



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Melvin Carter, Mayor

*25 West Fourth Street, Ste. 1400
Saint Paul, MN 55102*

*Telephone: 651-266-6700
Facsimile: 651-266-6549*

Date: June 29, 2018

To: Planning Commission

From: Kady Dadlez, 651-266-6619

Re: West Marshall Avenue Zoning Study – Public Hearing

BACKGROUND

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the West Marshall Avenue Zoning Study on June 29, 2018. The study was released by the Planning Commission for public review on May 18, 2018. Commissioners received a copy of the study at that time along with a full presentation on the study's recommendations.

You will recall the zoning study was initiated by the City Council in October 2017 in response to increasing development interest along Marshall Avenue from the Mississippi River to Hamline Avenue. A moratorium on development for a six block stretch of the avenue, Wilder to Wheeler, is in place until October 18, 2018 and a survey of historic resources is underway for a portion of the study area.

The study's primary recommendations are two-fold. First, is to maintain Marshall as an appropriate corridor for a range of housing options, including apartments. The intent is to accommodate some higher-density housing while preserving the neighborhood's character. Second, is to adopt traditional neighborhood zoning along the avenue, including at some commercial intersections and in the industrial area east of Snelling, so future development takes on a more traditional urban form and allows for a mix of uses.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY RECEIVED

A number of emails providing comment on the study recommendations were submitted prior to the public hearing. Copies of the emails received through June 21, 2018 are included in your packet.

Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)

From: Tom Basgen <tbasgen@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 21, 2018 12:28 PM
To: Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Marshall avenue downs one

Hey Kady,

I believe the new proposed zoning on Marshall around Prior is woefully underdone. This city is in desperate need of more housing and restrictive zoning is a substantial hurdle towards that goal. Saint Paul needs to do its part and if we can't build lots of housing on Marshall, a major transit thoroughfare, then where else are we gonna build it? We need to keep our options open and not hamstring ourselves here. We need to upzone this.

Tom Basgen
659 Wilder st

Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)

From: Ethan Osten <ethan.osten@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 21, 2018 2:59 PM
To: Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Comments on West Marshall Zoning Study

Commissioners,

I am writing to express my concerns about aspects of the proposed zoning changes on Marshall Ave. Although I recognize that the study is an attempt at good-faith compromise, I nevertheless believe that certain significant elements would hinder the City's efforts to achieve the goals outlined in its current and draft Comprehensive Plans.

Marshall Ave is one of St. Paul's most important transit and bike/ped corridors, and its importance will only increase once the planned B Line rapid bus line is constructed. City plans have for decades concentrated high-density development on corridors such as Marshall as a way to build tax base, reduce transportation-related pollution and GHG emissions, increase housing choice and affordability, and reduce pressure for detrimental exurban development. In most respects, the 5/18 draft study represents a tremendous step backwards from addressing these goals.

Study participants identified a desire to segregate student housing from other residential uses, and proposed the zoning changes therein as a key means of doing so. While I recognize the potential pitfalls of life adjacent to college students, the proposals would have the natural and obvious effect of inflating the cost of student housing, making higher education less affordable and harming the City's goals of equitable access to education. Many of the participants' solutions for the student housing problem assume a degree of privilege, either for the students or the colleges, which may not be justified and which is not supported in the study.

On these grounds and others, I ask you to modify these proposals to ensure that they are consistent with the broader interests of the community.

Thank you,
Ethan Osten
1288 Marion St

Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)

From: Christina Morrison <christina.n.morrison@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 21, 2018 3:33 PM
To: Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Marshall zoning proposal

Hi Katy,

I strongly oppose any downzoning of Marshall, one of the city's strongest transit corridors and the future home of Metro Transit's B Line BRT. The B Line will connect these neighborhoods, long home to students and transit-reliant households, to both the Blue Line and Green Line LRT.

These neighborhoods need more housing and density options, not less. Downzoning creates an artificial ceiling on housing supply which drives up cost. This proposal is not equitable or sustainable.

