

**From:** [Rob Harrison cPHc](#)  
**To:** [PRC](#)  
**Cc:** [Johnson, Rob](#); [O'Brien, Mike](#); [Sawant, Kshama](#); [board@pccnaturalmarkets.com](mailto:board@pccnaturalmarkets.com)  
**Subject:** In Support of Project #3020338, 2925 E Madison St, Seattle  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 12, 2016 9:28:13 AM

---

I am writing in support of the mixed use development at 2939 East Madison Street designed by Studio Meng-Strazzara. If the opposition of a small but vocal group of neighbors doesn't sabotage it, this building will include a wonderful new neighborhood amenity, a new PCC grocery store for Madison Valley, as well as welcoming 77 new households to the area. By introducing additional small housing units, this project could well "save Madison Valley" from further marginalization as an exclusive enclave of wealthy white single-family homeowners. That seems completely in line with the core values of the PCC I know (and of which I have been a member since 1978.)

I attended a presentation by the architect on May 17th, during which he introduced three options for the design, and (somewhat painfully) read most of the (very technical) geotechnical report. The preferred option 3, "stepped back" (code compliant) scheme makes the most sense on the site.

I would like to address several concerns I have heard about the development:

### **Size of the Store (and Building in General)**

A smaller store would offer less choice for customers, and cost for the build-out would be higher per square foot, raising prices. Likewise, fewer units (if the building were made smaller, or the unit mix shifted to larger units) would raise rents. It is magical thinking to imagine a smaller building will also be more affordable for either commercial or residential tenants. The street wall along Dewey is going to be more varied and interesting than it is now. The existing trees look to be twice as high as the proposed building, and certainly shade the area now. The architect has done a good job of reducing the visual impact of the building as well as its effect on shading.

### **Traffic**

Calling this a "destination retailer" seems a stretch. Central Coop's Madison Market—with whom PCC shares approach, structure and demographic—is exactly one mile away from the site. This PCC will serve the neighborhood. In terms of traffic generated, trips along Madison to Madison Market will probably be reduced, and nearby residents will possibly make trips to PCC by walking or bicycling, or if they drive, they'll stop at PCC instead of continuing up Madison to Madison Market. The traffic will shift, but the draw may not dramatically change.

### **Parking**

Objections to the amount of parking are scattered. On the one hand, neighborhood activists object to too much parking, saying it will create traffic on Madison, and on the other, they say too little parking will "force" drivers to park on the single-family zoned streets. The reality is that every parking stall included for residents will increase the cost of the units, and their rent, as well as increase cost for PCC and raise prices. Noise and light from cars can be mitigated with screening, as the current design shows.

### **Unit Mix**

Studios and one-bedroom apartments are a great addition to the neighborhood. Madison Valley, for the most part, is composed of single-family homes. It does not need *more* family

housing. Like many neighborhoods of Seattle, there is a dearth of places for kids to live once they've moved *out* of the family home. The way we do it now we force kids to move away, not to mention parents who separate, and older residents. Providing small units will allow kids (and adults) to stay close to their families, and maintain ties to their communities.

### **Geotechnical Concerns**

The addition of this building on this site will *stabilize* the slope, not introduce more landslide hazards. I can't emphasize enough that current standards for seismic and landslide resistance, and stormwater retention, are incredibly rigorous, and much more stringent than required for new single-family homes, and of course most homes here are already existing, and have no such requirements. The area is "endangered" more by the continuing existence of storm-water-unmitigated single-family homes in the area than it will be by this development.

### **Tree Canopy**

I support growing Seattle's tree canopy. However, I think this can be best done in the public right-of-way. Trees are important. They also have lifespans. I am not an arborist, but it appears the trees on the site are not just "mature" but could be nearing the end of their lives. If they are not removed by this development they may have to be removed anyway, to prevent them becoming hazardous—especially if the steep slope remains as is, unmitigated. As part of the requirements for Green Factor, it looks as though many new trees would be planted along Dewey, on the raised courtyard, and along Madison.

I would like to see the building be more adventurous in terms of saving energy, by committing to meeting one of the green standards currently offered by the City of Seattle—particularly Passive House. But I would make that comment on virtually every new building in Seattle.

Overall, I support the development, and feel it will greatly add to the community.

Sincerely,

Rob Harrison cPHc  
Certified Passive House Consultant  
HARRISON architects

1402 Third Avenue Suite 515  
Seattle, WA 98101-2120  
(206) 956-0883

<http://harrisonarchitects.com/>

lyrical sustainable design :: passivhaus

Rob Harrison cPHc  
Certified Passive House Designer + Consultant  
HARRISON architects

1402 3rd Avenue, Suite 515  
Seattle, WA 98101-2120  
Office: (206) 956-0883 iPhone: (206) 794-2738  
<http://harrisonarchitects.com>

lyrical sustainable design :: passive house plus