less obese; neighborhoods with more walking inhabitants are safer and more connected.

At 76 feet (with its towers) or even at 62 feet, this building is far too tall for this very residential neighborhood. Even though the existing buildings are two stories, I would welcome a building 50% taller – that is, three stories. With some trepidation, I could even accept a four story building but only if the upper two floors were stepped significantly back from the street and alley to reduce the canyon effect and make the feeling of the mass on the street more in keeping with the existing buildings on the other two corners of that intersection. In fact, this building is taller than any other building in a similar St. Paul neighborhood that we can think of. It is taller than the Vintage, and that is a far different neighborhood, much closer to the I-94 corridor.

As an aside, I suspect the traffic studies discussed for Snelling congestion have been inadequate at predicting the impact on neighborhood safety and public welfare. As you know, car traffic brings emissions and air particulates, which are triggers for asthma and other respiratory disease. My understanding is that the existing traffic studies have only looked at traffic impacts on Snelling itself, and not on side streets like Brimhall, where I live. I can tell you that Brimhall already has excessively fast and busy cut-off traffic trying to avoid congestion at the lighted intersections of St. Clair and Jefferson on Snelling. Second, any studies done previously certainly have not taken into account the traffic impacts of the massive new stadium and related development that is beginning a short ways north on Snelling and University. I think it is reasonable to assume that this will certainly increase congestion and traffic south on Snelling at St. Clair, to which this outsized apartment building would only add.

We unequivocally oppose the conditional use permit to allow for construction of a building over 55 feet tall. I look forward to your response. In particular, I would like to see a written response to my assertion that the CUP would NOT meet the required criteria, since it would be detrimental to the neighborhood as well as potentially to public health and welfare.

Yours in St. Paul,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Wallinga MD", is placed over a rectangular area of the document that has been redacted with a dense pattern of small dots.

David Wallinga, MD
305 Brimhall Street, 612-423-9666

Cc: Chris Tolbert
Liz Boyer

23 March 2017

Josh Williams
City Planner

Dear Mr. Williams:

I just returned from my third community council meeting regarding the proposed building of the mammoth apartment building by Florida's LeCesse Development Corp. at 246-280 Snelling Ave S. LeCesse is a huge that manages 40,000 units nationwide. So far as I know, they do not pay taxes in St. Paul. I'm writing to strenuously oppose the Conditional Use Permit, or CUP for this project. The finished project should have a height no taller than the 55 foot maximum allowed without a CUP under the T3 zoning change being sought. I am not opposed to the zoning change itself.

I'm a fourth-generation St. Paulite. My family has lived at 305 Brimhall St. since 2001. We've seen a turnover of the block from one where there were virtually no young families with kids to one where, at last count, we had over 20 children, attending Randolph Heights, Ramsey Middle School, L'Etoile du Nord, Holy Spirit and Cretin High School. My 11 year-old's two favorite things in the world are first to ride her pink scooter up and down the block, and second to walk to the Corner Drug for ice cream cones. I walk to the Bean Factory and to Defining You Pilates in one direction and to Shish and Dunn Bros in the other. We also take Lyft and public transit to avoid having or using two cars. When Mayor Coleman was running for office the first time, I met with him at Café Amore on Grand to talk about the link between walkable, bikeable neighborhoods and public health.

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Clearly, we are not opposed to in-fill development or a more population-dense city; in fact, that corner has needed redevelopment. The problem is this particular project *does not deliver* development that respects the desires of the residents of this neighborhood – the project fails to reflect what it is that makes MacGroveland a place we want to live in. If built, it also is my personal opinion that this project would indirectly have public health impacts that are detrimental. Let me iterate these concerns, below.

