

Elmer, Linda

From: GF Bird [gfbird@wi.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, December 17, 2010 2:16 PM
To: Zielinski, Tony; Witkowiak, James; Wade, Willie; Ald. Murphy; Bauman, Robert; Elmer, Linda
Cc: Bohl, James; Coggs, Milele; Davis Sr., Joe; Ald. Donovan; Dudzik, Joseph; Hamilton, Ashanti; Ald. Hines; Kovac, Nik; Puente, Robert; Witkowski, Terry
Subject: file 100883, file 30829, and Ald Zielinski's comments at today's meeting
Attachments: kkcon_Dec172010.doc; Alterra_Dec152010.doc

Honorable Members --

Thank you for allowing me to appear at today's meeting of the Council's Zoning/Neighborhood/Development Committee.

In having the final word, Ald. Zielinski referred to me and my comments yesterday at the meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals meeting, and at today's meeting.

Today, I chose to be less confrontational and more respectful of the body's time and tone. I also clipped my remarks to better support those of the other's in opposition. I know now, after listening to the Members comments, I should have read my entire statement, and, I know I should have prepared and sent it so that you would have time to digest comments. My apologies on that.

However, for your files and for your information to read before full Council action, I attach the two writings I prepared for the files in the Subject line and to which Ald. Zielinski referred.

My point is that as long as developers assemble parcels for big developments, allowing our older housing stock to become "sub-standard" justification for demolition, the City should require and allow buildings that bring in a lot more taxes, like from 20 stories that take advantage of water views and get premium prices, so that I, a small-holder, don't have to proportionally pay as much tax. I'm getting killed paying over 3500 a year on a 25 ft lot and 117-year old antique house. Maybe the outfits proposing these developments specialize in small- or mid-scale and can't do the job that will cut my proportion of taxes. If so, the Council needs to hold firm for those that can generate the taxes this City needs.

The debate I hope the full Council will have at length and in depth about density and neighborhoods with water views is explained in my attached writing, "kkcon". It's time to start covering the City's costs using in-City sources because after the fraud-caused economic and political disasters, we can't expect national or state funding.

I oppose both files, and ask that the full Common Council will hold action until a debate about density, design and taxes is completed.

Best regards for a vibrant City of Milwaukee --

Gregory Francis Bird 2230 South Woodward Street Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53207 1316 414 481 7541

12/17/2010

To: City of Milwaukee Common Council Zoning, Neighborhoods & Development Committee

Re: Dec 17, 2010 meeting, Item 7, file 100833

Instead of just sitting home and accepting something like what happened when I came to yesterday's Board of Zoning Appeals to oppose item 56 about demolishing a 1907 façade on the most historic intersection in the City, I came down to my City Hall again to behave like a citizen who sees unwise decisions being made in my neighborhood and City, and say my piece.

I oppose this development because it doesn't generate enough taxes for the City. As a homeowner on a little 25-foot lot with an antique house in Bay View a few blocks from this site, I'm fed up bearing too large a proportion of the tax burden because, when big-box developers assemble a larger parcel by buying up traditional lots, and manage to come up with something tame enough to not cause a ruckus in the neighborhood, the City caves in and not enough taxes are generated. Because of that, my proportion as small-holder remains relatively high when compared to what my proportion would be if a parcel with improvements that could have generated even millions yearly in taxes to the city, due to world-class water views, is underbuilt.

Further, too many storefronts on KK and in the neighborhood are empty. Having a large population of higher net-worth residents in water-view residences within walking distance of all these empty storefronts means they are more likely to re-open.

As far as parking is concerned, walking distance is key. This neighborhood was laid out in a walking era, and still works well that way. Resident-only street parking, already in use elsewhere, secures small-holders spaces. New buildings should not depend on space-per-unit parking outside building residential footprint, but market and expect residents to mostly walk and, if not available in the building footprint, find parking within walking distance by bidding up rental garage space or taking a bus to a large lot or structure on specially zoned parcels in industrial zone, not blighting residential neighborhoods. As far as visitors, this lakeside neighborhood is long familiar with influxes of summer refugees, to be near the cooler lake and to take in festivals and fireworks. Denser populations are nothing new.

Increased neighborhood income from residents keyed to walking will increase sales taxes to the city. In a time of increasing costs for local units of government due to aging infrastructure and rising social costs because of fraud-caused economic and social decline and division, the City needs to get more for its prime building sites.

