



Grant Park Neighborhood Association

Grant Park Neighborhood Association
grantpark@necoalition.org

August 22, 2015

Hearings Officer
1900 SW Fourth Ave., Suite 3100
Portland, OR 97201

Re: LU 15-186900 ZC
PC # 15-112617
3204 NE Weidler Street, Portland, OR 97232

Dear Hearings Officer:

Please accept this letter from Grant Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA) as you consider the request by Capstone Partners for a zoning change involving the property designated above, more commonly known as Grant Park Village, Phases II and III. Our GPNA board members and extended community understand a hearing has been scheduled to address the change requested on Wednesday, August 26, 2015, at 1:30 p.m. at 1900 SW Fourth Ave., Suite 3000, Portland, OR 97201.

As a preliminary matter, GPNA believes it important to advise that no official notices connected to the pendency of this zoning change request have been received directly by our neighborhood association. GPNA learned of the hearing scheduled thanks to a resident on Schuyler Street who received the notice, presumably as a property owner proximately located to the development. While Grant Park Village boundaries may technically fall within the Sullivan's Gulch Neighborhood, it is located directly across the street from the Grant Park neighborhood, separated only by NE Broadway. The fact that the developers chose to name the project Grant Park Village obviously implies a close connection to our neighborhood. Moreover, GPNA learned from a contact by Hollywood Neighborhood Association (HNA), that HNA had received official notice of the zoning change request and upcoming hearing, despite having no boundaries near Grant Park Village. Failure to provide timely notice to GPNA has, of necessity, resulted in a rushed evaluation by our Board of the requested zoning change.

GPNA scheduled a special meeting on Tuesday, August 18, 2015, primarily to address the Grant Park Village zoning change request. Capstone Partners representatives attended the meeting, as did a larger than usual number of concerned Grant Park neighborhood residents. Residents advised that as a result of the existing completed Phase I of Grant Park Village, a significant increase in traffic congestion and parking space reduction has occurred on their streets, particularly on Schuyler and Hancock, both of which are parallel and immediately adjacent to Broadway. Due to direct inquiries made by those residents of unfamiliar drivers/parkers, it appears that some current residents of Grant Park Village are unable to afford the market rate monthly parking fee charged of \$150 per car for a full time space within the development. Additionally, it appears that employees of retailers within the development have been forbidden to park within the retail parking garage during work hours, despite the fact that the available parking space is never close to being filled to capacity. Due to time constraints, GPNA has been unable to confirm independently the accuracy of this information. What we have observed, however, is that since retail employees are “closed out” of the under-utilized garage, they are parking on nearby streets and creating congestion for neighborhood residents.

In addition to the added traffic/parking issues described above, residents also complained of a perceived significant increase in overall traffic congestion since the completion of Grant Park Village Phase I. This complaint appears to be well founded, based upon a very recent investigative article contained in the *Portland Oregonian* that can be found here:

http://www.oregonlive.com/portland/index.ssf/2015/08/its_not_your_imagination_portl.html

GPNA notes that the original maximum unit allocation allowed, and currently challenged, was based upon traffic concerns. It appears that the data relied upon by Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) in recommending approval of the change requested is outdated and inaccurate, since it is based upon a comparison of 2003 and 2013 traffic flow rates.

After hearing the comments of neighborhood residents and receiving input from Capstone Partners, a majority of the GPNA Board voted conditionally to support the request by Capstone for a zoning change from that which currently limits future expansion to a maximum of 108 additional units. GPNA recognizes the desirability of proper commercial development of the property in question, and believes that current development plans by Capstone are appropriate. Capstone advised at the meeting that current plans for Phase II of Grant Park Village will result in the construction of an additional 165-175 apartments, and that Phase III will be a project by another developer consisting of retirement and memory care housing of approximately 137 units, or a combined total of 302-312 additional housing units.

GPNA supports the planned development disclosed, and requests that the current cap of 108 units be expanded to allow no more than 350 additional units of housing.

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This suggested increase will allow current development to proceed as planned (with some flexibility to allow additional units), but will not result in the “worst case” possibility of construction of an additional 625 dwelling units and 41,000 square feet of new retail space (total in both phases) that simple conversion of the zoning to RX would allow.

GPNA believes that our neighborhood and the transportation system surrounding Grant Park Village would be permanently adversely affected and harmed by development of that huge scale. GPNA also respectfully requests that the increase to 350 additional units of housing require provision of parking spaces at the same ratio as that which currently exists for residential use in Grant Park Village, Phase I. Finally, GPNA requests that this change “run with the land” so that if current development plans or developers change, the neighborhood will not be adversely affected.

Respectfully submitted,

Grant Park Neighborhood Association

Kenneth B. Peterson
Vice-President and Land Use Chair

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