- Most significantly, **the height of this building is overwhelming** and would create an oppressive environment for the entire block. A project going as high as 76 feet would create a canyon effect that ~~would deprive pedestrians and residents of access to light and visual space. On the alley, the~~ elevations make it appear that the building actually would loom over the alley, further creating the sensation of a dark, canyon.
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- Not only the height, but **the uninterrupted length of the building is the problem**, because it will replace a busy commercial strip of active, taxpaying businesses with only a single retail store and parking. With parking being above ground, this is basically a parking ramp for just about the entire block. Unless your idea of a healthy city is people walking from their apartments to the ramp to the drive to their jobs in the suburbs, I cannot think of a bigger damper on the kind of busy, vibrant street life that

most of us want for our neighborhoods. Putting a few window boxes on the street will not make this the bare Snelling facade friendly to pedestrians. That is what the Walgreens on Randolph and Snelling does, and it is pathetic.

The best way to encourage walking and a pedestrian-friendly cityscape is to have actual retail at the street level, with doors located on the street and windows into actual business activity, not window boxes. As planned, the street level view of this building would be a fake curtain, hiding the parking ramp within, with one teeny little bit of retail (1800 sq feet) at one corner. If you want a resource that talks about what truly constitutes pedestrian-friendly urban development, I highly recommend Urban Sprawl and Public Health: Designing, Planning, and Building for Healthy Communities (Island Press) by two former director's the CDC's environmental health division, Drs. Howie Frumkin and Richard Jackson, along with Larry Frank. Frumkin, Frank and Jackson also point out that what creates pedestrian-friendly urban density is not a 6-story tall building which has a few token setbacks (which is what is being proposed) going up the entire height of the building. To lessen visual mass, the solution instead is to have graduated setbacks that get greater as one moves up the building – more like a pyramid than a canyon, in other words.

At 76 feet (with its towers) or even at 62 feet, this building is far too tall for this very residential neighborhood. I would welcome a three story building, or even a four story building if the upper two floors were stepped back from the street to reduce the canyon effect and make the feeling of the mass on the street more in keeping with the existing buildings on the other two corners of that intersection. In fact, this building is taller than any other building in a similar St. Paul neighborhood that we can think of. It is taller than the Vintage, and that is a far different neighborhood, much closer to the I-94 corridor.

As an aside, I suspect the traffic studies discussed for Snelling congestion have been inadequate at predicting the impact on neighborhood safety and public welfare. As you know, car traffic brings emissions and air particulates, which are triggers for asthma and other respiratory disease. My understanding is that the existing traffic studies have only looked at traffic impacts on Snelling itself, and not on side streets like Brimhall, where I live. I can tell you that Brimhall already has excessively fast and busy cut-off traffic trying to avoid congestion at the lighted intersections of St. Clair and Jefferson on Snelling. Second, any studies done previously certainly have not taken into account the traffic impacts of the massive new stadium and related development that is beginning a short ways north on Snelling and University. I think it is reasonable to assume that this will certainly increase congestion and traffic south on Snelling at St. Clair, to which this outsized apartment building would only add.

We unequivocally oppose the conditional use permit to allow for construction of a building over 55 feet tall. I look forward to your response. In particular, I would like to see a written response to my assertion that the CUP would NOT meet the required criteria, since it would be detrimental to the neighborhood as well as potentially to public health and welfare.

Yours in St. Paul,



David Wallinga, MD
305 Brimhall Street, 612-423-9666

Cc: Chris Tolbert
Liz Boyer

city of saint paul
planning commission resolution
file number
date

WHEREAS, Lecesse Development Corporation, File # 17-016-413, has applied for site plan approval for a 5 1/2-story mixed-use development with 128 residential units, 1,800 sq. ft. commercial space, and 204 structured parking spaces under the provisions of §61.402(c) of the Saint Paul Legislative Code, on property located at 246-286 Snelling Ave S, Parcel Identification Number (PINs) 10.28.23.22.0164, 10.28.23.22.0165, 10.28.23.22.0166, 10.28.23.22.0167, 10.28.23.22.0168, and 10.28.23.22.0169, legally described as Sylvan Park Addition To The City of Saint Paul, Lots 1-10, Block 4; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Committee of the Planning Commission, on April 13, 2017, held a public hearing at which all persons present were given an opportunity to be heard pursuant to said application in accordance with the requirements of §61.303 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Planning Commission, based on the evidence presented to its Zoning Committee at the public hearing as substantially reflected in the minutes, made the following findings of fact:

