

REPORT / RECOMMENDATION



To: MAYOR & COUNCIL

Agenda Item #: IX. A.

From: Debra Mangen
City Clerk

Date: May 6, 2014

Subject: Correspondence

Action
Discussion
Information

Action Requested:

No action is necessary.

Attachment:

Attached is correspondence received since the last Council meeting.

Heather Branigin

From: XWithers@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2014 12:24 PM
To: Edina Mail; info@savethefred.org
Subject: Profitability of the 3 Privatized Golf Courses in Des Moines

Dear Council Members & Save The Fred:

Des Moines has privatized three municipal golf courses--all three seem to be 18-hole courses.

The three courses are Grandview, Waveland and A.H. Blank. Per the contracts, which have been forwarded to me, the City of Des Moines receives 15% of gross receipts from the concessionaire for Waveland and 8.5% to 10% of gross receipts for Grandview and A.H. Blank (indexing method in the contract determines the percent of gross for each of the two). The term of the contracts: 1/15/2010 to 1/15/2019, renewable every four years. The contracts are 36 to 54 pages in length, respectively.

In an earlier Des Moines Register article, the City spokesman, Ben Page, Director of Park & Rec, indicated that the City has been receiving an annual check approximating \$600,000. The City pays nothing for maintenance and development on the three courses--the responsibility of such is in the contractual relationship with the concessionaire.

In aggregate, the three courses do about 90,000 rounds annually, per my conversation with the DM Park & Rec Manager responsible for golf operations, Matt Salvatore. Thus each might do 30,000 rounds averaged. This compares to 18,123 (average of last three years) for Fred Richards and 16,542 for the Braemar Executive Course. (Fred rounds averaged +9.6% more than Braemar Exec during the last three years.)

Why pay for a Park when the City can establish a profit-center (operating privately and profitably with management independent of the Braemar operation)?

Hard to figure....

Dennis D. Withers
4504 Sedum Lane
Edina

Heather Branigin

From: Sara Kaufman <sara.kaufman08@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2014 12:30 PM
To: Chad Millner; Joe Feriancek; Mark K. Nolan; James Hovland
Cc: superintendent@edinaschools.org
Subject: Please Help Make the Concord Elementary "Walking Zone"...Walkable

Dear Chad, Joseph, Mark, and Jim,

On behalf of many Concord Elementary and Concord Neighborhood families, I'm writing to you because of a pedestrian safety problem that desperately needs resolution. The vast majority of kids who live in the Concord Neighborhood attend Concord Elementary School, and because of their proximity to school, are considered "Walkers". The idea of walking to and from school is great, and one that many kids and families absolutely love, however, the Concord "Walking Zone" is simply too unsafe for our kids to walk as it is today. We need your help to Make the Concord Walking Zone Walkable.

What We Are Asking For

Sidewalks - We know that a vote was placed before the residents of Concord in the relatively recent past, and sidewalks were voted down. We are asking you to not put such an important public safety and infrastructure decision up to vote - it simply should not be an option to not have sidewalks in a *public school walking zone*. Those residents who voted against sidewalks are not generally against *sidewalks*, they were against paying for, and maintaining them. The fact is, many of the voters were elderly, on fixed budgets and unable to take on more shoveling, or empty-nesters with no school age children, or first time home owners, again, with no school age children. Because of these demographics, it is predictable that they voted *against paying for and caring for*, sidewalks. However, we simply do not feel that a "no" vote should leave those with children in the walking zone with literally no safe way to school other than in their parents car, adding to the already problematic traffic jams on Concord Ave. at drop off and pick up times. Further, the demographics of this neighborhood are changing. With new construction, comes young, school aged families. Kids in both new and older homes in Concord want to play and get to school safely in this fantastic neighborhood. They want to get to parks and walk their dogs. The need for safe sidewalks in the "walking zone" will only grow...and grow, and grow.

At a minimum, we are asking for sidewalks on 59th and 60th streets, running east to west, just like 58th street. The 58th St. sidewalk is a great model. The 58th Street sidewalk provides safe transportation for both cars and walkers on the *main road artery* to and from Normandale School, the Community Center, and the Middle School. It just makes sense.

Likewise, 59th and 60th Streets see heavy vehicle school traffic *leading directly to Concord Elementary*, but neither offers a sidewalk for families in the Walking Zone. Concord School is gravely under-served by sidewalk access for walkers. 59th Street, in particular, is a speedway of rushed parents and school buses using 59th St. as a straight speedway between Wooddale Ave. and Concord. It is an accident in the making. Horns are honking, drivers are shouting at walkers to "get out of the road - we can't see you with the sun rising in the east" and bottle necks compound it all as on-street parking on 59th Street, at Concord, put salt in the wound. We are desperately seeking sidewalks on at least 59th Street between Wooddale Ave. and Concord Ave. It seems appropriate, also to extend the sidewalk further east to connect to Pamela Park, as Concord kids frequently travel between Concord School and Pamela Park.

It feels as if sidewalks are being put in in many places, which is great for our community, but just not in the places that *connect our school to our student-rich neighborhoods--* where they are desperately needed.

What We Are Asking for In Addition to, and/or More Immediately than, Sidewalks

Absolutely NO PARKING OR IDLING on 59th Street between Concord Ave. and Ashcroft Ave. between 8-9 and 3-4 on school days. Current on-street parking at this intersection is simply unacceptable, turns a two lane road into a single lane road, forcing high car, bus, and walker volumes through one on-road bottleneck. On foot traffic, primarily our kids in a public school Walking Zone, simply should not be forced to walk down the middle of a bottle-necked road, navigating sparse road space along with cars and buses. It should be noted that the Concord Ave. *crosswalk literally dumps kids into the back of parked cars on 59th Street.*

Speed bumps or sound strips on 59th Street, especially between Concord Ave. and Ashcroft Ave. Cars, including school buses, *simply drive too fast down 59th*, rushing kids to and from school. Walkers should not be walking on the road with speeding traffic.

Walking/Biking Green Lane The painted green bike lanes on Valley View should be used on any street in the "Walking Zone" that does not yet have a sidewalk. Parents of young walkers/riders constantly yell after their children to "stay on the side of the road!" The truth is, young children need visual clues for where they can and can't go, if sidewalks don't exist, green paths provide a great alternative. The truth is, drivers could also benefit from a visual reminder that pedestrians share the road in this area.

