

Linda,

This is the letter that I sent on January 10th. I would like this posted to file #060705 and #060575. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you for speaking with me this morning.

Dawn McCarthy

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Milwaukee, WI 53211

-----Original Message-----

From: dawnhmcc@aol.com

To: planadmin@mkedcd.org; bgreenstreet@mkedcd.org; damat@milwaukee.gov; wwade@milwaukee.gov; mmurphy@milwaukee.gov; ahamil@milwaukee.gov; rjbauma@milwaukee.gov

Cc: mayor@milwaukee.gov; gbroderick@milwcnty.com

Sent: Wed, 10 Jan 2007 2:41 PM

Subject: Re: Opposition to Webster & Stowell Condominium and Downer Avenue Master Plan

We are writing to register our opposition to the development of Downer and Stowell Avenues as presented to the City Planning Commission by New Land Enterprise (Files 060705 and 067505). We believe there needs to be more serious consideration than there has been when the city is considering *two* zoning changes. These changes would occur in a well settled, predominantly residential neighborhood, bordering a historic district. There have been several neighborhood meetings. Opposition to the height and mass of the proposed eleven story condominium has been consistent. That opposition has largely been ignored. New Land Enterprise claims, in Exhibit A, that objections have been addressed, and yet the building, again in Exhibit A, is at 121 feet. Clearly the residents in the area have had little input. The height of the proposed condominium is nearly twice the height of the next highest, solitary, seven story building. A nine story building, several blocks away and generally considered to be an eyesore, is the *only* other tall building in the area. It is absurd to think that the proposed building is in scale with the neighborhood, which is composed primarily of two to four story buildings.

Homeowners count on zoning ordinances to protect the value of their homes. This kind of seemingly capricious and *radical* change will only serve to discourage people from investing in Milwaukee, and could therefore easily lower our property values.

The December 18th meeting was the first that we learned of the intent to bundle the Downer Avenue parking lot into New Land Enterprise's master plan. To our knowledge the RFPs had been declined and nothing further was happening. The Zoning Committee agenda for January 9th shows that the alderman meant to fast track this addition to the master plan. At the very least the parking lot needs further study. If it is to be developed there needs to be a competitive bid, and proposals need to be held to the highest standards. The Historic Preservation Commission's Downer Avenue Historic study says

this about the Downer Avenue parking lot: “It might be one of the oldest, continuously used parking lots in the city.” We believe all things historic require consideration, even a parking lot. Furthermore, this land abuts the historic district. Surely there needs to be a buffer between a historic home and new development.

I fail to understand the urgency. Haven't we learned from the past that a neighborhood can be put into decline by a single developer when that developer monopolizes it? New Land Enterprise has an uneven record at best, with financing problems, and lawsuits. It seems prudent to let Mr. Gokhman prove himself before essentially giving him the keys to the city.

The December 18th meeting itself should raise concern. Though the meeting was held at the very busiest time of the year, when people are preoccupied with preparations for the holidays and with one weeks notice, a standing room only crowd attended. The applause for those speaking against the development indicated widespread opposition.

The Water Tower Landmark Trust, a group “dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of the unique residential character of Milwaukee’s historic east side neighborhood” voted on Wednesday, January 3rd, 2007 to oppose the master plan for Downer Avenue.

There has been very little communication from our alderman on this project. Letters we have sent to him regarding this development and zoning change, and requesting a response, have not been answered, or even acknowledged.

Please take into consideration this letter, the signed petitions, and the neighborhood opposition at meetings when making your decision. Please decide to maintain the zoning in our neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dawn McCarthy
Jeff Loss
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