1. *The city's adopted comprehensive plan and development or project plans for sub-areas of the city.*

The site plan meets this finding. The proposed development is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Applicable Land Use Strategies include:

- The future land use map of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan (2010) identifies Snelling Avenue and a segment of St Clair Avenue including the subject property and properties immediately to the east, as a Mixed-Use Corridor. Mixed-Use Corridors are intended to accommodate a mix of commercial, residential, civic, and institutional uses, with residential units at densities of 30-150 units per acre. The proposed development is approximately 92 units per acre. This Mixed-Use Corridor adjoins a Residential Corridor along St Clair Avenue and Established Neighborhood to the east.
- LU 1.2 – Permit high density residential development in Neighborhood Centers, Mixed-Use Corridors, the Central Corridor, and Downtown.
- LU 1.21 – Balance the following objectives for Mixed-Use Corridors through the density and scale of development: accommodating growth, supporting transit use and walking, providing a range of housing types, and providing housing at densities that support transit.

moved by _____
seconded by _____
in favor _____
against _____

- LU 1.25 – Promote the development of more intensive housing on Mixed-Use Corridors where supported by zoning that permits mixed-use and multifamily residential development.
- LU 1.23 – Guide development along Mixed-Use Corridors... recognize community circumstances and preferences as stated in City adopted summaries of small area plans and district plans, while still providing additional housing opportunities at densities that support transit.

Macalester-Groveland Community Plan (2016) Strategy LU1 is to: Support land use that preserves Macalester-Groveland as a uniquely connected, walkable, mixed-use sustainable neighborhood with a pedestrian-oriented human-scale streetscape.

- LU 1.1 – Maintain and/or establish zoning that encourages compact development along mixed-use corridors that incorporate a mix of uses.
- LU 1.2 – Maintain and/or establish zoning that encourages higher-density (taller) development at the intersection of mixed-use corridors and lower-density (shorter) development at mid-block of mixed-use corridors.

2. *Applicable ordinances of the City of Saint Paul.*

The site plan can meet this finding. If T3 rezoning and a CUP for height are approved, then the site plan meets the standards in the T3 zoning district for height, setbacks, density, parking, and design per the following:

- §66.314 - Intent, T3 traditional neighborhood district.
- §66.331 - Traditional Neighborhood District Density and dimensional standards.
- §66.342 - Parking requirements in T3—T4 traditional neighborhood districts.
- §66.343 - Traditional neighborhood district design standards.
- §63.110 – Building design standards.
- §63.207 - Parking requirements by use.

Conditions for site plan approval should include that: 1) architectural materials and detailing shall be of the same quality as shown on the site plan, or better, 2) building façade articulation along the bottom 25' of the building shall include elements that relate to the human scale, such as required door and window openings, texture, projections, awnings and canopies, ornament, public art, etc., and 3) The project meets all T3 traditional design standards, as stated in Sec. 66.343 of the Saint Paul Zoning Code, as determined by the Planning Administrator.

3. *Preservation of unique geologic, geographic or historically significant characteristics of the city and environmentally sensitive areas.*

The site plan meets this finding. The property is typical of the intent of a T3 neighborhood district, which provides for higher-density pedestrian- and transit-oriented mixed-use development. The property does not have unique historical or environmental significance.

