

June 18, 2019

Sent via email to:

Ald. James Cappleman (james@james46.org)

cc: Tressa Feher (tressa@james46.org)



Ald. James Cappleman
46TH Ward, City of Chicago
4544 North Broadway
Chicago, Illinois 60640

Re: Proposed Zoning Change for Property Located at 4750 North Winthrop Avenue from RT-4 to B2-5

Dear Ald. Cappleman:

Thank you for reaching out to the residents living in our block club area and for arranging an informational meeting with representatives from Cedar Street/Flats regarding the zoning change it has requested, and its plans to build a four-story, 84-unit Transit Oriented Development residential rental building at the property it owns at 4750 North Winthrop.

By a margin of 51 to 17, the residents of Truman Square support the zoning change. Please consider this a letter of support for the proposed zoning change from Truman Square Neighbors block club.

At the meeting on May 30th, Cedar Street/Flats indicated that it might be willing to address the concerns expressed by the condo owners at 1107 West Lawrence regarding the proximity of the proposed new building to 1107, among other issues. It is our sincere hope that the Alderman's office, Cedar Street/Flats, and the condo owners can work together to find common ground and address the concerns brought up at the meeting and in the comments reproduced below.

About the voting process: A summary of the meeting was posted on Truman Square Neighbors' Facebook page. Residents were given the option of voting online (via Survey Monkey) or by paper ballot. A sample ballot was posted, and paper ballots were also made available. Additionally, residents of 15 buildings within Truman Square were contacted via email and asked to make their neighbors aware of the zoning change request and the voting process. 78 total votes were collected; 10 were discounted (seven because the voters did not include the required name and address; two because voters lived outside our block club boundaries; and one duplicate vote).

As always, we give residents the option to relay comments to you along with their votes. Below are all the comments received, verbatim:

- "Very excited about the project!"
- "I'd prefer a masonry or similar facade that better visually coordinates with the vintage residences already on Winthrop. The steel/concrete/glass squares look is popular and probably cost-effective, but it will look out of place in that location. Thank you."

- “I am voting against this for several reasons: As a resident of 1107 Lawrence with a porch on the south end of the building this will change my view from open air and sunlight to a brick wall. While a parking lot is not the best view in the city, it is significantly better than a wall, and the open space allows for lots of sunlight and fresh air. Having a building here will significantly alter my quality of life and resale value of my unit. Beyond just the view and resale prices of our rear units. The new building will be a burden to all of the units in the building. Should the new building go up, we will not have space for our dumpsters. They are currently located directly behind the building. During our meeting we asked what the plan was for accommodating them. The representative from Cedar Street said we will have to just move them to the alley for pick up, and that’s not a big deal. Our building is not staffed with people to do that, so the responsibility would fall on a resident. Having to move dumpsters in and out of a tight space would be a burden. And consider what will have to do while the building is being built. The alley way is currently under construction to support the needs of the new redline station. Once that wraps, the station itself will be under construction, which will likely be concurrent with the construction for this new building. There will not be space for us to put out trash. Beyond dumpsters, the terra-cotta and underlying steel of our facade is about to be repaired. I am very worried that all of this new construction will damage the work we are about to do. This could end up costing us a significant amount of time and money in repairs after the building is put up. Those are very personal reasons to protest this rezoning, which could easily dismissed as only affecting those in our building, but actually connect to a larger reason. We came here and bought a home in the neighborhood because we wanted to invest in it. Uptown was not as nice then, but it had character. People of different races, nationalities, and income. Since moving in, we have participated in community gatherings, were active with the tent city, were early participants in the new Uptown Church, attended the aldermanic forums, and voted often. In short we became part of the neighborhood beyond it being a place where we sleep. As a couple in our early 30’s we already raised one child are hoping to do it again. We are putting roots into the neighborhood and are investing more than just money. What is Cedar Street’s vision for the neighborhood beyond making money? A question that was brought up in our community meeting was is Cedar Street is a good neighbor? Are the buildings they are putting up keeping with, and enhancing the vision the people Uptown have? I would say no. They are altering the composition of the neighborhood and I wouldn’t say for the better. Gentrification is inevitable, but this is a rather homogenized group coming in. Single people, living in single room apartments. Again, part of why we bought our place here was for the variety of people in the neighborhood. I would love to see new faces, by can they be of different ages? Can they be of different backgrounds, who want to live here for more than a couple years? The building that is proposed to go up will be for young, single people who will not stay in the neighborhood. They will come in for a time and then leave. They won’t be investing the neighborhood by purchasing homes or raising families. They are not enriching the roots of the community. I feel that putting up another multi unit building full of small apartments (i don’t agree with their claim that these are not micro-units) is not good for the long term diversity of Uptown. Cedar Street already has 2 complete buildings and a third nearly completed in the area. Could Cedar Street at least finish the construction of the building at Broadway & Winnemac and then see if there is demand for more units of that size before putting up another? A major contention of the last election was the desire of residents to maintain a certain integrity of the neighborhood. This new building would change the look of the neighborhood

