



Regent Neighborhood A S S O C I A T I O N

February 9, 2005

To: Mayor Dave Cieslewicz
Mark Bugher, Chair, Economic Development Commission
Alder Brenda Konkel

The Regent Neighborhood Association (RNA) at its board meeting January 26th, 2005 reviewed and discussed the Economic Development Report of December 2004.

The RNA Board finds that the report fails to recognize the value of the dialog between neighborhood associations and the business community. Our experience over more than a decade shows that healthy debate and constructive dialog between neighborhood associations and developers lead to better projects. We also oppose a "presumptive approval" process that would prevent exercise of political processes not only by neighborhood associations, but also by the individuals who must live with the results of these decisions.

The RNA has a long history of working with the business community and the University. We recognize that quality development projects are an asset to the neighborhood. Collaboration between developers and the neighborhood association along with alderpersons has included facilitating meetings with affected neighbors, working directly with city staff, constructive brainstorming, and representing the neighborhood, usually with written comments, at Urban Design, Plan Commission, and Common Council meetings when decisions are made. This collaboration results in better projects for both the developer/owner and the neighborhood.

Recent examples include:

- An expanded parking lot at the Blue Moon acceptable to nearby residents
- Development of Lakeside Commons with the Fiore Company
- Redevelopment of a defunct gas station to a Goodwill drop-off station
- Redevelopment of the Ivy Inn site and two other apartment projects with Ron Fedler on Old University.
- Improved results along Breese Terrace and in the Lot 17 parking ramp that resulted from negotiations with the University

We appreciate that in the past Mayors' Soglin, Bauman, and Cieslewicz have supported our proactive and reasoned stance. We urge you to consider our concerns, and request that a much broader public discussion about the implications of this report needs to occur before any implementation measures are considered and developed.

Thank you for your consideration. Please keep us informed about any further activities relating to this report.

Sincerely,

Joy Drummond, President RNA for the RNA Board

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