4. *Protection of adjacent and neighboring properties through reasonable provision for such matters as surface water drainage, sound and sight buffers, preservation of views, light and air, and those aspects of design which may have substantial effects on neighboring land uses.*

The site plan DOES NOT meet this finding. Through the review process, the developer has made several site plan changes in an attempt to improve the relationship of the development to the homes to the east and the streetscape along Snelling Ave. Specific to the findings:

- The stormwater system shall meet City standards for run-off rate control. The system will consist of pipes buried below grade located on the east side of the building in the landscaped setback area.
 - The building's proposed rear setback is 12' from the 15' alley. The rear side of the building employs a step-back design. An outdoor terrace sits above the parking structure. The three residential floors are a reasonable distance from the abutting homes.
 - The setback areas to the south and east will be landscaped. Existing boulevard trees will be protected where possible and new boulevard trees will be planted as required.
 - The off-street parking will be provided as two levels of structured parking. Deliveries, trash and recycling will occur within the parking structure or street. There will be no alley access to the parking structure.
 - The proposed site plan adheres only in part to §66.343. – Traditional Neighborhood District Design Standards:
 - *Transitions to lower-density neighborhoods.* Transitions in density or intensity shall be managed through careful attention to building height, scale, massing and solar exposure.
 - *Building facade articulation.* The bottom twenty-five (25) feet of buildings shall include elements that relate to the human scale. These should include doors and windows, texture, projections, awnings and canopies, ornament, etc. This standard is NOT met. The project as proposed does not provide sufficient articulation and other elements to relate to the human scale.
 - *Door and window openings - minimum and character.* Windows shall be designed with punched and recessed openings, in order to create a strong rhythm of light and shadow. Glass on windows and doors shall be clear or slightly tinted, and allow views into and out of the interior. Window shape, size and patterns shall emphasize the intended organization of the facade and the definition of the building.
 - *Materials and detailing.* Mixed use buildings shall be constructed of high-quality materials such as brick, stone, textured cast stone, tinted masonry units, concrete, glass or metal. All building facades visible from a public street or walkway shall employ materials and design features similar to those of the front facade.
 - *Parking location and design.* Off-street parking shall be provided within a principal structure, underground, or to the rear of buildings to the greatest extent possible. Vehicular entrances to structured parking shall be minimized so that they do not dominate the street frontage of the building.
5. *The arrangement of buildings, uses and facilities of the proposed development in order to assure abutting property and/or its occupants will not be unreasonably affected.*

The site plan meets this finding for the reasons listed in finding 4 above:

- Stormwater management system;
- Spatial buffer provided by 15' alley right-of-way and 12' rear setback.
- Step-back building design;

- Landscape buffers;
- Structured parking;
- No alley access to building or parking lot;
- Deliveries from the parking structure or street;
- Trash and recycling haulers from the parking structure or street.

6. *Creation of energy-conserving design through landscaping and location, orientation and elevation of structures.*

The site plan meets this finding. Higher density development is inherently more energy-conserving because it has fewer exterior walls and roof per dwelling unit than low density housing. The proposed development is located in a commercial area with good public transit and thus is conducive to walking, biking, and using public transit rather than driving.

7. *Safety and convenience of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic both within the site and in relation to access streets, including traffic circulation features, the locations and design of entrances and exits and parking areas within the site.*

The site plan DOES NOT meet this finding. The site plan as submitted, proposes traffic for the development to enter the site at one of two parking ramp entrances: a right-in only on Snelling Ave and from either direction on St Clair Ave. Traffic will leave the site from the two parking ramp exits: right-out only on Snelling Ave and to either direction onto St Clair Ave. There is no vehicular access from the alley. A pedestrian entrances to the parking structure are proposed off both Snelling and St Clair Avenues. Sidewalks will continue at grade across driveways. Bicycle parking will be provided in bike storage rooms inside the parking structure.

The applicant has not submitted a completed and certified traffic impact study. The location and design of vehicular access to the site could create an unsafe pedestrian environment on adjacent sidewalks.

8. *The satisfactory availability and capacity of storm and sanitary sewers, including solutions to any drainage problems in the area of the development.*

The site plan meets this finding. The parcels were found to have a high water table, forcing the development to be less than a story below ground. Stormwater from the building would be piped to an underground system on the east side of the structure. The stormwater would go to the public storm sewer in St Clair Avenue at a controlled rate that meets City standards. The technical details for this system are being worked out between the applicant and Public Works Sewers. A condition for site plan approval should include that technical details for the stormwater management solution be approved by the Public Works Sewer Division.

