Mr. Magnum and Mr. Ruiz,

Evanston has a proud tradition of supporting young people in their quest to become educated. This building proposal, though well intentioned, severely undermines that noble tradition.

The library parking lot is simply much too small a space on which to construct a 13 story office building. The access alleyways are entered with virtually blind turns, with two major building loading docks inside them. Large delivery trucks in the narrow alleyways will further reduce sight lines. Adding a few hundred car trips per day through the alleyways increases the likelihood of a serious car/pedestrian injury accident.

The alleyways are utilized by youngsters for shortcuts. The west side 1700 Chicago Ave. block has an extremely high amount of pedestrians from adjacent apartment buildings, including McManus with Northwestern students, from the Northwestern campus dorms 1 block North, and from pedestrian users of the library.

In Turturro v. City of New York, 32 N.Y.3d 469 (2016) the city of New York was held partially liable (40% for an 8 million dollar judgment) for an injury accident from a speeding vehicle in a flawed traffic design. There are a few million dollar judgments against municipalities in California for accidents in which a defective traffic design was part of the cause of the accident.

The concerns about safety with respect to this building, the tightness and blind turn quality of the alleyways, are now a matter of public record. The proposed building has the potential to substantially drain city revenue rather than increase it.

(page one) (email continued on separate email page two)
The drawings that purport to represent the geographic situation of the building in relation to the alleyways, streets, and grassy areas are disproportionately spacious. In them the 1700 of Chicago Ave. looks like it was placed in Central Iowa. The roads and alleyways and green lawn spaces are in reality tighter and less spacious than depicted in the drawings. This is important because the alleyway tightness and potential congestion is a significant detriment to the project.

Both the Woman’s Club (adjacent to the South) and the Willard House and Museum staff (adjacent to the North) oppose the building and intensely dislike the proposal. Each are worried about how the construction will affect their historic buildings. This block is arguably the most historic block in Evanston.

The Willard Museum is a national landmark. By placing it in a permanent Winter shadow the building may deteriorate more quickly. In Boston recently a developer putting up a building that placed a historic church in shadow had to pay three million dollars into a restoration fund for the upkeep of that and other affected historic buildings.

The trees on the north side of the proposed building are not likely to survive absent winter sunlight.

The large building will dwarf the historic buildings and make them look ridiculous. The west side of the 1700 block will appear to have been planned by a drunk.

The developers claim that some coloring on the facade of the lower four story parking structure makes the building congruent with the neighboring buildings. This is like saying painting a blue and white stripe on the bottom of the Titanic makes that ship congruent with neighboring sailboats. The proposed building ruins the visual scale of the block.

Austin Sherer <shereraustin@gmail.com> 7:38 AM (7 hours ago)

to Scott, me

The current open air parking lot is a preferred parking lot for many who want to use the library, or eat and/or shop in Evanston, but who don’t like going into and navigating through an
enclosed parking garage. Mothers with small children are frequently in this category. The library parking lot is usually full on weekends and often full around 5 pm weekdays. Surely it is generating some amount of decent revenue for the city as it now functions. If each of the 74 spaces is generating an average of $10 per day, that would be $270,100 per year.

In summary, this is the wrong place for a thirteen story office building. This is Evanston’s most historic block, a true architectural treasure. To wedge the office building into the parking lot is to create safety problems for which there are simply no adequate solutions, because of the very simple fact of the space being completely inadequate and overly tight.

Please deny this proposal the sake of public safety, and to respect this historic district and these remarkable colonial and Victorian buildings, and to maintain the quintessentially residential scale of this historic block.

Respectfully submitted,
Austin R. Sherer
Attorney

(page three). (final page)
Dear Mr. Magnum, Mr. Ruiz and Plan Commission,

As an Evanston resident, I understand there is a proposal to build a 13 story development between the Evanston Woman's Club and the Frances Willard Center. As a preservationist, I strongly oppose this development because it will diminish the Frances Willard House, a National Landmark as a consequence. This high rise will indirectly and directly alter the characteristics of this charming home and dwarf its neighbors to the north and south on Chicago Avenue. I am also concerned of a loss of funding streams because having a skyscraper next door will put the Willard House’s grant eligibility and maintenance needs in jeopardy. It would be a shame to lose this National Historic Landmark!

