

Dela Cruz, Jeff

From: Michael VonKorff <vonkorff.m@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2017 8:24 AM
To: PRC
Cc: Michael Von Korff
Subject: Proposed development at 2925 E. Madison

As a Seattle resident who has lived in the neighborhood for 34 years, I wish to speak in favor of the proposed development of a PCC at 2925 E. Madison. I have reviewed the most recent revisions to the plan, and was pleased to see that they were responsive to many of the most important concerns raised by persons from the community. Placing town houses on Dewey Place is an important step in the right direction.

The PCC and high density housing on Madison will make an important contribution to our neighborhood. The PCC will provide a much needed destination grocery store that does not require driving long distances. It will be a nexus bringing together residents north and south of Madison. The high density housing is consistent with developing Madison as a transportation corridor. The changes made to the parking garage and the traffic flow plan address important concerns in a thoughtful and responsive manner. The proposed PCC and housing will provide a shot in the arm to local businesses on Madison.

Some object to the removal of large trees on the existing property. The hillside is in a liquefaction zone that could collapse in a major earthquake. The hillside is overgrown with English Ivy and has large concrete retainers in several places to prevent erosion. There is a "Do Not Dump Trash" sign on the hillside, reflecting the issues with ongoing maintenance of the land. Dewey Place has been used as a parking lot for City People's trucks after hours. If you compare that hillside to the Arboretum across the street, there is a marked discontinuity. The hillside is a geo-hazard and has been poorly maintained.

The developer is proposing a high quality project, and has engaged with a community that is understandably upset. If this project does not go forward, I am skeptical that the next developer will propose a project that makes the same contributions to the neighborhood, and that addresses the difficult geo-hazards posed by the site, not to mention the inadequate maintenance of the hillside. If a developer placed a smaller, schlocky apartment building on the northwest quadrant of the site, the stability problems with the existing steep slope would not be addressed, although the trees might be maintained. But, would anyone maintain the hillside? I am skeptical. Placing townhouses opposite the existing houses on Dewey Place can be viewed as an enhancement, when one considers the stability and maintenance problems with the existing steep hillside. I am surprised that no one is asking who would want to buy a house on Dewey Place that sits opposite an unstable, poorly maintained hillside in a liquefaction zone?

In the final analysis, this is not a question of whether the site will be developed--it will be. It is a question of whether it will be developed by a responsible and responsive developer, who will bring in a much needed destination grocery store along with housing on a transportation corridor, while addressing the difficulties and instability of a poorly maintained building site.. Or, whether it will be developed by a firm that puts in an ill-conceived apartment building on part of the site, without adding a grocery store that will be a nexus for the entire area, and without addressing the geohazards and maintenance problems intrinsic to the steep slope on the site. That would be a terrible outcome IMHO.

The process has been fractious, but the developer has been engaged with the community, more than most would be. If this opportunity to bring in a PCC passes us by, I am not optimistic that the next development plan will serve the broader interests of our community.

Thank you for consideration of my input.

Michael Von Korff
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