

Camacho, Rudy

From: Dan Drais <dandrais@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2016 1:50 PM
To: PRC
Cc: Jane
Subject: Project 3020114

Attn: Jay Janette, Michael Dorcy
DPD/PRC
700 5th Avenue, Ste. 2000
PO Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124

Dear Messrs Janette and Dorcy:

We have serious concerns about the long-term impact of allowing 55 apodments with no onsite parking for the 55-100 residents and their guests; with no east-west planned or available public transit; with inadequate north-south transit capacity; and no parking for the likely dozens of Smart or Zip cars that are the required reality of apodment dwellers in today's Urban Villages.

We support increased density in the Phinney/Greenwood and have enjoyed the greater vitality and energy and activity that our neighborhood has enjoyed as density has increased over the 18 years we have lived at Phinney and 68th. While the Stumbling Goat and Kort House building has a certain historic charm that will disappear when the block is redeveloped, that's life in an urban village. We get that. Things change.

We also know that the City and its growing population need more housing at lower price points, and clearly apodments are a good step in that direction. Clearly, too, adding parking to a building costs money and inescapably raises rents. But failing to require the builder to make this investment in permanent and short-term parking simply transfers the burden of that inevitable investment to the local neighborhood. We have seen rising market prices and the benefits accruing rapidly to developers who then move on, leaving the city planners and the community members to cope with the resulting cost and conflict of inadequate parking and transit capacity.

The odd notion of siting apodments without any parking and where there's inadequate transit will cause substantial and costly impacts to the new and existing residents, businesses and visitors in the neighborhood. As occasional bus commuters, we know that the No. 5 is fine for trips to and from downtown (or to and from Northgate). So is the Rapid Ride, although it's more than a quarter of a mile down that steep hill. Unlike at Greenwood and 85th, or Phinney and 46th, transit service east and west is nonexistent from here. As the EDG Proposal notes, "Greenwood Ave. and 65th Street connect the area to other neighborhoods" (p. 4)— and 65th St. is not served by transit. Riders must go 21 blocks south or 18 blocks north for an initial transfer to points east or west; talk to King County Metro about how many transit riders change mode when they have to change buses. Given that, it's inconceivable that 55 units will fill with people who are so deeply committed to transit/bike/walk transportation. (Not to mention that 55 additional riders would completely overwhelm the already-crowded No. 5 commute-hour bus service (which will be struggling to absorb the riders from the Isola new building, which is also counting on transit to ease its parking burden on the immediate neighborhood)).

But there is no requirement that the builder find buyers willing to certify their long term commitment to the exclusive use of transit/bike/walk. Such a requirement would be ridiculous to administer. The fact is over and over we see that "car-free people" resort to Smart cars/Zip cars/and even car ownership over time. They resort to full or part time cars to get to places not served by transit from 65th and Greenwood: finals at the UW, a doctor's office in Ballard, a car pool to a job outside of downtown corridor, a Zip car to their soccer game in Woodinville or to the mountains on the weekend or

to Southcenter to buy new furniture. We want all these residents in the neighborhood and enjoy the vibrancy that density brings to Greenwood. But the City should not abdicate its responsibility for the realistic infrastructure demands of these residents.

Car2Gos and Zip cars are a great service and the City must do more to actively support it. It is at the point when new density is being permitted for a for-profit builder that the City must plan for the future. The developer needs to make an investment today to support the infrastructure impact he is making on the community for the long term. Only the City can fairly allocate the cost of the infrastructure impact to the correct parties. The builder's anticipated profit margin is growing by day due to market appreciation, appreciation partly due to the quality of the Greenwood community and its support for density. The City must insist that the project absorb its fair share of the infrastructure impact on the urban village. It will pencil out even if he passes that investment on to new buyers (see the prices for the Isola units). The residents will see increased value in their new apartment homes if they are not solely dependent on a limited and constrained transit infrastructure. We suggest that in addition to mitigating the parking impact by requiring a reasonable amount of onsite parking for the new car-owning residents, the City should also require onsite spaces for a number of permanent Car2Go/Zip spaces.

Again, it's indisputable that requiring the project to add parking raises costs. But naively pretending that parking won't be needed simply allows the developer to externalize to the neighborhood a cost that should be borne by the project. That is unfair to the neighborhood and unwise policy. Surely the affordable housing community does not benefit when projects create ill-will solely because of lax permitting requirements.

Regardless of SMC requirements, therefore, the project's potential impacts warrant significant onsite parking.

In addition, the developer still hasn't adequately addressed concerns about mass and bulk as regards the neighbors to the east. Privacy, light, and shading impacts need mitigation. As you know, the code's requirements must be implemented with consideration of the realities of the existing built environment and the topography. In this case, those realities require additional setbacks and perhaps scaling back the building. Again, this site is not the heart of an urban village like 85th and Greenwood, but at the edge of one.

Finally, we echo others' comments regarding safety concerns arising from the combination of the Phinney/Greenwood S-turn, trucks using the middle lane for loading/unloading, and the project's need for safe pedestrian loading-unloading. We aren't sure how best that can be mitigated, but it needs more attention.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jane Mills and Dan Drais