This building will violate our Downtown Evanston Plan that states the need for "open space on the northern edge of Downtown" on pages 57 and 58. It is nice to have the open space for residents. Who wants to have a shadow on their house, business, condo or non-profit anyway? Should this building be built, we face the possibility of worsening congestion, additional development and loss of parking spaces. It is already hard to find a space near the Evanston Public Library.

Finally, I advise the Evanston Plan Commission to not move forward with this development because it will canyonize the entry street to Downtown and bring negative affects to our nearby historic buildings. Please listen to all concerned residents and small businesses because our voice matters.

Thank you for reading my concerns!

Regards,

Harris Miller
4th Ward Resident
Chair and Members of the Evanston Plan Commission
City of Evanston
2100 Ridge Avenue
Evanston, IL 60201

Dear Chair and Members of the Evanston Plan Commission:

I have been a resident of Evanston since 1966 and have owned our home on Wesley Avenue since 1967. After many years serving as a League of Women Voters observer to the City Council, the Planning and Development Committee and the Plan Commission, I served as a member of the Zoning Amendment Committee during its earliest days of consideration of a Planned Unit Development ordinance. More recently, after retiring from my position as a federal prosecutor, I have settled into my current role as an observant, active and concerned citizen. In that role, I vehemently oppose the proposed Zoning Map Amendment to D-3 zoning and the proposed Planned Development for 1714-1720 Chicago Avenue, 19PLND-0053.

**Zoning Amendment to D-3 from R-6.**

Effectively, the applicant proposes to create a “spot zone” of D-3 zoning, the most intense Downtown zoning category, on a single parcel on the west side of the 1700 block of Chicago Avenue, which entire block (on both sides) is currently zoned R-6. This block, on its west side, is home to the historically significant Evanston Women’s Club, the nationally recognized treasure of the recently renovated Frances Willard House and campus and a nine-story apartment building at Clark Street and Chicago Avenue, which was tastefully placed and landscaped to be compatible with these historic landmarks so important to women’s history. The changed zoning for this single parcel would permit the land to be developed with a building whose bulk and height, even without the extensive variations proposed under their Planned Development application, is totally incompatible with the adjacent buildings and with the streetscape of this heavily used (and enjoyed) pedestrian route to and from the Northwestern campus to the North.

There is no possible justification for such spot rezoning. The only adjacent property currently zoned D-3 is the Evanston Public Library, which fronts on Church Street and Orrington Avenue and is separated from the subject property by the heavily trafficked alley from the R-6 block facing on Chicago Avenue. Furthermore, the Evanston Library, both in height and bulk, was constructed consistent with the housing to its north and across the street on Orrington Avenue, not with the looming height that is permitted in a D-3 zone (85 feet excluding four levels of parking). In most other locations where residential neighborhoods abut the Downtown, less impactful downtown zoning (D-1) provides a transition.
Moreover, the proposed rezoning does not meet the four standards for such amendments as set forth in Section 6-3-4-5:

- It is not consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the Comprehensive General Plan (Subsection A);
- It is not compatible with the overall character of existing development in the immediate vicinity of the subject property (Subsection B);
- It will have an adverse effect on the value of adjacent properties (both economic and cultural), as attested to by the statements of the Women’s Club and Frances Willard Campus (Subsection C); and
- As testified to by the Evanston Public Library, it will have a negative impact by reducing the number and accessibility of parking for young families and elderly patrons (Subsection D).

There can be no explanation for the City’s entering into the twice-extended agreement with the applicant to pursue such “spot zoning” in a residential neighborhood except the higher price that the applicant would pay the City if it rezones the property to D-3 (Currently, $4,000,000). All citizens of Evanston recognize the City’s current financial bind. But the higher price that a property owner can get for a property by up-zoning to more intense use is not a recognized justification for rezoning in conflict with adjacent zoning under the Zoning Code.

