

TPC 03.12.14
ITEM F.1.
HAND-OUT

Benishek-Clark, Anne

From: Bidar-Sielaff, Shiva
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 9:56 PM
To: Benishek-Clark, Anne
Cc: Schmidt, Chris; Ellingson, Susan; Weier, Anita
Subject: University Ave Corridor Plan

Dear Anne,

A last minute big favor: could you please forward this email to TPC members tomorrow AM and also have copies available for them at the meeting. Thank you so very much. Shiva

Dear TPC members,

I apologize for not being able to attend your meeting. I am out of town at a conference.

I am writing to you to urge you to support the University Ave Corridor Plan as submitted by the Regent Neighborhood Association with the changes suggested by TPC staff in the staff report.

A few important points I would like to make about the plan, especially given some assumptions and statements that have been made:

- Process: the plan before you is the result of 3.5 years of neighborhood and stakeholder engagement led by a group of hard working Regent Neighborhood Association Board who volunteered countless of their time. They organized neighborhood meetings, businesses on the corridor were surveyed and invited to meetings, walks of the corridor were organized, numerous meetings with city planning staff and myself were held. I am flabbergasted at the fact that the legitimacy of the Regent Neighborhood Association is being questioned and that its Board is being assigned nefarious motivations. I attend the RNA Board meetings monthly- this is an extremely committed, caring group of people whose drivers are the continued vibrancy and livability of our neighborhood.

- Balancing the corridor's capacity and density: The best word to describe the plan before you is balance. It provides a vision for a balanced approach to redevelopment and added density to this corridor. It calls for more density while acknowledging that too much added density will put too much pressure of the corridor that it will already an extremely busy one, creating the sort of gridlock that will drive people away from wanting to leave on or around the corridor and scaring away businesses. This is a corridor is at or close to capacity. It is a huge transportation corridor, one of the busiest city corridors given the number of buses, bicyclists, pedestrians and cars that utilize it on a daily basis. We already have serious challenges in attracting businesses to the corridor- businesses have specifically mentioned lack of parking as a main reason they do not locate on the corridor. The balanced approach reflected in the plan before you is essential to the livability of the area will encourage neighborhood businesses to take root and prosper.

- Affordable housing: At a time when we face a serious crisis in availability of affordable housing in our city, it is critical to ensure that our land planning promotes affordable housing instead of a one directional push for redevelopment and higher density at the expense of affordability and livability. There are areas in the corridor such as Paunack and Birge that are some of the last remnants of affordable housing in the whole neighborhood. We heard it loud and clear at some of the neighborhood meetings. I think it is our responsibility to make sure that we support the availability of affordable housing in this neighborhood. A blanket call for redevelopment and height is in essence a call to do away with this pocket of affordable housing.

Again, I urge you to support the University Ave Corridor Plan as submitted by the Regent Neighborhood Association with the changes suggested by TPC staff in the staff report.

Thank you for your service on TPC.

Best,

Shiva Bidar-Sielaff
District 5 Alder