9. *Sufficient landscaping, fences, walls and parking necessary to meet the above objectives.*

The site plan meets this finding. A condition of Site Plan approval should include that a final landscape plan be approved by the City Forester. The setback areas to the south and east will be landscaped and used for stormwater management. Existing boulevard

trees will be protected where possible and new boulevard trees will be planted as required.

A minimum of 158 off-street parking spaces are required (5 for commercial plus 153 spaces for residential) less any allowed reductions for T3 zoning, shared parking, or bicycle parking.

- The zoning code requires off-street parking for commercial space at one parking space per 400 square feet of gross floor area. The off-street parking requirement for residential units is based on the number of rooms per unit.
- Required off-street parking may be reduced by 25% for residential uses in a T3 zoning district per Leg. Code Sec. 66.342. - Parking requirements in T3—T4 traditional neighborhood districts. In addition, on-street parking located along the frontage of a property may be used to meet parking requirements for that property.

Sufficient parking will be provided. 204 off-street parking spaces are proposed within two levels of structured parking. Of the 204 parking spaces, LeCesse Development has stated its intention to provide 29 off-street parking spaces that could be leased or somehow made available for use by neighboring establishments.

10. *Site accessibility in accordance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), including parking spaces, passenger loading zones and accessible routes.*

The site plan meets this requirement. The floors of the commercial spaces and lobbies will match the sidewalk grades. The plan proposes 7 accessible parking spaces to meet the ADA standards required for lots of 201 – 300 parking spaces. The sidewalks have accessible crossings.

11. *Provision for erosion and sediment control as specified in the ``Ramsey Erosion Sediment and Control Handbook.''*

The site plan includes an erosion and sediment control plan that meets this standard.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Saint Paul Planning Commission, under the authority of the City's Legislative Code, based on findings 4 and 7 above, that the application of Lecesce Development Corporation for a site plan approval for a 5 1/2-story mixed-use development with 128 residential units, 1,800 sq. ft. commercial space, and 204 structured parking spaces at 246-286 Snelling Ave South is hereby DENIED.

city of saint paul
planning commission resolution
file number
date

WHEREAS, LeCesse Development, File # 17-015-551, has applied for a conditional use permit for building height over 55': proposed height of 62' 4" under the provisions of §61.501 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code, on property located at 246-286 Snelling Ave South, Parcel Identification Numbers (PINs) 10.28.23.22.0164, 10.28.23.22.0165, 10.28.23.22.0166, 10.28.23.22.0167, 10.28.23.22.0168, and 10.28.23.22.0169; legally described as Sylvan Park Addition to the City of Saint Paul, Lots 1-10, Block 4; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Committee of the Planning Commission, on April 13, 2017, held a public hearing at which all persons present were given an opportunity to be heard pursuant to said application in accordance with the requirements of §61.303 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Planning Commission, based on the evidence presented to its Zoning Committee at the public hearing as substantially reflected in the minutes, made the following findings of fact:

1. LeCesse Development has a purchase agreement for all properties, which are proposed for rezoning to T3. They are proposing a mixed use building which will cover nearly the entirety of the properties and will consist of approximately 1900 square feet of retail commercial space, 128 residential units, and associated amenity space. The building will include 204 parking spaces, 29 of which will be available for use by the new retail commercial tenant and existing businesses in the area. The owners of the property have submitted a petition to rezone the properties from B2 community business to T3 traditional neighborhood.
2. The applicant is seeking a conditional use permit to allow additional height above the maximum height allowed without a conditional use permit for a mixed use building under T3 zoning. The building has a proposed height of 62' 4" as measured to the roof line. Under Sec. 66.331 of the zoning code, buildings in the T3 zone may exceed the maximum height with a conditional use permit (CUP). Alternatively, buildings may exceed the maximum height provided taller portions of the building are stepped back an additional distance from side and rear property lines, at a ratio of 1' of additional height for each 1' of additional setback. The proposed building is designed with parking and retail/amenity space covering the majority of the site to about 19' above grade, and an additional 4 stories of residential units in a linear configuration along the long axis of the site, at an average setback of approximately 52.5' from the rear property line. Due to this setback, the majority of the portion the building exceeding 55' is allowed as of-right. The CUP is required to allow additional height for the portion of the building with side

moved by _____

seconded by _____

in favor _____

against _____

setbacks of less than 7' 4". This is the northernmost 5' 4" of the building where it abuts St. Clair Avenue.