Digital "your current speed is" displays along 59th and 60th Streets as well as ramped-up police presence during school drop-off and pick-up hours.

Additional school Walking Zone and speed limit signs throughout the Concord Neighborhood.

Thank you, in advance, for paying attention to this concern. We can appreciate that sidewalks take time to implement, but we beg you to give heavy consideration to our request. We also sincerely hope that some of our ideas for more immediate steps in the right direction offer solutions that are extremely budget friendly and easy to implement asap.

Thank you, thank you, thank you,

Sara Kaufman, a Concord Mom
612-454-9494

Heather Branigin

From: ALANKOEHLER@comcast.net
Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2014 1:40 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Input on Grandview Development

To the Members of the Edina City Council,

I am writing to you in reference to an upcoming decision to be made by the Edina City Council regarding the Grandview District development. I strongly encourage the City Council to vote in favor of proceeding with the Request for Interest which calls for engaging a consultant to further refine the type of potential projects to consider for the former Public Works site located at 5146 Eden Avenue. Based on the results of the resident survey conducted by Morris Leatherman in January 2014, the "Community Facility Inventory for the Grandview District Project" completed in February 2014, and the majority opinion of the Grandview District Community Advisory Team, there is much more work that needs to be done to define the best public amenities for this city-owned site before proceeding with a private sector development partner.

There are clearly a wide range of possible uses for this valuable site. I personally find the concept of a city-owned and operated community center to be the most appealing. The specific amenities that should be included in a civic community center will undoubtedly be a topic of lively discussion but it is a discussion that must be framed and undertaken before determining how much of the site would be required for such a facility. Therefore, it is premature to engage with a private developer before the needs of the site have been more fully defined by the community.

Some have argued that the city does not need "another" community center. While there is no doubt that the City of Edina owns and operates a number of facilities scattered around the city, it is inaccurate to state that the City already has a civic community center. The former Edina East High School building located at 5701 Normandale Boulevard has been branded the "Edina Community Center" by Edina Public Schools but this facility is owned and operated by the school district with the exception of one city-owned gymnasium in the building. Thus, it is more accurate to state that Edina Public Schools has a facility that they call a community center, but the City of Edina has never owned and operated a municipal community center that is intended to serve all citizens living within the city, including the 27% of households who do not live within the Edina school district boundaries. I find it very noteworthy that the web page of the City of Edina there contains no link or reference to the school district-owned community center in either the "For Residents" menu or the "Parks & Places" menu. In fact, typing "Edina Community Center" into the search function on the City's web site generates no relevant results.

Finally, as we look further ahead, it is apparent that fulfilling the long-term vision of the Grandview District development will require the relocation of the school bus garage owned and operated by Edina Public Schools. There seems to be a working assumption that this will only be achieved if the relocation occurs at no cost to the school district, even if the new facility is an improvement over the existing. For this outcome to be realized, the costs would need to be borne by the taxpayers of the City of Edina, a private developer, or a combination of the two. It would be entirely unreasonable for Edina Public Schools to seek or accept any financial assistance from the municipal taxpayers of the City of Edina for a relocation without first modifying their policies to provide enhanced access for all residents of the City of Edina to the school district's facilities.

Sincerely,

Alan Koehler

5304 Evanswood Lane

Heather Branigin

From: Sarah Wohlrabe <sarahwohrlabe@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2014 2:47 PM
To: Edina Mail; Mary Brindle; jonibennett12@comcast.net; joshsprague@edinarealty.com; swensonann1@gmail.com
Subject: Birchcrest B project

Hi City Friends-

I feel like I know a number of you personally, so it is fun to write about something "official." I am truly grateful for all you do to make Edina the wonderful place it is. My husband and I have both grown up here and now are raising our three kids here. We live on Tingdale Avenue and 60th street. I have not written yet, because I thought for sure with all the communication our neighborhood has sent things would for sure have changed.

I am one of the survey entrants that wrote our streets need to be replaced. Well, I feel like my response was not exactly what I believe is the case.

I think I should have checked not replaced, but repaired or replaced by rectangle is what I am more thinking... as is every single neighbor in our area.

After learning more about this project and what is involved, I must say that I am disappointed. I know our entire neighborhood is actually really upset about getting streets re-done. One would think it is for the inconvenience of it, but that isn't even the talk around here. It is the final product we are all worried about. There is not one person excited about the "improved" plan. I am a green girl and so grateful for the health and maintenance of our concrete streets. They are healthier for the environment and have lasted for over 60 years. I actually wanted to buy on this street because it is a concrete road--I know that sounds crazy, but it is true! Other streets in the neighborhood that have been "replaced" look so worn and full of potholes. The kids of the neighborhood are voting for concrete as it creates less "road-rash" on their biking endeavors! :)

You all have made wonderful decisions fixing the rectangle sections that have needed replacing. I know Judd Reitkerk has sent in a very detailed proposal as to what he believes would accomplish your goals and the desires of its residence.

It isn't the money either, but the final product. I am as a mom and hopefully life-long resident, asking you to consider the information below and my request. I know I am but one small voice, but represent a lot of the chatter around here since everyone has been back outside visiting.

We would all be grateful if you either delayed this project to give it more time to really evaluate, or listen to what the neighbors are saying about the longevity, width, safety, etc. of our streets.

I have copied a letter below that you have probably received multiple times, but sums it up quite well.

Again, I am so grateful to all you do in the community to make our world a better place. Thanks for the time commitment and see you around the city, hopefully again at Margo's, Ann!

Take care,
Sarah Wohlrabe

6000 Tingdale Avenue
Edina, MN 55436

952.381.7770

Dear Mayor Hovland and Members of the City Council,

We are writing in response to the notification, received on Saturday, April 19, 2014, of the presentation of recommendations for the street project in our neighborhood to the City Council on Tuesday, April 22, 2014.

We urge you to consider the safety concerns outlined below, and to weigh these concerns in contrast to the desires to have an aesthetically pleasing look to the neighborhoods and increased infiltration of stormwater, before making your final decision.