If current neighborhood residents do not like college students, they should have considered this when buying their homes. St. Thomas was founded in 1885, and Macalester in 1847. The large student population is a defining characteristic, not a new burden, on this neighborhood. As a Macalester alum and 18-year Saint Paul resident, I believe it is unreasonable to think that students will disappear if housing is not provided. Housing students within walking distance to campus is also the best way to reduce auto traffic and commuter congestion in this neighborhood.

Thank you,
Christina Morrison
2110 Highland Parkway

Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)

From: Eric Saathoff <ericSaathoff@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 21, 2018 9:18 PM
To: Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Re: Marshall Zoning
Attachments: image001.jpg

Hello,

I applaud the city's goal to increase intensity of housing in various zones. I do not have sympathy for people who want to change the zoning to restrict the more intensive uses that are already allowed in the neighborhood. It's abundantly clear that our metro area is in a housing shortage that has frustrated many people who are middle class, not to mention those who are in more dire financial circumstances. This is no time to restrict the height of buildings in ANY part of the city where they are already allowed. This is the city and neighborhood taking a step backwards when we should be embracing higher levels of density because we absolutely need to change the character of our neighborhoods and welcome more people into our great city.

Thank you,

Eric Saathoff
691 Wells St
Saint Paul, MN 55106

On Mon, May 21, 2018 at 4:29 PM Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul) <Kady.Dadlez@ci.stpaul.mn.us> wrote:

Dear Mr. Saathoff-

Thank you for your comments on the West Marshall Avenue Zoning Study. If you would like your comments to be part of the official record, please include your address and resend your email to me.

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the study recommendations as follows:

Friday June 29, 2018

8:30 a.m.

Room 40 City Hall (basement)

15 West Kellogg Boulevard

Best regards,

Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)

From: Benjamin Ashley-Wurtmann <ben.wurtmann@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 22, 2018 7:26 AM
To: Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul); #CI-StPaul_Ward4
Subject: Comment on Marshall Downzoning

Kady-

I write in strong opposition to proposed West Marshall zoning plan recently released for public comment. ***As a resident of this area (1661 Iglehart), I am concerned that St Paul is shutting the door on reasonable and necessary development of this area.***

My primary concern is that this plan allows a small number of loud and privileged home owners to defeat development that is in the best interest of the city at large. Note the plan (page 2) includes a note that the ***people who shaped this plan had to be reminded that apartments were homes.*** I can think of no better encapsulation of the danger of using a limited sample size that comes from a neighborhood meeting to set policy. This is uninformed, discriminatory, and unrepresentative of our city. ***Concentrating the denser zoning at the corners that already have it puts the older apartment buildings at those corners at extreme risk of redevelopment*** from NOAH into higher rent housing. Targeting these apartment complexes in this way could make an already segregated neighborhood extremely gentrified.

Second, I want the amenities and walk-ability that come with development. The Snell-by development has been a wonderful addition to the neighborhood. We've gained a lot of walk-ability with the addition of a grocery store so close by. I want to see further development that will put ***more retail and commercial amenities in walking or bus*** range for residents of this neighborhood.

Third, Saint Paul needs housing. The papers recently covered the fact that ***Saint Paul is the fastest growing part of the metro.*** Those new households and residents need homes. It is not enough to only allow for the most incremental of changes. Failure to accommodate these new residents leaves sprawl as the only alternative. If we are going to do our part to make Saint Paul a resilient city, in line with the Paris accords, we need to do a lot more to support people who want to live in transit oriented neighborhoods. With 21/53 bus access, Marshall is a key transit corridor that can connect homes, jobs, and complete communities. We have to do more here.

I've lived here as a homeowner for seven years now, and I am disappointed to see this plan. It listens to the fears and prejudices of a limited number of my neighbors, and fails to accommodate what the city as a whole needs. I ask that you consider revisions that increase density and the allowable uses in the West Marshall zoning plan.