beyond demographics. When I asked why they chose to build such a modern building next to ours, they said they couldn't beat it, so why try? That is lazy, and I think it is because they don't really care to incorporate themselves into the neighborhood. They just want to make money here. To further that point, last year Cedar Street wanted to buy our building. They own the commercial space below our units and wanted to take over the whole building. After determining their proposal would have us selling at under market value, the unit owners decided against their offer. We still interact with them in matters that pertain to the building regularly though. I myself spoke to a person from Cedar Street just weeks before our meeting. They know how to contact our building when they want to. However, when it came to the community meeting about putting a building next to us, they made no effort to contact us. We had to find out on our own, just hours before the meeting occurred. Since then, our management company has been trying to schedule a meeting with Alderman Cappleman and someone from Cedar Street to discuss the building more, and it has not been successful. They do not want to talk to us. They do not want to be good neighbors. They just want to build next to us for as much profit as possible. For all of these reasons, I am voting against re-zoning the property."

- "People may object to their views getting blocked, but by law, people don't own their views. However, I still want FLATS to work with the condo owners just north of this site to see what type of setback they can provide. We continue to have extraordinarily low apartment vacancy rates due to many millennials moving into the area due to the great mass transit options... many of them are forgoing car ownership so that they can focus on their high college debt. The only way we can stabilize rents is to build more apartments for this group of people that are moving here in very high numbers." *[This comment was made by Ald. Cappleman, who is a resident of Truman Square.]*
- "I feel the building is out of place with the surrounding architecture. Cedar has also been rather callous in response to the impacts on the north facing neighbors in their design."
- "I've found in the last year or two, it's been a nightmare trying to find parking on nights where there are events at either the Aragon or the Riviera is a total nightmare because people are parking on our residential parking and no one ever tickets them. Removing that parking lot would only further increase people parking illegally on our streets and with no one ticketing or enforcing the residential zone it will only make things worse."
- "I live in one of the units at 1107 W Lawrence Ave. And am against this zoning change. As it will be a huge inconvenience to have a building built covering my balcony view. I'm against these micro mini apartments that they try to pass off as affordable housing."
- "Hello, I am a unit owner at 1107 W Lawrence Ave and am against the zoning change at least till more parking can be added and more space between our two building, allowing more light/space. While I would hope Cedar has checked, what the zoning is, the space at the back of our building is for emergency access, egress and trash collection for our building. Has this been considered? Parking - as everyone know parking is very tight and is becoming more so with these projects. Where will the parking for Chase Bank be moved to and has Chase agreed to this? One of the conversion requirements of the 1107 building back in 2006 was a provision of parking, as an original

owner our sales agreement stipulates parking be provided in the lot behind the building, Cedar's proposed building site. I would presume that when Cedar purchased the lot all the original stipulations carried over, though I don't see any provision for parking for the 1107 units. Has there been any traffic/parking/density impact studies performed? Thanks.”

Thank you for affording the residents of Truman Square the opportunity to have a voice on this issue, and for considering our feedback.

TRUMAN SQUARE NEIGHBORS BLOCK CLUB