Shorted this building is part of a large problem that is keeping this City's economic activity depressed and causing my taxes to go up. Because of current City policies and lack of Member leadership regarding building heights and development of fallow lands, I, as a resident, am part of a diminishing number of taxpayers and must pay a larger proportion. If the City allowed more dense development, and got more serious about bringing businesses to life in a worker-rich environment, there would be more taxpayers making more money, and I, a small-holder, would pay proportionally less in taxes.

Limiting density to the Central Business District is costing me more taxes because neighborhoods are starved of taxpaying residents and businesses, and that's causing me to pay more in taxes. This issue must be confronted now. This Committee of Common Council Member can begin to force the issue by showing leadership and opposing Item 7, forcing the District Member to hold a more detailed public meeting.

Best regards for a dazzling new building at Milwaukee's most historic Mainstreet –

Gregory Francis Bird 2230 South Woodward Street Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53207 1316 414 481 7541

City of Milwaukee Board of Zoning Appeals – Dec 16 2010 meeting

Re: Item 56 14th District File 30829 Special Use/Dimensional Variance Phelan Acquisitions, LLC, Prospective Buyer 2301 S. Kinnickinnic Av. Request to raze the existing structure and construct a light manufacturing facility (production bakery) that exceeds the maximum allowed primary street setback (allowed 2 ft. / proposed 4 ft. - 28 ft. 1.25 in.) and secondary street setback (allowed 5 ft. / proposed 3 ft. - 7 ft. 11.75 in.)

Honorable Board Members --

I oppose any action today on this file.

While other historic façades and structures in the city are under considerable defense by interested parties due to leadership by elected officials, this project, with a façade from 1907, has had little beyond cursory mass public meetings called by this District's representative without participation by district organizations, such as the Bay View Historical Society, Bay View Business Association, etc. as occurs in other lakeside districts.

Additionally, the District member has been quoted in the Bay View Compass as having traveled to Europe and admired works in such as Barcelona, mentioning by name Antoni Gaudi, and has made such representations verbally to others (but not at public meetings to my knowledge), and, has suggested an architecture review board be formed for district project, though none exists. He also said in the Compass that he's "not that crazy about the design . . .". This indicates that he does not enthusiastically support this design, although, for some reason, he feels can ethically let something he is not enthusiastic/happy about be built on a prime lake-view site on the district's primary business and ceremonial Mainstreet, where Bay View's over century-old Fourth of July parade passes by block after block of the look-and-feel of our historic community.

I oppose this action until such time as leadership is shown that brings together critical organizations in the part of the district most affected, and, that an architectural review committee of Bay View residents is organized and weighs in.

As one alternative, I suggest envisioning the 1907 Keystone-lintel façade's two-story arched openings secured to the new building frame, that new building frame set back enough to allow bus passengers and pedestrians to be sheltered in a wrap-around one- or two-story perimeter arcade naturally lit from top by clear pavers for upper floor deck and by light from second-floor openings, and with various ground-level openings to allow full partially-sheltered pedestrian circulation made at the existing façade's street-level openings with sills brought to sidewalk grade. This would likely be the most innovative, attractive, and largest bus shelter in the City, at the City's most historic corner, too long ignored as a dazzling opportunity for world-class design, and too long cramped for bus riders and pedestrians.

Toward better, bigger, more opportune and incrementally flexible, design for this corner, developers should be required to reinforce elements of the new building frame by including a few heavy footings and columns at the new footprint's corners and edges coming up above the roof so that tower crane could construct upper floors above working operations (with off-site infrastructure sized to accommodate eventual increased use of upper floors) allowing several floors above the suburban look-and-feel single story factory and café, where views of the Lake and downtown will be premium, when visionary developers get the message of this great venue.

Not wanting to just complain and make a suggestion, I volunteer to serve on such an architecture review board, recognized as needed by the member in a public announcement.

I challenge this District's Council Member to rise beyond his previous practices of too-much and --often providing a place-holder's public involvement, and have his district aspire, led by him, to having a dazzle better than what he travels for. Please, delay action on this item. Then, before another round of governments meetings, a round is needed for the public to review new design paradigms, hear from critical neighborhood organizations' views, and look at alternatives, perhaps in the form of a public sketch-up session, maybe in the building itself, after soliciting comments from the Historical Society, the Business Association, and a district Architecture Review Board.

Best regards for a dazzling new building at Milwaukee's most historic intersection --

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