Ben Ashley-Wurtmann
1661 Iglehart Avenue

Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)

From: Mike Hicks <mulad6@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 22, 2018 8:55 AM
To: Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)
Subject: West Marshall Avenue Zoning Study comment

Hello,

I am writing because I am very disappointed to learn that the St. Paul Planning Commission is considering down-zoning areas along Marshall Avenue to limit the size and scale of structures that can be built along the street. I approve of the idea of changing to the Traditional Neighborhood zoning type in order to allow a mixing of residential and business properties, but I do not want to see the area locked in to the current sizes of buildings.

This is the wrong way to go for a city that has an expanding population and in an area that is close to colleges that need affordable housing for students, staff, and faculty. The area has a need to modernize housing to better accommodate the ways we live today, and to correct the designs of homes originally built more than 100 years ago as the first structures on the land. Some of these structures have likely reached the end of their useful lives, and should be allowed to be replaced with multifamily housing.

Older homes and apartment buildings often do not have modern electrical systems, are lacking in heating and cooling, and aren't designed for appliances such as clothes washer/dryers, dishwashers, refrigerators, or modern-size ovens. People who desire amenities that have been common for the past 50 years are often forced to look to the suburbs for housing, constraining the ability of the city to accommodate more residents and increase its tax base. Recent growth in the city's population has happened despite those constraints. Upzoning the area to accommodate new, larger apartment buildings would allow even greater growth for the city.

Marshall Avenue has bus service every 10 minutes along the segment between the Mississippi River and Cretin Ave, which should cause this area to be treated as a transit-oriented development corridor. I am frustrated that this zoning plan is concentrated almost entirely on the half-block facing Marshall Avenue on each side -- I personally prefer to live in apartment buildings that are a block or two away from busier streets, since I am easily wakened by traffic noise. It would be far more appropriate to expand TN zoning so that it extends 1/4- to 1/2-mile from Marshall Avenue, and allow more multifamily structures in quieter parts of the neighborhood. This should also be considered along the rest of Marshall, to improve the chances of 10-minute (or better) transit service along the entire corridor, which would benefit residents by allowing them to forgo the use of their cars much more frequently, and possibly save tens of thousands of dollars by choosing to sell them off.

Allowing bigger structures and more density is the far better way to go for this area.

Thank you for your time.

Mike Hicks
740 Victoria St S Apt 330
Saint Paul, MN 55102
612-703-3787
mulad6@gmail.com

Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)

From: Sean Bennett <swbennett06@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 22, 2018 9:38 PM
To: Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Against Marshall Ave. Downzoning

Hi Kady,

I'm writing to argue against any downzoning on Marshall Ave or anywhere in the city. As a renter living on Marshall, downzoning to prevent new multi-family homes is a direct threat to my ability to afford my current home. Other renters in this neighborhood, often the young and the disadvantaged, may be even more grievously harmed by the proposal.

Locking in place the status quo contributes toward aggressive gentrification--the high demand for homes combined with a frozen supply ensures skyrocketing house values and rents, excluding all but the wealthy and often outright expelling the poor. This is utterly unacceptable in a Saint Paul seeking to be a dynamic home to peoples from all walks of life. The construction of more multi-family homes would counteract the effect of the current housing crisis and make Saint Paul more affordable to more Minnesotans.

Those demanding downzoning are a privileged few who are jealously trying to accrue even greater benefit to themselves at the expense of others, using an array of shifting goalposts for why new homes are bad. They complain brand new apartments wouldn't be affordable, yet do nothing toward addressing affordability in this neighborhood--all the while sitting back and watching their own home values skyrocket year after year.

They complain that new construction wouldn't match "neighborhood character" (often racism and classism thinly veiled in an appeal to "inherent" value of old architecture). I say we should value the current and future residents of our city, the *human beings* looking to be our new neighbors, over conservatives' wounded sense of aesthetic.