3. §61.501 lists five standards that all conditional uses must satisfy:

- (a) *The extent, location and intensity of the use will be in substantial compliance with the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan and any applicable subarea plans which were approved by the city council.* This condition is met. The future land use map of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan (2010) identifies Snelling Avenue and the portion of St Clair Avenue including the subject property and properties immediately to the east as a Mixed-Use Corridor. Mixed-Use Corridors are intended to accommodate a mix of commercial, residential, civic, and institutional uses, with residential units at densities of 30-150 units per acre. The proposed development is approximately 92 units per acre. Policy LU 1.2 of the Macalester-Groveland Community Plan (2016) expresses a strategy to "maintain and/or establish zoning that encourages higher-density (taller) development at the intersection of mixed-use corridors and lower-density (shorter) development at mid-block of mixed-use corridors."
- (b) *The use will provide adequate ingress and egress to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.* This condition can be met. The applicant has provided a preliminary assessment of potential traffic impacts associated with the project. A final traffic impact study (TIS) evaluating any impacts to pedestrian and bicycle safety and impacts to automobile traffic levels of service on adjacent and other impacted streets and intersections should be completed. This assessment should be certified by a registered professional engineer. The Traffic Impact Study will look at the existing conditions of the traffic volumes, and take into account the impact of the proposed land use, transit availability, etc. The parking configuration, ingress/egress and pedestrian/vehicle safety requirements will be informed by the TIS. Public Works Transportation Planning & Safety and the Minnesota Department of Transportation will sign-off on both the TIS and the Site Plan.
- (c) *The use will not be detrimental to the existing character of the development in the immediate neighborhood or endanger the public health, safety and general welfare.* This condition is not met. The proposed building includes a podium comprised of two levels of poured concrete parking garage, loading/service space, and retail/amenity space. The podium base is 3' below grade, and the top is 19' above grade. The vast majority of the podium levels is off-street parking. The applicant has proposed a variety of treatments, including trellis plantings, seating, windows, art displays, and screening to meet requirements for percentage of openings and in an attempt to create a welcoming streetscape. However, the design as proposed does not create an active frontage on Snelling Avenue, and detracts from neighborhood walkability and pedestrian safety. The rear façade of the building faces the north-south public alley between Snelling Avenue and Brimhall Street. The façade as currently proposed would be constructed with brick facing and limited openings or architectural adornments. The grade of the alley rises moving from north to south, resulting in approximately 10' of the façade being subsurface at the southern end of the building.
- (d) *The use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.* This condition is not met. The mass of the building is set away from the adjacent single family residential properties across the alley in order to provide for a transition in mass between the Established Neighborhood and the Mixed Use Corridor. However, while the use is

generally consistent with the planned character of the Mixed Use Corridor, the building form is not, and the lack of a vibrant, welcoming and safe public realm adjacent to the building will impede the continued, orderly development of uses allowed in the district.

- (e) *The use shall, in all other respects, conform to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located.* This condition can be met. The proposed use shall be in conformance with all applicable regulations, provided that the lots for which the property is proposed are rezoned to T3 traditional neighborhood, all T3 design standards are met, and a site plan for the project is approved. Site plan approval, rezoning of the lots for which the project is approved, and conformance with all T3 design standards as stated in Sec. 66.343 should be required conditions of approval.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Saint Paul Planning Commission, under the authority of the City's Legislative Code, based on findings 3(c) and 3(d) above, that the application of LeCesse Development for a conditional use permit for building height over 55' at 246-286 Snelling Ave South is hereby DENIED.