

Lee, Chris

From: Connelly, Kristin D.
Sent: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 9:45 AM
To: Lee, Chris
Cc: GrowingMKE,
Subject: FW: Growing MKE

From: Sam Kovnar <srkovnar@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 9:41 AM
To: planadmin <planadmin@milwaukee.gov>
Subject: Growing MKE

Hello,

Yesterday I attended the public hearing about the Growing MKE plan, and while I originally intended to speak, I had to leave early and was not able to make my comments. So, instead, I'm sending this email in the hopes that it can be counted with the other voices.

I am strongly in favor of the Growing MKE plan. My wife and I live in Bay View, where our rent is over a third of our combined take-home pay. If we were to buy a house, we would not be able to afford to live in our current neighborhood. Instead, we would have to look for housing elsewhere. Many of my co-workers and friends are in a similar situation, and I've seen it happen over and over - young people are leaving the city to live in Wauwatosa, Menomonee Falls, West Allis, and Greenfield because we simply cannot afford to buy houses in Milwaukee.

You won't hear from them, because young people are consistently underrepresented in public decisions, even though we have just as much a right to live here as anyone else. These are people who should be settling down and starting families in this city, and year after year, Milwaukee misses out on those opportunities.

This city needs more housing in its existing neighborhoods, not on the fringes. Keeping our current overly-restrictive zoning practices drives up both home prices and rents in places where people actually want to live. Allowing for more development in any way we can will have a transformative effect.

I know that yesterday, CPC heard from a lot of very upset homeowners who are worried about extortion. As much as I feel for people who are struggling to keep their neighborhoods together, I hope that they aren't the only voices you hear. There are a lot of people all across the city who need the kind of missing middle housing that this city hopes to provide.

Furthermore, I believe that many of the arguments heard yesterday stem not from opposition to the plan itself, but miscommunication and an understandable lack of trust. We all share a goal of making this city better. CPC needs to communicate better with these neighborhoods about not just how the plan will affect them, but how the plan will benefit them, and the protections that the city will implement to ensure that predatory landlords are not able to take advantage of this plan in order to push their own goals. The people who were at the meeting yesterday were understandably frustrated at the consistent lack of communication, and the dismissive tone taken towards those who took time off work to be there. I'm hopeful that a reconsideration of strategy will allow the city to win the support that this plan deserves.

Sincerely,

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Sam Kovnar
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