The proposed rezoning for financial gain would also represent a betrayal of trust. When the Evanston Women’s Club sold the property to the City for use as a parking lot for the to-be-constructed Evanston Public Library and other public use, it surely did not imagine that the City would rezone and sell it for a profit to a developer who would construct a building five feet from their lot line, where the only view from the Women’s Club north windows would be the four floors of parking (not counted against the height allowance in D-3), and the looming structure above.

**Planned Development in D-3**

The applicant’s proposed D-3 Planned Development compounds the injury that the adjacent R-6 properties on Chicago Avenue would suffer by pushing the envelope to exceed every limit for development of an office building in a D-3 zone.

Regarding the setbacks, the proposal would reduce the setbacks on the north and south sides from the required 15 feet to 5 feet, thus threatening the trees both north and south and throwing the Frances Willard campus buildings into almost perpetual shade, risking mildew damage to their wood construction. The front setback is also reduced from the prevailing setback of the block. The rear setback (and proposed alley vacation
by the City) would make a tight and dangerous alley more dangerous, make egress and entry to the apartments to the west more difficult.

The proposal seeks to construct a 167 foot tower, which exceeds by 42 feet the 85-foot height, excluding four floors (40 feet) of parking, that a changed zoning would allow.

And it woefully reduces the required parking while removing parking now convenient to families with small children and the elderly, which is critical to patrons of the medical offices at 636 Church Street and the Public Library.

For all the reasons stated above and by the adjacent objectors and for the reasons stated DAPR’s unanimous vote in opposition, I urge the Plan Commission to reject this proposed Planned Development for 1714-1720 Chicago Avenue, 19PLND-0053.

Thank you,

Joan B. Safford
joanbsafford@yahoo.com
847-328-2981
Calos and Scott- Below is my statement that I am prepared to make at tomorrow's plan commission.

Thank you, Kim Stanton

President Elect

Woman's Club of Evanston

The Woman's Club of Evanston opposes the Library Lot proposed development.

Since 1889, the WCE has been a transformative force that provides thousands of hours of volunteer time and makes hundreds of philanthropic grants. In addition to the group's volunteerism and giving, the WCE maintains its historic Clubhouse, a 107-year-old structure, which is included in the National Register of Historic Places.

As proposed, the captioned development creates substantial risk to the Clubhouse and, therefore, to the WCE. Members are concerned about damage to the historic building and loss of private event income during construction.

If the Clubhouse is damaged during construction, the WCE does not have money to chase and litigate against the parties who may cause that damage. The Plan Commission should require the developer to provide a plan for protecting the Clubhouse and an indemnification so that the WCE need not chase the responsible parties.

If the Clubhouse loses money during the period of construction, the WCE will no longer be financially stable. At this time, WCE is self sufficient - it uses money from private events to pay for building maintenance for the Clubhouse. If money from events dissipates due to unattractive construction at the parking lot, the WCE will become financially unstable. The City has the authority to exercise their rights both as the property seller and as the ultimate arbiter of development allowances to force the developer to protect the WCE from financial harm that may be incurred during construction.

On behalf of WCE, our members, our volunteers, and community supporters, I
urge you to protect the Clubhouse by adopting these conditions. The Woman's Club of Evanston opposes the Library Lot proposed development.

Thank you.
Lin Ewing <linewing123@yahoo.com>  
12:34 PM  
(2 hours ago)  

to smangum@cityofevanston.org, me  

PLEASE!!!! Do not allow another building into our downtown area that will make it into a town we don't know and didn't want. I have seen the information on what will be built and it is not appropriate for the space. Aesthetically, it does not fit there. It will ruin the block. We need that open space there to balance Evanston Place and 1738 Chicago Avenue buildings. Plus, we need parking and having a building such as the one proposed will dominate The Evanston Women's Club building which is part of the character of our town.

Lin Ewing  
1585 Ridge Ave. #102  
60201
As an owner of property at 1738 Chicago Ave. in Evanston, I respectfully request a 30-day continuance for tonight’s discussion regarding the proposed planned development (Case # 18PLND-0053) at 1714-1720 Chicago Ave.

