

722 Williamson Street – Neighborhood Issues with the Development

The Baldwin Group has met with the neighborhood several times and there is a plan in place to meet with them after the UDC meeting approximately once per week to work out details of the plan. We are now looking to UDC for their take on the plan and design for this parcel.

Negative aspects of plan

1. Does not meet several standards set by the Williamson Street Build II Plan:
 - which allows 5 stories plus two bonus stories for excellence in design, structured parking, affordable housing and should not exceed 85 ft. in height
 - should be a mid-block "urban lane" system
 - Too much massing along bike path corridor.
2. Insufficient parking for residents would exacerbate parking problems in the neighborhood.
3. Additional traffic moving into an uncontrolled intersection on Blount St. & Williamson St. as well as Livingston St. & Williamson St.
4. The proposed design is not so exceptional that it warrants a 10 story building.
5. Should provide more affordable housing and should use a better criterion for affordable housing.
6. Green roofs may not be sustainable and may require irrigation.
7. Concern that lower income families would be priced out of the neighborhood.
8. The bike corridor is currently planted with prairie that was developed by volunteers and the building will produce too much shade to sustain the prairie. The lack of sunlight will permit icing on the bike path during winter. This is addressed in the East Rail Corridor Plan and says, " shadowing effects of large buildings should be taken into consideration to preserve reasonable access to sunlight".
9. Does not engage with the bike path corridor as stated in the Build Plan II.
10. At 10 stories, this building would be significantly taller than any other building on Williamson Street and in the vicinity.

Positive aspects of plan

1. Design fits with the Williamson Street facades.
2. Meets need for housing in central area.
3. Green elements of plan.
4. Neighborhood should accept additional density here, should develop here rather than additional sprawl on the outskirts of the city.
5. Terraces and step backs open up the design
6. A higher use for space, currently used for parking, no demolition needed.

Bruce Woods
722 Sub-Committee, Chairman

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