Situation: Absence of sidewalks

- There are no sidewalks in our neighborhoods
- Children walk, skateboard, ride their bikes and wait for school buses in the streets
- Many residents walk for exercise in the streets

Safety concerns with narrower streets

- Parking is allowed on both sides of the streets
 - On-street parking is increased on Sundays, Wednesday evenings and days of special activities at Normandale Church
 - Narrower streets will greatly decrease the "safety zone" for children, walkers and bike riders
- Winter months and snow plowing
 - Roads are rarely plowed curb to curb in our neighborhood
 - Narrower streets will greatly decrease the "safety zone" for children to wait for their school bus especially when there isn't an option to move to boulevards covered with snow
 - Narrowers streets will increase the hazards of backing out of our driveways

We have lived in this neighborhood for 30+ years without concern for vehicle noise due to the concrete surface. Very little street maintenance has been needed during these years. The cost of repairing the existing street is comparable to replacing it with a narrower street of lesser quality materials.

We urge you to select Schedule A and Schedule C as the best path forward for those who live on and use these streets on a daily basis.

Respectfully and sincerely,

Heather Branigin

From: Laura Hotmail Account <laura196511@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2014 4:42 PM
To: Scott Neal; Edina Mail
Subject: RE: Response regarding Park Planning Consulting for 4/22/14 meeting

Please forward to the full message to the City Council and the mayor.

City Council,

I think it is outrageous that a project of this size was not put out to bid. Cities have a duty to get bids for projects like this one for Park Planning. With a proper bidding process, qualifications and price can be properly reviewed.

Please deny staffs recommendations for this consultant and ask staff to put this project through a proper bidding process.

Thank you,
Laura Schleck

From: sneal@EdinaMN.gov
To: laura196511@hotmail.com
Subject: Response
Date: Tue, 22 Apr 2014 20:45:27 +0000

Ms. Schleck –

The selection of a park planning consultant starts the process of creating a new future for Fred Richards GC. I don't know what that future should be. I have worked with Jeff Schoenbauer on a park/trail planning project while I was city manager in Eden Prairie. I was impressed with his ability really listen to opinions and to translate those collective opinions into drawings and concepts. While I do not count Mr. Schoenbauer as a "friend", at least in the manner you used that word in your email, I find him to be a humble and talented consultant. I think he is the right person to take on this assignment because I think he will earn the confidence of the residents involved, and that's because I've seen him do that before.

Regards,

Scott



Scott Neal, City Manager

952-826-0401 | Fax 952-826-0390

sneal@EdinaMN.gov | www.EdinaMN.gov

...For Living, Learning, Raising Families & Doing Business

Heather Branigin

From: Laura Hotmail Account <laura196511@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2014 5:00 PM
To: Lynette Biunno
Subject: RE: Fred Richards Park Design

It is outrageous that a project of this size is not put of for a proper bidding process. Qualifications and price could be compared. This project is not unique enough to avoid the requirement for public bidding.

This consultant has a prior relationship with Scott Neal, that does not mean the consultant will understand neighborhood concerns.

Please deny staffs request for this consultant.

Thank you
Laura Schleck

From: lbiunno@EdinaMN.gov
To: laura196511@hotmail.com
Subject: Fred Richards Park Design
Date: Tue, 22 Apr 2014 18:35:09 +0000

Laura, I made the motion to start the process to design a new park. As part of that request I asked Scott Neal and Ann Kattreh to come back with in 30 days with a process for re planning the Fred space. As part of that we asked that is be a process that was inclusive of the neighbors from the very beginning and have a time line that was transparent from the start. I am glad that our city manager Scott and Ann have found a consulting company that understands neighborhood concerns. We do not normally go to RFP for this kind of work. What I have heard from the Fred neighborhood is a concern over not knowing what would be in the Fred space other than the Three Rivers Park bike path. A number of emails have been sent from the neighborhood wanting to be part of this re planning process.

Sincerely, Ann Swenson

Heather Branigin

From: Metropolitan Council <METC@public.govdelivery.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2014 5:29 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: SWLRT municipal consent hearing moved to May 29

Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page.](#)



NEWSADVISORY

Metropolitan Council/Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority hearing on municipal consent moved to May 29

(St. Louis Park, MN) – Today, the Metropolitan Council announced that the joint public hearing with the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority will occur **May 29 at the Hennepin County Government Center, 300 South Sixth Street, Minneapolis at 6PM**. An open house will be held on the Public Service Level of the Hennepin County Government Center beginning at 5PM. The previously announced May 12th hearing will not take place.

The hearing was rescheduled to May 29 due to the need to correct information in the Minneapolis portion of municipal consent plans. Municipal consent plans, which are available on the Council's website at www.swlrt.org and at numerous city halls and libraries along the corridor, were updated by Council staff on April 22 to ensure every set contains corrected information.

What is municipal consent?

In the municipal consent process, the Metropolitan Council will be seeking approval from the county and the line's five host cities on preliminary design plans to build the LRT line in their jurisdictions. The preliminary design plans show the footprint of the LRT line and its physical design components. Further engineering in 2014 and 2015 will provide greater details, such as station elements and landscaping features.

The preliminary design plans will show the Southwest LRT line with adjustments as approved by the Met Council. Details include:

- Location of the 15.8-mile line and the 16 stations, down from the original 17 stations with the elimination of the 21st Street Station in Minneapolis. The plans will retain Mitchell Road Station as the line's westernmost station.
- Location of LRT tracks primarily at ground level with several bridges and tunnels including

Minneapolis.

- General dimensions, elevations and alignment of the LRT route and crossings.
- Location of the operations and maintenance facility in Hopkins.

More information about the municipal consent process is available at www.swlrt.org.

About the Project:

The Southwest Light Rail Transit (LRT) Project (Green Line Extension) will operate from downtown Minneapolis through the communities of St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka, and Eden Prairie, passing in close proximity to the city of Edina. The proposed alignment is primarily at-grade and includes 16 new stations and about 15.8-miles of double track. The line will connect major activity centers in the region including downtown Minneapolis, the Opus/Golden Triangle employment area in Minnetonka and Eden Prairie, Methodist Hospital in St. Louis Park, the Eden Prairie Center Mall, and the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes. Ridership in 2030 is projected at 29,660 weekday passengers. The project will interline with the METRO Green Line (Central Corridor LRT), which will provide a one-seat ride to destinations such as the University of Minnesota, state Capitol and downtown St. Paul. It will be part of an integrated system of transitways, including connections to the METRO Blue Line, the Northstar Commuter Rail line, a variety of major bus routes along the alignment, and proposed future transitway and rail lines. The Metropolitan Council will be the grantee of federal funds. The regional government agency is charged with building the line in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Transportation. The Southwest Corridor Management Committee, which includes commissioners from Hennepin County and the mayors of Minneapolis, St. Louis Park, Edina, Hopkins, Minnetonka, and Eden Prairie, provides advice and oversight. Funding is provided by the Federal Transit Administration, Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB), state of Minnesota and Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRA). The Southwest LRT Project website is www.swlrt.org.