We have 44 condominium owners at Lakeview Terrace (address above), and we would like to survey the residents here regarding several concerns about this project (alley concerns, traffic issues, etc.). We will need to call a meeting with our residents and Judy Fiske beforehand.

Sincerely,

Marcia Kuhr
1738 Chicago Ave., Unit 803
Evanston, IL 60201
Ph: (847)869-7915
Plan Commission  
7pm 12.12.18

1714-1720 Chicago Avenue  
Speaking on behalf of the board of Design Evanston I urge you to deny tonight the request by Paul Janicki on behalf of the developer, Chicago Avenue Partners, to approve the project they propose for the LPL property.

Although the City Council approved a second extension of the purchase agreement approval period so that you could review the project tonight it’s clear to us that the architect and his developer are struggling to meet financial, design and zoning issues for the proposed building. As you know, DAPR unanimously rejected the project. They are asking for an excessive number of exceptions to code and zoning issues. You denied the 601 Davis Street project for the same reason.

If you, as we hope, deny this project, we start again at ground zero with this site. Design Evanston recommends that the City revise and reissue the RFP for the sale of the LPL to specify residential use instead of the commercial use stated in its RFP. Because the City requested it, the applicant is asking to rezone the property from R6 General Residential to D3 Downtown Core Development District. This is property should remain residential, especially because of its central place in this residential block of Chicago Avenue.
To Whom it may Concern,

As a small, independent business in Evanston, The Celtic Knot Public House would not be able to survive the loss of business during the construction period. During one of the meetings the developer said that it would take 18 months from breaking ground to getting tenants in the building.

When they replaced the sidewalk in front of our business on Church Street it took around four months and we were on the brink of closing by the time that project was completed and we still had people coming in who would park across the street!

We are one of the few full service restaurants in downtown Evanston that charge reasonable prices for food and drink so that all of the residents of Evanston can come into town and enjoy themselves. It is extremely difficult to continue with this business model while paying the extremely high rental rate that landlords demand here.

We would expect a 30 - 40 percent decline in our revenue during the construction period. We don't have cash reserves to keep us afloat over any period of time, never mind 18 months.

With the decline in revenue and the high rental rate we would not be able to stay in business and 20 jobs would be lost.

The argument that construction workers would make up for lost revenue and that if we wait for the office workers to pour across the street once the project is complete shows a lack of understanding of the eating habits of office workers and of how small businesses operate, which is pretty much week to week.

Even if we were to survive the construction period, the proposed reduction in parking spaces would be detrimental to all of the businesses along the stretch of Church Street from Orrington to Chicago.

The most important thing though is the long term effect on the citizens of Evanston. We can always relocate our business.

Once that open space in downtown Evanston is gone, it is gone forever. Also, accessibility to one of the most important institutions in any city (the library) will be hampered for those 18 months. How many people will get out of the habit of going to the library because of the inconvenience? What long term effect might that have?

There is no monetary price that you can put on the losses that the community might incur because of this inexplicable rush to sell this piece of land which should be put to good use for all of the people of Evanston.

I spend many hours walking around this town and see plenty of vacant office spaces. It might be more prudent to supply the demand before creating more supply while assuming there will be more demand.

Yours sincerely,
Patrick Breslin
Owner/Manager
The Celtic Knot Public House
Fwd: High Rise proposal at Library
1 message

Deborah Hirshfield <hirshf2@aol.com>  
To: smangum@cityofevanston.org  

Wed, Dec 12, 2018 at 5:18 PM

Sent from AOL Mobile Mail
Get the new AOL app: mail.mobile.aol.com

On Wednesday, December 12, 2018, smangun@cityofevanston.org <smangun@cityofevanston.org> wrote:

This idea should not even be in consideration as it will destroy the surrounding architecture aesthetically and physically, canonizing the area making it dangerous for pedestrians. I just can't wrap my head around the constant attempts to ruin the unique architecture and culture of my city and the drive to make it into another entity entirely, one where the streets appear as towers of steel and glass that could be anywhere corporate greed has overtaken the human touch. STOP IT!
Deborah Hirshfield

Sent from AOL Mobile Mail
Get the new AOL app: mail.mobile.aol.com