

March 10, 2015

Re: McGrath Property Group Proposal for N. Few St. and E. Washington Ave.

To Whom It May Concern:

The Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Association (TLNA) Council has considered the proposal by McGrath Property Group for the corner of N. Few and E. Washington. On February 26, 2015, TLNA Council voted unanimously to support the proposal, although detailed below are several items of concern that TLNA prefers be addressed as the proposal moves forward.

Given that TLNA Council is made up of neighbors from across Tenney-Lapham, its findings represent the opinions of the entire neighborhood. In contrast, the TLNA Steering Committee, comprised mostly of neighbors living within a block of the proposed development, was much less enthusiastic.

TLNA hopes that readers will investigate and appreciate the opinions of all involved, including the Steering Committee and other neighborhood input, all available at our development website: <http://www.danenet.org/tlna/development.html>.

We appreciate the willingness of the development team to meet multiple times with the Steering Committee, with individual nearby neighbors and with TLNA Council. Their willingness to listen to and address neighborhood input was helpful. Throughout the process, they produced building renderings, shadow studies and perspectives as requested by the Steering Committee.

Following are aspects of the proposal that the TLNA Council finds **favorable to the neighborhood**:

- Follows city zoning and Urban Design District-8 guidelines with allowable conditional uses and generally follows the Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Plan.
- Improves a property that all consider blighted and under-utilized.
- Elimination of the 4<sup>th</sup> floor that was proposed in an earlier project version.
- References to the streamlined architectural style of isthmus warehouses with large windows and a classic red brick façade.
- Quality exterior and interior construction with storage units on each floor that could facilitate conversion to condominiums if market conditions allow.
- Larger setback than required by zoning on the rear of the building, thereby decreasing backyard privacy concerns of residents on E. Mifflin.
- Balcony setbacks and other horizontal variations provide a needed visual break along the E. Washington façade and along all other exterior sides.
- Placement of the first floor retail/commercial space at ground level to increase its attractiveness and large windows for the commercial space.
- Recent expansion of the retail/commercial square footage and the accompanying increase in the first floor retail/commercial façade along E. Washington.
- Targeting retail/commercial tenants that appeal to nearby neighbors and whose primary customers are those who walk or bike, thereby minimizing traffic and parking impacts.
- No Magic-Paks or other HVAC grills on the building exterior.



- Placement of rooftop a/c condensers on the interior rooftop, away from the E. Mifflin neighbors.
- Internal, covered garbage corral that will minimize noise, odors and impact on backyard neighbors.
- Ample bicycle parking in the parking level and the inclusion of a bicycle maintenance room.
- 1:1 (or slightly less) parking spaces to apartments ratio, which discourages tenants from having automobiles.
- Developer has expressed a desire to include multiple electric car-charging stations and is exploring the inclusion of a car-sharing spot.
- Developer's willingness to work with the City to install and underwrite a left-turn lane on eastbound E. Washington, which would reduce traffic in the nearby established neighborhoods and the bike boulevard.
- Rooftop solar panels for the electrical needs of the building's common areas and the willingness to partner with Focus on Energy.

Following are aspects of the proposal that the TLNA Council finds are **issues that the TLNA, the City and the Developer should work to further resolve:**

- The TLNA Council and neighborhood generally find the project's **lack of an affordable housing component** to be unfavorable to retaining the neighborhood's diversity and range of housing types. That said, it is recognized that housing affordability and related inequality issues are difficult to address on the project level.
- The **traffic increases and changing traffic patterns** expected from the new development are a large concern. It is anticipated that the majority of the proposed building's tenants will work west of N. Few St., hence returning workers will need a left turn lane off eastbound E. Washington. If this turn lane is not installed, there will be an additional unwanted traffic increase on the adjacent quiet residential streets, including Curtis Court and the 1100 and 1200 blocks of the E. Mifflin bike boulevard. The inability of exiting residents to access eastbound E. Washington is also an issue because drivers seeking nearby stoplights will use the aforementioned quiet streets. Those drivers could also potentially endanger elementary school students at Lapham School if accessing the stoplight at N. Ingersoll. Traffic calming and diversion efforts on the adjacent streets should be encouraged.
- The **impingement of headlights onto 22 N. Few St.** across from the parking level driveway is a large concern. The headlights from traffic exiting the parking level could negatively impact this neighbor's quality of life and property value. Ideally, the parking level exit should be located closer to E. Washington (or better yet on E. Washington) to address this problem. TLNA Council appreciates that MPG has expressed a willingness to underwrite the installation of 4-season landscaping at 22 N. Few, but additional screening options should be explored due to the small amount of land available for such plantings.
- TLNA Council is encouraged by MPG's latest proposal, which includes 34% of the units as 2- or 3-bedroom units, but would prefer **as many large, family-friendly units as possible** so that residents could send children to and support nearby Lapham School. Additionally, residents with children could better integrate into the existing

nearby residential neighborhood.

Should the proposal move forward, TLNA Council agrees, that in addition to the previously stated developer commitments and unresolved issues, these **conditions are important to the project's ability to contribute to Tenney-Lapham:**

- Adjacent neighbors on E. Mifflin should have input on landscaping and fencing plans for the sections of the site with which they share property lines.
- Existing trees and their root systems both on adjacent properties and on the sidewalk median should be protected during construction.
- Assure proper drainage away from neighboring properties.
- The exhaust fan(s) for the parking level should create minimal noise, should not negatively impact neighbors' quality of life and should not face E. Mifflin backyards or N. Few St. neighbors.
- Useable green space, including gardening areas for tenants, should be maximized on the exterior ground level, rooftop and/or in the interior courtyard.
- Additional traffic generated by the building and its construction should be discouraged from turning onto the E. Mifflin bike boulevard or onto Curtis Court.
- Street parking by apartment residents should be discouraged. Residents of the proposed apartments should not have access to residential parking permits should that program be in existence or established on nearby streets. In addition, the applicant shall inform all tenants of the facility of the restriction in their apartment leases.
- Bicycle parking for guests should be provided, as well as additional exterior spots for residents.
- If a restaurant, tavern, bar or similar establishment is included, it should close no later than 11:00pm with any outdoor spaces closing by 10:00pm.
- There should be either an onsite manager or the owner should provide a direct 24/7 phone line and email address for neighbors to use if there is a problem with tenants or the building.
- Given that the large increase in the number of apartments in Tenney-Lapham has coincided with a large increase in dog waste that is not picked up, a station for depositing dog waste bags should be provided if dogs are allowed.

Sincerely,



Patty Prime  
TLNA President