

From: Save Madison Valley
To: [PRC](#)
Subject: Feedback on Project 3020338
Date: Tuesday, October 25, 2016 11:22:00 AM

Please see comments below from Mark McPherson (mark@skintour.com)

Dear Design Review Board,

I have lived in Madison Park since 1985, raised three children who attended Seattle Public Schools, and worked and employed more than 30 people at businesses in Seattle. My children and I have walked, shopped, dined out, played, and bussed in and around the Madison Valley neighborhood more times than I could count.

Honestly, Project # 3020338 is a monstrosity whose design and function are completely out of character with Madison Valley and the neighborhoods around it. I am not a NIMBY, but it is not an exaggeration to say that this project will destroy the streets and neighborhood of Madison Valley, turning it into a dark and forbidding tunnel, with all of the design focus of the project on the interiors of the project. And, of course, those interiors will be used and "consumed" by a relatively small number of people residing there or clogging our streets with more exhaust-spewing cars to get there.

First, the Project destroys the streetscapes around it. American planning has for years tried to create living streets, recognizing in them the key to livability and safety. Streets, in the words of the great urban sociologist, Jane Jacobs, create the wonderful urban choreography that makes living in a neighborhood human, lively, and safe.

This project flouts everything we have learned in decades of failed urban design - monolithic projects that are built for their interior spaces will destroy streets and neighborhoods. This project turns its entire focus to creating spaces for the people inside and designing a parking entrance and garage that only encourages more car use in our neighborhoods. In the new submittal, I see a few embellishments added, but these are lipstick on a very large pig. This is essentially a big-box development on a small street already vastly overtaxed with traffic.

What would we say to an elected official who literally turned her back on our homes and streets? That is exactly what this project does to the residents on Dewey and the neighborhood to the south. In a design decision that is either blind or actively aggressive, the project gives that neighborhood a huge blank wall.

Other objectionable parts of the design fit within my concerns about the bulk and scale of this project as destructive of a precious streetscape and community:

The building's massing and bulk do not fit aesthetically into the commercial zone on Madison.

The size of the garage is grossly excessive for the size of the streets and amount of traffic already on Madison and Dewey.

This building and the large garage will bring excessive noise, light, and air pollution.

Seattle is losing its tree canopy to growth and development every year - death by a thousand cuts. The current tree canopy provides many ecological benefits, from carbon storage to slope stability to bird habitat, to human health and happiness. The new landscape plans do not sufficiently replace what will be lost if the exceptional tree grove is removed.

I do not see any community space in the design, As I siad above, the proejct creates in effect an interior-directed fortress that excludes the streets, people, and neighborhood around it.

Last, I am concerned that the project is not listening to the community at all. I do not see in the new submittal a a significant attempt to consider and reflect neighborhood concerns.

Respectfully,
Mark McPherson