

Nadia Khan

From: David A. Olson
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 6:08 PM
To: citycouncil
Cc: Nadia Khan
Subject: FW: Orr block development concerns

From: Phil Wallas
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 5:59 PM
To: David A. Olson
Subject: Orr block development concerns

Dear Mr. Olson,

Please forward my remarks to members of the City Council as they consider the request for zoning changes to accommodate the developer's plans for the Orr block.

Dear Members of the City Council,

I ask the City Council not to make an ad hoc zoning change for the Washington Place (Orr block) proposed development. It makes sense to me for there to be redevelopment on that site, but as with so many other projects, the proposal is too large. If a block-long 5 story building goes up on that site, it will create further demand for property to be developed at similar density. The developer should propose building what the city's zoning allows; if a project of that scope can not be profitable at the price paid for the land, then that price was too high. It should not be the City's role to validate a speculative price by changing the rules after the property has changed hands.

Disturbing zoning with ad hoc changes has the potential to unsettle every significant property in the City. I'm particularly concerned because of what happened with the proposed 70 Rowe St. project. Initially the developer's documents listed an acquisition price of \$10m, but when the property was actually acquired, it was for less than 60% of that figure. Residents and the City Council should not allow themselves to be "played" by developers who claim to be serving the good of affordable housing while damaging the character of the City with over-dense projects. A smaller project, with an appropriate number of permanently affordable units, is the right outcome for this location.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours,

Philip Wallas
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