



CGF Meeting Feedback Form

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City of Grand Forks

Meeting Type:	City Council Meeting
Full Name	First Name: Nancy Last Name: Wang
Full Address	Street Address: City: Grand Forks State: ND Zip: 58201
Agenda Item Number / Topic:	Meeting Item 3.4
Comments:	Hello, I live right along 47th Ave S., and very close to the proposed apartment building. The planned construction of an apartment building at our door step will: 1) increase traffic by multiple folds to an already very busy street; 2)decrease our property value; and 3)add an "eye sore" to the neighborhood. To make it a 5-story building will exacerbate all problems.

City Council Members,

I attended the Planning and Zoning Commission Public Hearing on July 9 and voiced my concerns regarding the proposed rezoning of the parcel east of the Marathon gas station on the corner of South Washington and 47th Avenue South to accommodate the building of The Domain. I would like to reiterate those concerns in opposition to the rezoning.

When a developer requests three major changes to the current zoning (while it is quite adequate), that is a good indication that it is not appropriate for the neighborhood. A basic premise of planning and location theory is that you BUILD TO ENHANCE THE LANDSCAPE OF A COMMUNITY. When that is accomplished, existing property values increase and attractivity is heightened.

Of the three proposed changes, I would like to address two that are most important to my sense of neighborhood community, increasing both the density and height limits.

The allowable density is currently 14 units/acre and the request is to raise that to 30 units/acre, more than double. This will have an impact on several issues.

- With approximately 150 units proposed for the apartment complex, it can be expected that approximately 250 to 300 vehicles will be added to the area's traffic.
- 47th Avenue South is already a busy street as many residents from the southeast section of the city use this as their main route to cross over South Washington for work and other needs.
- The ingress/egress for the gas station, 11th Street South (off 47th Avenue) and 48th Avenue South (off South Washington) are the two to be used for residents of The Domain. Added to this, are vehicles that frequent Choice Wellness, ICON, and Starbucks. With the proposed retail on the first floor of The Domain, the traffic count is increased again.
- If the Hugo's grocery store, catering, and event venue comes to fruition, that added traffic only compounds the traffic situation. Just look at the Phase 3 plan for the parcel. Those parking spaces represent vehicles, and most often filled when something is planned at the event venue.
- With 11th Street South and 48th Avenue South being so close to the lights on South Washington and 47th Avenue, it is highly unlikely for placement of a traffic light. Even if there was an added traffic light, congestion would be worse.
- The increased number of vehicles entering and exiting on 47th Avenue from 11th Street South will create an increased safety hazard for the children that ride their bikes or walk to South Middle School. And, even if residents chose the other ingress/egress on 48th Avenue, South Washington crossings would be a safety concern.
- Is there actually a need for more apartment units in the city? The data used by the Mayor, City Administrator and others is suspect and does not align with the Greater Grand Forks Apartment Association's quarterly data, which at this point, while not perfect, is the best data set we have – and, it is the data set the city and EDC have claimed to use. As a researcher, having reliable and

representative data is essential in making decisions. We want integrity in all the decisions made for our community.

- In addition, more residents in a compressed area adds to the noise factor.

It is requested to increase the allowable height of the building from its current four stories, height of 50 feet, to up to five stories, height of 65 feet. This, too, raises many concerns.

- A building of that height so close to residential impacts the quality of life for those homeowners. If living in the northern townhomes, The Domain would be in their backyard. If living on Pines Circle, total view would be lost. On 49th Avenue, northwest view would be lost. Loss of view is not just an aesthetic concern, but the sun is obscured, which means no sunlight from midafternoon and on.
- Another loss incurred is that of privacy because of the proximity. The upper floors of The Domain would have a good aerial view of residents' backyards. Residents have fences for privacy but six feet is irrelevant to keeping out the eyes of aerial onlookers. Swimming pools, hot tubs, sunbathing, and many other activities would no longer be private.
- Linked to privacy is security. Unfortunately, in our world today security for women and children has become more difficult. Though we tend to think of our Grand Forks community as relatively safe, we cannot control who is peering into our backyards, looking through our windows, or watching children play. Because of the short distance, a cheap set of binoculars can even provide a close-up view.

Bottom line, when the privacy, safety, and security of residents are negatively impacted, the quality of life is no longer a desirable in our neighborhoods. Subsequently, property values go down. Who wants to live next to a 65-foot building? This is not a dense metropolitan city.

With a tax incentive requested by the developer and resulting lower property values for current surrounding homeowners, how is this effectively building the tax base of the city? I believe that the City Council should make decisions that increase existing property values. And, as mentioned, community should be considered, not just the vision of a possible higher tax base 15 or 20 years in the future, after a tax incentive dries up.

I wish you could take a few minutes to walk the neighborhoods that would be impacted by this development and imagine a structure 65 feet high. Would you want this near your house? Do you think you would have multiple offers for your home when it was time to sell? No, in this case, the buyer is having the advantage. Just ask Mayor Bochenski about his experience fighting a very similar battle after he bought his home on the southend of town.

BUILD TO ENHANCE THE LANDSCAPE OF A COMMUNITY.

Regards,

Dr. Mary K. Askim-Lovseth

Grand Forks, ND