

Tuesday, Feb 4, 2025

Regarding: Growing MKE, Rt 5 and ADU zoning

For reading during the meeting and placed in the file about any and all of the above

To all elected officials, representatives, and government agents:

My name is Samuel Sims. I have lived in Milwaukee for almost all of my adult life. I moved here from Mississippi. I have lived through some of the worst of times and some okay times. I have what is called a good life here in Milwaukee.

Let me say, I have looked at gentrification and other aspects of it for years. You may see articles and videos of my statements.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hr5Cksk3Bfk&ab_channel=MilwaukeeMemoryProject

<https://www.fox6now.com/news/its-not-enough-to-say-enough-is-enough-faith-leaders-talk-about-how-theyre-taking-action-to-stop-violence>

<https://shepherdexpress.com/news/features/is-gentrification-happening-in-milwaukee/>

<https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/local/milwaukee/2021/02/01/business-district-along-milwaukee-king-drive-expands-heres-why/6407252002/>

One of my life's missions is ensuring that the clock does not turn back. I have participated in marches with Brother Booker and Father Groppi, conducted business and lived in the original "Bronzeville," and started block clubs and neighborhood associations all with the intent to secure for people a high quality of life.

When I read, listen to, and discuss all the changes the government is undergoing, it feels as if we are headed "Back to the Boat." Our very rights and life are at stake. All of the fighting for equal protections under the law, the right to live where we want, access to schools and books that did not have ripped off covers and were not passed down from white schools in other words "fresh off the press and new" books, access to clean water and resources, good grocery and the ability to live off the land formed a part of my mission. In addition, we often had to sharecrop and not own the land we had. With God's blessings my father was able to purchase land in the South. He carried us outside, placed his foot on the ground, and said, "they can take away everything you have, but once you own this, you are considered a man." It is with this in mind, that I look at the proposed zoning changes and the plans enacted that do not meet the muster of building ownership and enhancing the quality of life in the neighborhoods.

I lived in the era in Milwaukee where all the Blacks were forced in one section. It was also the time during which when the city was locked down after Dr. King Jr. was assassinated that made it easy for all of us to be contained and in lock down.

I cringed with the thought that the city is pushing proposals, ordinances, and movement of dollars that prevent Blacks from owning their houses and lands, having businesses, and are not given the same opportunities that big businesses and investors are given.

The goal of the legislation is to enable us to own our homes, have high quality city services, and for us to grow businesses and own land. These ordinances go against the very reason we push our generations to learn.

I move that the Grow MKE plan, Ordinances RT5 and ADU's, and any other measure by another name that creates unrepresented districts, additional taxes, lack full disclosure, push gentrification, does not aid the very citizens who contributed to the cities growth, and do not provide services are denied. I do not support the Grow MKE, Ordinances RT5 , ADU's ordinance substitute, and future proposals that do not take the senior population, the communities' health, gentrification, concerns of the aging, raising of taxes without funds from the antidisplacement increasing in aid, of support the use of ARPA funds for preservation and improvement in infrastructure for those owners and renovations of building with aids from all the sources that are open to outside and bigger developers who do not reside and contribute to the pot or contribute to building better infrastructure with funds, such as protections against the very taxes they create and stabilizing the seniors, keeping our schools, and producing quality services that run and provide a good life.

This plan and ordinances do not agree with what I have built a life working to have in our areas. I restate my opposition to the adoption and passage of any of these actions mentioned.

I agree with the community requests typed below and much more.

- **Clarity and Transparency:** The city must define key terms (e.g., "historic," "facade") and specify which neighborhoods are affected.
- **Community Inclusion:** The city must explain why a new zoning district is needed and how it benefits current residents.
- **Protection for Current Residents:** Anti-displacement measures and community-led development should be prioritized.
- **Employment Opportunities:** Housing rehabilitation should create job training opportunities for residents.
- **Public Investment:** Reinvestment in community infrastructure and financial accessibility is necessary to ensure equity.

Sincerely,

Samuel Sims (esign valid)

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