

To All Whom it May Concern:

I have been a resident of the 1000 block of Drake Street for over 20 years, and am a member of the Greenbush Neighborhood Council. I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed design of the Ideal property redevelopment.

The height of the proposed five story apartment building is intrusive on the adjoining neighborhood and will loom over other buildings, even on Park Street. We need appropriate infill development that fits the scale of the neighborhood and maintains its pedestrian friendly nature and small business scale on Park Street. Several examples of successful developments that are distinct and yet blend into their neighborhoods come to mind, such as Arbco, Sequoia on Midvale, and The Depot at West Washington and Bedford Streets. The Ideal developer has said the additional height is needed to make the building work economically because of the cost of underground parking, but there are new residential buildings with underground parking under construction on Monroe Street, and none exceed 4 stories in height.

I believe this proposed five story building extending substantially into Drake Street would have a negative impact on the quality of life for current residents, blocking light and casting shadows on existing homes during the day, and shining security lights at night, in addition to its intrusive visual presence. The Greenbush Neighborhood Plan (approved by the City in 2008), highlights the diversity of styles, character, and pedestrian friendly nature of the Greenbush neighborhood as traits that should be preserved. It specifically recommends development of the Park Street corridor stating that it "should include mixed use development with buildings between two and four stories in height" (p.32). The UDD7 guidelines also state that "new buildings should generally be limited to four (4) stories in height." Given that a four story apartment building would still be much larger in height and mass than any existing neighborhood structure (except the hospital) and that 4 stories is specified in both the both the neighborhood plan and UDD7, it seems reasonable to ask the developer to limit the building height to this standard on Park Street, with a lower height as it extends into Drake Street.

A building of this scale will permanently alter the character of the Greenbush neighborhood that we have been working to preserve and revitalize, and for this reason I oppose the current design.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cynthia Williams