

Dela Cruz, Jeff

From: Michael Richards <mikelrich@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, January 11, 2016 5:26 PM
To: PRC
Cc: Dorcy, Michael
Subject: Project #: 3020114 / 6726 Greenwood Ave. N.

Comment regarding Design Review:

I don't see any changes to the "new and revised" Project Proposal that truly affect the major concerns. For me, a longtime Greenwood/Phinney resident, those concerns are:

Physical Structure

- This proposed project is designed exclusively to maximize rentable floor space and the number of rentable small units within the limits allowed by zoning within the Urban Village area. The footprint of this proposed building is at the absolute maximum allowed on a rather small lot size of 8,000 (80' x 100') sq ft.
- With minimal set-back, this proposed building transcends directly onto single family residences to the East. This is a gross invasion of privacy and sense of space to these residents and will forever cast these family homes in an afternoon/evening shadow.
- From a lay perspective, this project fails to meet the 2013 Greenwood-Phinney Design Guidelines. A few examples would include:
 - For all practical purposes there is no planned landscaping. I would not consider plopping 3 or 4 trees into the sidewalk along a 100 ft street front as "landscaping".
 - The building blocks, rather than enhances, views from the public right-of-way.
 - The residential part of the building is not set back from the commercial first floor
 - The height, bulk and scale of this building is totally out of proportion with the rest of the area - with the sole exception of the fini across the street and the Isola building under construction. Having 2 tall and boxy 4 story residential buildings so close by does not justify a 3rd. It only encourages further such development and diminishes this predominately single family residential neighborhood.
 - The solar exposure along the Greenwood/Phinney corridor would be negatively impacted.
 - Totally "boxy" in appearance with straight walls going to a flat roof with exposed heating/ventilation equipment. It's out of context and an eyesore!
 - Amenities for prospective tenants are minimal. Considering these tenants will be living in very small studio type apartments, there are no recreation facilities, no leisure time facilities and no common use areas.
 - Tenants would constantly be moving in or out - creating traffic, blocking walkways and roadways and resulting in high wear and tear on the building and proximate area (see "Demographic" below).

Demographic/Excessive Density

- With 55-60 very small (275 sq ft) studio apartments, the typical tenant would most likely be single, probably young, and largely transient. Students may be part of the population, but there is no direct bus route to the University - or anywhere cross-town. These are not livable housing units for permanent residents who would be invested in the neighborhood.

- This demographic at such high density is non-existent in this neighborhood area. A 60 unit building of this type would drastically and permanently change the character of this largely single family neighborhood. It is inconsistent with the current population of this particular area. A building of this type would be more suited in higher density areas (U District, Northgate, or even more toward 85th & Greenwood, etc.).

Parking

- No parking at all is provided with this building design. This is certainly a building design feature - if only in its absence. Tenants with vehicles would be forced to utilize on-street parking available throughout the neighborhood. The problem here is there is no surplus of available on-street parking. Current residents have difficulty finding on-street parking now. This building, with up to 60 residential units, would clearly overstress an already stressful parking capacity needed by current neighborhood residents.
- According to King County's "Right Size Parking" study, a building of this size, with 60 studio apartments renting for \$1,000/month, at this precise location, would require **44** parking stalls. That \$1,000,000+ study, based on extensive research both locally and nationally, notes that the need for parking at that location and building type would require 74% parking use/unit. Commercial parking needs, if any, would be additional.

Affordability

I would NOT consider a 275 sq ft studio apartment renting for \$1,000/month as "affordable housing". At best, these living units (glorified dorm rooms really) would be adequate for single, predominately young adults in transition. The developers acknowledge that such tenants would likely stay only about one year before moving. These mini-apartments are not affordable on a dollar/square-foot living space basis. Instead, the building as a whole seems more focused on maximizing the profitability for the developers.

The City (Mayor) notes that an affordable rate would be 30% of a household's income - but for a "one bedroom unit" and a household earning at 60 percent of the Adjusted Mean Income. These small 275 sq ft studio apartments would NOT be considered "affordable housing".

Overall, this proposed building seems to be intent on maximizing profit for the developers without respect to the needs of current neighborhood residents. I strongly recommend a full neighborhood impact study be completed before this building is allowed to proceed ahead. Thank you,

Mike Richards

Resident, Greenwood/Phinney Impact Area