SWLRT.ORG



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Heather Branigin

From: Patty <pastang@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2014 5:41 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Fred Richards property

Hello Council Members,

I have to write to let you know my concerns about tonight's agenda item concerning the repurposing of the Fred Richards Golf Course property. I feel like we are back to square one with City staff hiring a consultant for the job without bidding out the job and getting plans from at least 3 consultants so plans can be carefully gone through with costs and needs being taken into account. This is reminiscent of staff's proposal to close The Fred with out showing any alternative ideas or even including The Fred in the master plan for golf enterprises. We were told Scott Neal has worked with this consulting firm before and just wanted to give the business to them so the project apparently doesn't have to go through a bidding process. As a homeowner on the course, I already feel defeated and the process supposedly hasn't even begun yet. It' so disappointing that I couldn't even bring myself to write this email for the last couple of days.

You probably won't see many concerned citizens at tonight's meeting (please don't misread that as we are not concerned or don't want to be a part of the process Councilwoman Bennett)- there is no time for public input and the item comes at the end of the agenda so another late night for regular citizens. Please consider moving public items to the top of the agenda at least some of the time. I know we had several senior citizens who desperately wanted to be heard and take part in the process to Save The Fred and they said it was really hard for them to sit so long and be out so late.

Sincerely,

Patty Stang

Heather Branigin

From: Kim Thorstad <kimthorstad@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2014 6:01 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Birchcrest B Neighborhood Roadway Reconstruction

Dear Mayor Hovland and Members of the City Council,

I am writing in response to the letter I received dated April 18 regarding this project. I am concerned about the staff recommendation to narrow our street and replace the concrete with bituminous pavement. I am surprised that considerations such as aesthetics and reducing impervious surfaces by a small fraction win out over residents concerns and safety.

I have been a Tingdale homeowner for over 10 years. I am a runner and a mother with children who ride bikes and I push in a stroller. With no sidewalks, the only place to ride and run is in the street. I see narrowing the streets takes away this as an option. Other areas of Edina get green painted bike lanes but we get our bike lanes taken away? Where is the logic in that?

And with both the Normandale Church near by and the stadium during football games, parking occurs on both sides of the streets at times. And to have cars parked, traffic will be impossible with narrowed streets.

Overall, living on Tingdale, I don't understand the reason why we are scheduled to have our streets torn up and changed. The intersection of Clover and Tingdale was recently patched. With that completed people who have reviewed the street have not seen any sign of repairs needed. The concrete surface is intact as are the curb and gutters. We aren't getting sidewalks out of this, or improved sewers with back flow preventers. So where is the improvement? This project is costing millions and is only a takeaway, not an improvement. Why do these planners think they know better than the people who live on the street whether aesthetic improvements are needed and should outweigh our safety concerns? Sounds to me like someone is just trying to score some points on some urban livability contest. And the letter sent didn't even address prior comments raised by residence or in our petition.

Please reconsider the need for this project. I find it hard to believe that Edina does not have more pressing needs to fund than this project. Maybe I am wrong, and you are that woefully overfunded. I will know by your vote on this project.

Kimberly Thorstad

Sent from my iPad

Heather Branigin

From: Ann Swenson <swensonann1@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2014 8:21 AM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Re: Fred Richards property

Patty, the consultant we hired last night for the Fred does not bring a plan for the park. They use a process of public meetings with residents to determine wants and needs. It is a collaborative process designed for public involvement. In our other park designs that we have done recently, Pamela, Countryside, etc we do not use an RFP process. We chose this particular consultant because of their inclusive approach. Ann Swenson, council

Sent from my iPad

> On Apr 23, 2014, at 8:05 AM, Edina Mail <mail@EdinaMN.gov> wrote:

>

> Good morning,

>

> This message has been forwarded to the Mayor and Council members, Scott Neal, Ann Kattreh and Janet Canton.

>

> Lynette Biunno, Receptionist

> 952-927-8861 | Fax 952-826-0389

> lbiunno@EdinaMN.gov | www.EdinaMN.gov

> ...For Living, Learning, Raising Families & Doing Business

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Patty [<mailto:pastang@comcast.net>]

> Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2014 5:41 PM

> To: Edina Mail

> Subject: Fred Richards property

>

> Hello Council Members,

>

> I have to write to let you know my concerns about tonight's agenda item concerning the repurposing of the Fred Richards Golf Course property. I feel like we are back to square one with City staff hiring a consultant for the job without bidding out the job and getting plans from at least 3 consultants so plans can be carefully gone through with costs and needs being taken into account. This is reminiscent of staff's proposal to close The Fred with out showing any alternative ideas or even including The Fred in the master plan for golf enterprises. We were told Scott Neal has worked with this consulting firm before and just wanted to give the business to them so the project apparently doesn't have to go through a bidding process. As a homeowner on the course, I already feel defeated and the process supposedly hasn't even begun yet. It's so disappointing that I couldn't even bring myself to write this email for the last couple of days.