Please, Saint Paul must rise to the challenge and make the future better for all Minnesotans, not give in to the thoroughly selfish demands of a handful of bitter curmudgeons.

Thank you,
Sean Bennett

1990 Marshall Ave, Apt 6
Saint Paul, MN 55104

Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)

From: Shari Albrecht <shari.albrecht@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 22, 2018 9:58 PM
To: Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Comment on downzoning Marshall Ave

Hi,

This is my comment on downzoning Marshall Ave. Please don't do this. Marshall is a major transportation corridor including bikes and buses. It well suited for higher density developments. As a neighbor, I want appropriate increases in density so that I can enjoy improved transit and more commerce. I like my neighborhood and I want more people to be able to live here, as opposed to moving to suburbs that rely on car commuting, or college students having to move further front their schools.

Thanks!

Shari Albrecht
1610 Laurel

Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)

From: Commers, Jon <Jon.Commers@metc.state.mn.us>
Sent: Friday, May 25, 2018 11:25 PM
To: Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Development capacity question

Kady,

I've just finished the overview of the West Marshall Avenue Zoning Study. In thinking over its recommendations, I'm wondering if during the study there has been analysis done comparing the total development that could be built by right under current zoning, to the total development that could be built by right under the proposed rezoning.

It would be very helpful to understand the impact on the capacity for housing units and other development (realizing of course that T zones would allow a fair amount of flexibility in use). If you would, let me know if this has been undertaken and if so, the results. Many thanks,

Jon

Jon Commers
District 14 (Saint Paul)
Metropolitan Council
(651) 645-4644

Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)

From: Jake Rueter <jake.rueter@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 29, 2018 9:53 AM
To: Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Fwd: Comments on Proposed Marshall Ave Zoning

Hi Kady,

Resending per your request so that this can be part of the public record.

Thanks!

Jake

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Jake Rueter <jake.rueter@gmail.com>
Date: Sun, May 27, 2018, 10:46 PM
Subject: Comments on Proposed Marshall Ave Zoning
To: <Kady.Dadlez@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Hi Kady,

I recently saw that the St Paul Planning Commission will be considering changes to the current zoning on Marshall Avenue. I am writing to share that I am not in favor of the proposed changes.

The proposed rezoning is effectively down-zoning significant swaths of one of St Paul's most critical transit corridors, which is exactly the kind place where we should be building more housing, not less. As the City continues to make decisions that impact our current housing crisis, we need to be working to allow more housing that is close to transit and allows people to walk and bike instead of driving.

Please pass my comments along to the Planning Commission. I hope the Commissioners will vote against the proposed rezoning.

Sincerely,

Jake Rueter
1347 Blair Ave

Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)

From: Mickey Tierney <mickeyt13@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 31, 2018 10:02 PM
To: Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Comments to UPDC email and zoning plans

Under the B2 to T2 link I see that there is an idea to turn the Cheapo and Now Bikes into a Starbucks and housing. Are you insane??? Cheapo, which sells records, probably employs more people than yet another God awful Starbucks. And Now Bikes employs 3 times as many more. At the very least make sure you don't run good businesses out and replace them with restaurants like BW which reeks up the neighborhood and has terrible food.

Businesses like Now Bikes and Cheapo make St. Paul the neighborhood-centric place it is. As soon as it becomes just another town full of chain-filled strip malls you'll ruin the charm.

Here, just take a look at the new Starbucks on Marshall and Snelling. Have you been there? Try the drive thru. You might crash your car or you might not. It's a fun challenge. But don't worry you'll get the challenge because there's no parking. Lucky for us there's another Starbucks just a few blocks up the street.

Sincerely,
Mike Tierney
1393 Ashland
612-306-4376

Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)

From: Joshua Donato <jdonato@CollageArch.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2018 10:01 PM
To: Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Marshall Ave Land Use Meeting 06/05/18

Good Morning Kady,

I am a home owner at 1898 Marshall Ave.

