

To: The Historic Preservation Commission

From: The Georgetown Association, Inc., by Catherine Miller, 2641 N Hackett, #5

Date: July 1, 2022

Re: Resolution relating to a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the existing parish hall, the construction of new parish hall and the construction of a new four-story apartment building at 2618 N. Hackett Ave., in the Downer Avenue Commercial Historic District, for St. Mark's Church. (File #220279)

The fourteen condominium owners in the Georgetown, located at 2641-2649 N. Hackett Avenue and 2619 E. Park Place, held their annual meeting on June 29, 2022. At this meeting the members unanimously requested that I write on their behalf to the Historic Preservation Commission to oppose this development as proposed, and ask that a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) not be approved unless the plans are modified to be in compliance with the current RM3 zoning and the Final Historical Designation Study Report for the North Downer Avenue Commercial District.

Our primary concern is with the scale and very large footprint of the proposed apartment complex which will dominate the block and diminish the beauty of the historic buildings surrounding it. The size and bulk of the proposed building and the lack of appropriate set-backs that are required in our district violate the principle of compatibility and sympathy with respect to the historic structures. Preservation guidelines state that "The massing of new construction must be compatible with the goal of maintaining the integrity of the complex as a cohesive group of historic structures."

Our district is zoned RM3 to preserve and protect medium-density residential uses. Our building was completed in 1911 and we have lovingly cared for and maintained it for its beauty and historic nature, as well as its setting among other historic buildings. We want our neighborhood to continue to be medium-density and have all new construction enhance our historic area rather than overwhelm and diminish it.

The extremely modern design of the parish hall is of concern to us as well, but we will leave that to the wisdom and experience of the Commission members to determine since the proposed apartment complex will be the dominating feature.

We realize there are other concerning issues that are not in the purview of the HPC, particularly the lack of street parking for condominium owners, so we won't address them at this time. But we urge you not to grant a COA for the St. Mark's project as it is currently proposed. Thank you.

cc: Georgetown Association Board of Directors