>

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>

> Sincerely,

> Patty Stang

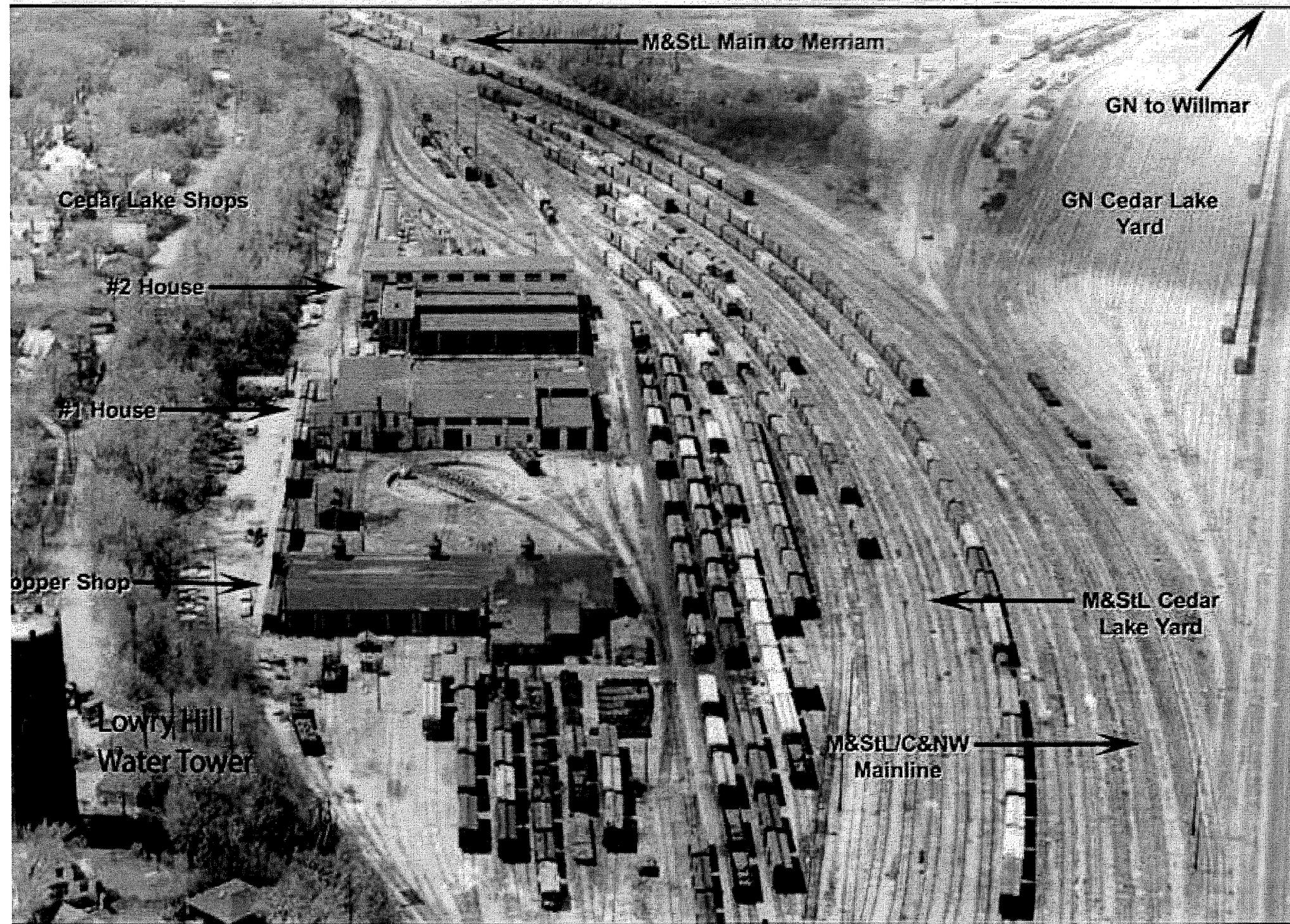
Heather Branigin

From: Curt Rahman <curtrahman@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2014 10:55 AM
To: Curt Rahman
Subject: Old Photo of the Kenilworth Train Yard
Attachments: Kenilworth Train Yards.jpg

I thought you might appreciate the attached photo of the train traffic in Kenilworth as it used to be. This photo is taken looking west, note the Lowry Hill water tower in the bottom left of the photo.

Curt Rahman

M&StL/C&NW Cedar Lake Yards, Looking West



Heather Branigin

From: Chris Bremer <bremer101@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2014 10:58 AM
To: Ann Swenson; Sprague Josh; Joni; Mary Brindle (Comcast); Edina Mail
Cc: Cindy Larson; MJ Lamon
Subject: Re: Concerns about new construction in Strachauer neighborhood
Attachments: Nasar & Stamps 2009 Infill McMansions_Style and the psychophysics of size.pdf

Dear Edina City Council members,

To follow up on my email from yesterday I looked for some research on infill homes and what makes them objectionable to those looking at them in a neighborhood context. I found the following article:

Height, Style of "McMansions" Are What Turn Off Neighbors



I did some further digging and found the study upon which the article was based (attached). It is much more technical, but will give you a better understanding of how the researchers' conclusions were reached. I think a research-based approach to building codes would be of great benefit to neighborhoods in Edina, particularly those like mine (Strachauer) in which the existing homes are completely different from those being built on spec by developers. Perhaps this research, and related research, could help the city move beyond an essentially one-size-fits-all code in a rational way, tailoring an evidence-based approach that would keep our neighborhoods and community attractive -- and be more considerate of current residents' perceptions and needs.

I have a research background and would be happy to support the Council in identifying other related research that could support future decision-making about building codes and policies related to infill construction.

Best regards,

Chris

P.S. I apologize if you received two emails from me yesterday; my email account was indicating that my first message had not been sent.

From: Ann Swenson <swensonann1@gmail.com>
To: Chris Bremer <bremer101@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2014 8:41 AM
Subject: Re: Concerns about new construction in Strachauer neighborhood

Chris, thanks for your detailed email on tear down concerns in your part of Edina. We put in new ordinances that took place January first of this year. We have studied this issue twice over the nine years I have served on council and made changes each time. We will continue to take input. Ann Swenson, council

Sent from my iPad

On Apr 22, 2014, at 5:03 PM, Chris Bremer <bremer101@yahoo.com> wrote:

Dear Members of the Edina City Council,

First, thank you for all you do on behalf of residents like myself who rarely have to think very much about how our city runs. Your efforts are much appreciated.

I am writing to express my concerns about how the city's building guidelines/policies are likely to affect my neighborhood, the Strachauer Park area. We have lived there since 1984, and raised our three children there. Ours is a friendly low-rise community of midcentury-modern homes, and until very recently we seemed immune from the developer's backhoe. We are more diverse than most Edina neighborhoods, and have many young families who appreciate our relatively affordable homes in a wonderful school district. Those in the 50-plus age group appreciate the more accessible one-level living spaces available in our neighborhood.

We are now seeing homes being purchased for tear-down and new construction. In the past, most of those building or remodeling were the ones who would be living in the new spaces, and they had some concern for the look and feel of our neighborhood, but now it seems that almost all of this construction in Strachauer and Chowen is being done "on spec" and therefore those choosing the design of a new home do not care if they upset the neighbors by completely overshadowing someone's house, blocking their natural light and diminishing the value of their home. A Strachauer neighbor recently commented to me that she even hesitates to update her kitchen, as she fears her house will only be valued as a tear-down. A new neighbor, whose house was nicely remodeled before she bought it, expressed similar concerns.