I would like to say thank you for a thoughtful effort to come up with a zoning map that will help the residents of Marshall meet our wants of seeing the neighborhood maintain it's character while at the same time providing for more dense areas of development, meeting the cities goals. As you know if we take away the character of a place than that place becomes nowhere. Only by preserving our history can we make a place worth visiting, and it looks as though you share that historic place making vision that made us fall in love with this part of Marshall.

We understand our area of Marshall is under consideration for a historic overlay or district. Can you please pass on the individuals responsible for that survey as we would very much like to participate. My wife has done an extensive study of our house and can provide quite a bit of information about the house.

Lastly, this one is for you. Big picture. I am not from Minnesota. I come from places that have stellar public transportation. The first quandary I had was why does much of the bus transit run parallel to the Metro backbone. In my mind it should be running perpendicular with another line at Ford Parkway. I know that will not happen, but at least with a perpendicular approach we can hope to provide more connectivity to the neighborhoods to the two great cities we live in. I know that is outside the scope of what we are talking about. I only bring it up as it might help the calculations of where we are putting density. If it were up to me I would put a bus line down Fairview as a North South link in addition to Snelling as a short run circulator.

Thanks again, and please let us know if you would like our voice at the city council meeting. I am happy to get behind your work.

Joshua Donato
jdonato@collagearch.com
612 406 6066
1898 Marshall Ave.

P.S. Can I get a PDF of the PowerPoint Scott gave on Zoning 101.

Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)

From: Dale Halladay <dale.halladay@outlook.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2018 1:56 PM
To: Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Zoning Code info on West Marshall Ave. study

Dear Ms. Dadlez:

Thank you for your time after the Union Park District presentation yesterday evening on the West Marshall Avenue Zoning Study to discuss the St. Paul zoning code information.

As mentioned, I think it is important that all future iterations of the West Marshall zoning study (and probably all other ones for the city) should include a reference table showing a comparison of the key numerical dimensions and restrictions of each zoning code referenced in the study. There is nowhere on the city's website that I could find, after searching for 20 minutes, that provides an easy to understand overview and comparison of the key dimensional components of the various zoning codes of the city. Without that information, all the colored maps provided in great detail in the study are rendered essentially meaningless.

A good start to this is the table included in the "Zoning 101" presentation given by Scott Van Wert, although I think additional relevant items like parking should also be included.

If there is someone else at the city to which I should present my concern and request, in order to get this problem resolved, please let me know.

Thank you for your help with this.

Best regards,
Dale Halladay
1936 Dayton Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55104
phone: 612-804-5153

Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)

From: Shaun McElhatton <shaun.mcelhatton@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 09, 2018 8:23 AM
To: Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Marshall Avenue Zoning Study

Dear Kady—I have lived at 1879 Carroll Ave. since 1990. It appears that the proposed rezoning for West Marshall protects and preserves existing business uses—gas stations and the taxi business—but does not similarly protect and preserve single-family uses. I object to that prioritization of business over residential use.

Sincerely,
Shaun McElhatton.

Sent from my iPhone

Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)

From: S. W. Strand <swstrand@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 18, 2018 7:29 PM
To: Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)
Subject: West Marshall Ave Rezoning - Question

Hello Ms. Dadlez,

I own parcel at 226 North Wilder Street which is the property referred to as the parcel to the south of the property located at the southeast corner of Marshall at Wilder. My property is a duplex which I have owned since 1993 and occupy.

My question is why my parcel is deemed as a "logical" parcel to become rezoned to T1 yet the duplex directly across from mine, at 225 North Wilder, would not be changed by the rezoning. That duplex (formerly a single family home converted to a duplex) is behind a commercial property on the block of Marshall between Cleveland and Wilder Avenues of all commercial property. Would it not be "logical" to include it into the T1 rezoning? (Even better, zone that parcel for a parking lot for area businesses (with bike racks as well, of course) and remove the property altogether).

I am not opposed to changing my parcel to T1 as it appears that will offer more use options than the current RM2.

Respectfully looking forward to your reply,
Steven Strand