The primary reason for this sad state of affairs is that many of the new homes being built are over twice as tall as the ones they stand next to. It is not so much of a problem, perhaps, to have 30-foot tall homes next to two-story colonials, but in a neighborhood of ramblers it is jarringly unattractive. Walking around our neighborhood in the evening, we find people pointing, shaking their heads, and expressing grief, sadness, and a sense of helplessness. I am sure this is not what you intended when you developed the current building guidelines. Josh Sprague was kind enough to send me a chart showing the current standards (height, setbacks, etc.), which I greatly appreciated. He also said he thought these were unlikely to be revisited "until the changes have had time to sink in to the market." I have to say that I found that phrase very discouraging and even chilling (though I am sure Josh did not mean to come across that way), because it seems that if we wait even another year or two, our Strachauer neighborhood will be irrevocably changed for the worse.

I think it was a wise decision on your part to establish front setback requirements based on those of neighboring houses. I would like to suggest that you now consider a similar approach to limiting the height of new residences. While I would not presume to know exactly how this should be specified, one approach might be to limit the height of new homes to a percentage above the average height of homes in an area as of a certain date (e.g. 2014). Or an absolute height limit could be set, but on a neighborhood basis, with a lower maximum height for neighborhoods like ours.

I invite you to walk around the Chowen neighborhood, just north of Strachauer, and experience how it feels to live in this part of town. Huge structures tower arrogantly over their neighbors, like schoolyard bullies. Vegetable and flower gardens lack sun, and people no longer have a pleasant view from their decks. We desperately want to avoid this fate in the Strachauer neighborhood. Not all of our homes are worth saving or remodeling, and thoughtful new construction could certainly enhance our area. However, the city's current policies do not include the kinds of limitations needed to ensure that Strachauer continues to be a great place to live for those in existing homes.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments. I hope the construction policies can be revisited by the City Council very soon – well before the current ones have "had time to sink into the market."

Again, many thanks for your dedication to the City of Edina and its residents.

Sincerely,

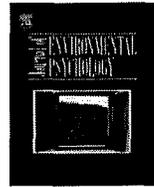
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Infill McMansions: Style and the psychophysics of size

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ABSTRACT

The number and size of infill oversized houses, or McMansions, has increased in the U.S. and the world. To maintain desirable neighborhood appearances, communities should know what constitutes “too big.” This paper reports six studies that used color simulations of blocks of houses to examine compatibility and visual appeal in relation to attributes of the infill house and its context. Following psychophysical findings, the relative size of the infill house should have larger effects on response than its actual size. The studies confirmed that the infill ratio had more weight than size for perceived compatibility. Compatibility did not always translate into visual appeal. For visual appeal, infill style had larger effects than did size or size ratio, height had larger effects than width, and, for larger sizes and ratios, infill ratio had larger effects than actual size. To maintain visual quality in relation to infill houses, communities should first seek an architecturally compatible style, and then try to control its relative size (the infill façade area). Tests of responses to real infill houses can show how well these findings generalize.

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1. Introduction

McMansions, also referred to as too-big houses, monster houses, starter castles, tract mansions, mega homes, garage Mahals, or what Huxtable (1997, p. 68) calls “grotesquely grandiose” houses, are becoming larger and more prevalent (Fig. 1). This paper examines the perceived compatibility and visual appeal of infill McMansions to learn what characteristics of the design matter.

In the United States, new houses have increased in size from an average of 1900 square feet in 1987 to an average of 2300 square feet in 2001 (National Association of Home Builders, NAHB, 2002). The percentage of new houses larger than 3000 square feet has increased from 11% in 1988 to 20% in 2003 (US Census Bureau, 2003). In 2005, 20% of occupied homes had four or more bedrooms, compared to 17.7% in 2000 (US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2007). McMansions are not unique to the United States. Observers have noted their presence from the United Kingdom to China, which even has a development named Orange County (Glick, 2006; O'Brien, 2004).

McMansions have two forms, Greenfield and infill, with different effects. Greenfield McMansions are plats of oversized houses on larger parcels of vacant land. Contributing to sprawl, they run counter to Smart Growth goals (Burchell & Mukheri, 2003). Infill McMansions occur in built up areas in the form of either new houses on vacant lots, tear downs replaced with a new house, or

additions to existing houses. They are always much larger than the houses around them.

Unlike Greenfield McMansions, infill McMansions advance Smart Growth goals. They use existing infrastructure, replace obsolete housing, reduce sprawl, and revitalize and promote reinvestment in older suburbs (Burchell, Listokin, & Gallwey, 2000; Lang & Danielsen, 2002), but they create a different problem. Neighbors may see the house as “too big for the lot on which it sits,” “out of scale with the rest of the community” or incompatible (Kending, 2004, p. 47) and lobby their local government to adopt regulations to prevent or minimize the undesirable impacts.¹ This paper presents six studies on evaluative responses to infill McMansions, aimed at developing visual quality guidelines for design review and controls.

Research on visual quality guidelines for design review is needed because those guidelines are already widely implemented. U.S. federal and state law gives local communities the right to regulate esthetics (cf. Mandelker, 1993; Meck & Pearlman, 2004; Smardon & Karp, 1993). According to Hinshaw (2002, p. 27), “inflicting massively oversized structures on neighborhoods that have an established pattern of small houses on small lots is the epitome of public rudeness ... Communities should not be catering to this kind of nouveau riche excess.” He called for carefully crafted standards that benefit everyone, “not just the newcomers,” standards that without discouraging infill development encourage

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¹ Infill McMansions may also increase property values, making their communities less affordable.



Fig. 1. Infill McMansion approximately four times the size of its neighboring houses.

compatible development. Two studies indicate the extent of implementation of design guidelines for McMansions in American (Nasar & Evans-Cowley, 2007; Szold, 2005). They found that many American cities have infill McMansions, and in response to them have adopted controls, such as design review, and controls for house height, floor area ratio or bulk to achieve contextually compatible solutions.

1.1. Contextual design

Contextual design assumes that fitting in will make a group of buildings look better. This presupposes that a group of buildings on a block or in a group of blocks (seen as a neighborhood) have a distinctive character into which a new building should fit. One study suggests that they do. Stamps (1999a) had respondents judge if the overall character of a block (all gable roof, all flat roof, or mixture of gable and flat roofs) appeared to be flat roof, gable roof, or mixed. More than 80% of the houses had to share the roof feature before respondents judged the block as having that character. This suggests that blocks can have character, and that changes in more than 20% of the houses on a block might disrupt it. The size of the impact may vary with the infill house style and size. For policy, communities need to know if improved compatibility makes a block look more pleasing to the eye.

The degree to which contextual design increases perceived order (coherence), it should increase preference. Studies consistently find increases in preference associated with order or coherence (cf. Nasar, 1987, 1994, 1998). For example, one study found that preference increased as the compatibility of a building to its context increased (Wohlwill, 1982). For houses, research has found that people prefer blocks of homogeneous styles even if, in isolation, they dislike the style of the block (Stamps, 1994). The first incompatible house on a block may have the largest impact. Stamps (1999a) found that for 2–3 storey infill building heights, one infill larger building on a block yielded the lowest preferences, but as the number of such buildings increased, the negative effect weakened.

However, factors other than massing may influence visual appeal or compatibility. For style, research indicates that the public has consistent preferences in relation to house styles (Nasar, 1989; Nasar & Devlin, 1989). Popular and high-style houses have different characteristics, people notice the differences between them, and prefer the popular styles. Certain styles may go together, while others do not. People might view a high-style house in a popular-style context or *visa versa* as incompatible.

For size, the Weber–Fechner law in psychophysics suggests that the relative size of an infill house to the houses around it is more important than its absolute size (Dehaene, 2003). Specifically, the

law indicates that a just noticeable change in a stimulus is a constant ratio of the original stimulus (cf., Mitina & Abraham, 2003; Takahashi, Oono, & Radford, 2008). Others have found slightly different non-linear functions (Gregson, 1991; Krueger, 1991; Laming, 1991; Norwich, 1987; Stevens, 1936; Wasserman, 1991). Still, the approaches would agree that in a block of *small* houses, it should take only a small increase in size for the infill house to stand out as incompatible; while in a block of *larger* houses, it would take a larger increase in size to stand out. If so, communities should control infill size in proportion to its context rather than its absolute size. This has not yet been adequately tested in relation to infill houses, but one study of building heights offers support. Stamps (1999a) found that a taller infill building evoked a larger negative response in relation to a block with houses of uniform height than to a block with houses of mixed heights. For design controls, communities also need to better understand the relative impacts of changes in infill style and Size on perceived compatibility and visual appeal.

1.2. Outline of the six studies

This paper reports six studies that tested effects of infill house style and one non-linear function (logarithmic) of infill house size on response. Although design guidelines and design review often center on compatibility, presumably communities seek compatibility to enhance the visual quality. We tested both kinds of response.

All six studies used color images of blocks having an infill house. Research confirms that responses to color images relate to responses obtained on site to the same places (Stamps, 1993). As research indicates smaller effects from the respondent than from the environment (Stamps, 1999b), the analyses in each study centered on tests of the environmental conditions. The results of earlier studies led to hypotheses tested in the subsequent studies.

2. Study 1: style, infill house size, ratio, and distance from observer

Study 1 examined two main questions.

1. Non-linear psychophysical effects: do impressions of visual appeal and compatibility depend more on the ratio of the size of the infill house to its context than on its absolute size?
2. How important is size ratio compared to architectural style?

The study also examined two subsidiary questions.

- a) Does the distance of the infill house from the observer affect response? For methods and application, it makes a difference if the effect of an infill house that differs from its context varies with the distance from the house. As a person approaches a contextually unfitting infill building, it should become more visually prominent, and this might increase its impact. If so, controls for such houses serve primarily to protect against negative reactions among immediate neighbors and passersby, rather than broader community-wide effects. However, viewers of the unfitting house may notice it at a distance, imagine its impact on neighbors, and respond to it similarly to viewers closer to it. In that case, contextual controls would apply to a broader community than the immediate neighbors.
- b) Does compatibility entail visual appeal? Research suggests a connection, but it has not specifically examined the context of infill houses. Perhaps communities want to maintain compatibility, whether or not it affects visual appeal. If, however, they control compatibility to achieve visual appeal, they need to know if visual appeal increases with compatibility.

2.1. Method

2.1.1. Stimuli and experimental design

Each stimulus shows a color image of a suburban block with five houses (all of the same architectural style) on each side of the block. The lot sizes were set at 2.26 times the size of the houses. Each block has one infill house inserted into it. The study used a 5×5 Graeco-Latin square design. It superimposed one 5×5 Latin square (house size and ratio), on another 5×5 Latin square (style and distance). With the treatments designated by Greek letters and the two designs superimposed on one another, the Greek letter appears once and only once for every Latin letter, such that the two Latin squares are orthogonal (Montgomery, 1997). As a result, the design has four (instead of three) factors—size, ratio, style and distance—each with five levels. To mitigate potential order effects, we varied the order of presentation of the scenes. The stimulus set varied in the size of the context houses (8.62 m, 9.90 m, 11.37 m, 13.06 m, or 15 m), its associated lot size (17.00 m, 19.53 m, 22.43 m, 25.77 m, or 29.6 m), distance to the infill house by its slot (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5), and style (labeled Cubes, I Beam, Ranch, Sea Ranch, or Sea Side), size of the infill house (discussed below), and ratio of infill house to context houses (discussed below). Fig. 2 shows the 25 stimuli.

For each block, all houses had the same style, so style was always compatible. Infill size and infill ratio, however, did vary within each scene, so the experimental design was infill size (widths of 15.00 m, 17.22 m, 19.79 m, 22.74 m, 26.12 m) \times infill ratio (1.15, 1.32, 1.52, 1.74,

and 2.00). This means that each level of infill size and each level of infill ratio were approximately 1.15 times larger than the level below it. Rather than test various non-linear functions, we tested the Weber–Fechner logarithmic function (Dehaene, 2003). Size and ratio numbers in all of the studies were constructed on a log basis.

2.1.2. Respondents

90 people took part in the study. 60 of them rated each block for visual appeal (dislike/like), and 30 of them rated each block for compatibility. We obtained independent ratings on the two scales to avoid the potential bias of responses to one scale influencing responses to the other. Most participants in each sample were male (53.3%, 51.7%), Caucasian (66.7%, 73.3%), with a college degree or more (96.7%, 82.4%). Most of them were also single, divorced, or widowed (76.7%, 52.6%) and had no children living at home (70.0%, 67.8%). The visual appeal group was younger (28.9, SD 7.2 years), had a lower median family income (\$20,000–\$40,000) than the compatibility group (34.7, SD 12.5 years; \$40,000–\$60,000). It also had more renters (63.3%) than owners, while the compatibility group had more homeowners (60.0%) than renters.

Interviewers obtained respondents from various public gathering places (such as parks, plazas, and coffee shops) in different areas of central Ohio, conducting five or fewer interviews in each place. The interviewer approached the respondent, asked him or her to participate in a study that would take less than 5 min. The interviewer explained that we wanted to learn how people

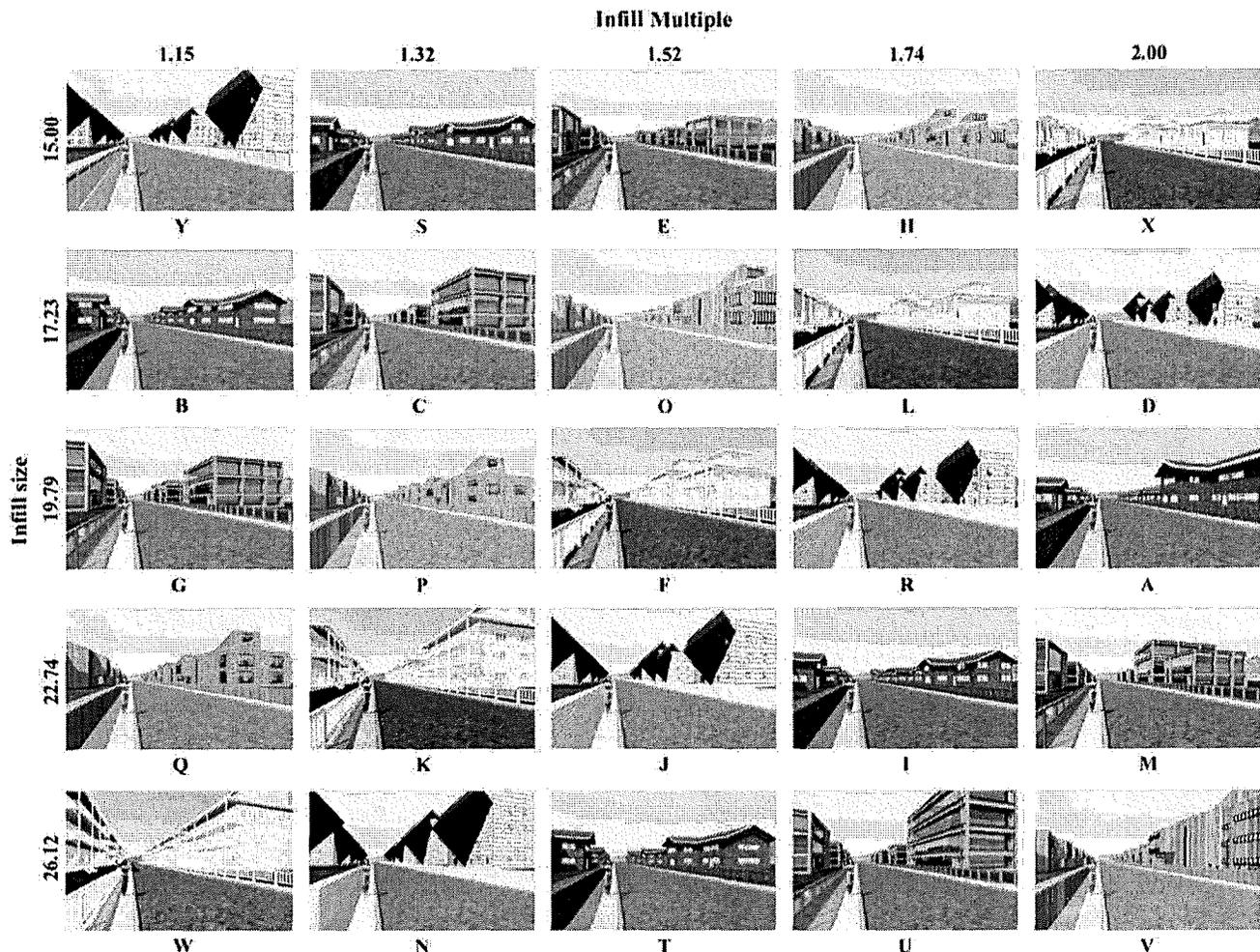


Fig. 2. Study 1 stimuli: infill house varies in size, ratio, style and distance from observer.

respond to different streetscapes, that they would see a picture of each street and be asked to rate the street depicted, and afterwards to answer some background questions. The interviewer assured them of confidentiality, anonymity, and the ability to withdraw at any time without penalty or repercussion. The instructions asked them to imagine they were on the street shown when responding.

2.1.3. Task

Respondents received a book of the 25 computer generated color images arranged in one of four orders, selected at random. We varied the order of stimuli across respondents to mitigate order effects. For visual appeal, the questionnaire asked them to check the answer that best represented their evaluation of each block (Dislike it a lot, Dislike it, Dislike it a little, Neither like nor Dislike it, Like it a little, Like it, Like it a lot). The compatibility form asked them to check the answer that best represented their evaluation of the street's compatibility (Very Incompatible, Incompatible, Fairly Incompatible, Neither Incompatible nor Compatible, Fairly Compatible, Compatible, Very Compatible). Each form also asked them to report their gender, race/ethnicity, education, marital status, number of children living at home, whether they rented or owned, family income, and age.

2.2. Results

Let's start with the subsidiary questions. First, as distance from the observer increased the perceived compatibility of the infill house increased. Tables 1 and 2 show the contrasts for compatibility and visual appeal respectively. Because distance is a continuous variable, we examined its correlation. It correlated at statistically insignificant levels with visual appeal ($r = 0.11$, $p > 0.05$) and with compatibility ($r = 0.25$, $p > 0.05$). These correlations converted to d values of 0.22 for visual appeal and 0.53 for compatibility. We can compare the d values with other design choices. For example, a d of 0.35 is the increase in visual amenity caused by the addition of street trees (Stamps, 2000). Thus, for compatibility, the effect of distance is greater than the effect of adding street trees. The pragmatic implication is that compatibility goes up substantially with increasing distance. Distance makes the infill house less disruptive.

Second, compatibility did not translate into visual appeal. Recall, we obtained ratings of compatibility from one group of respondents and ratings of visual appeal from another. We calculated the mean score on each scale for each of the 25 blocks. Those two sets of scores across the 25 blocks had a weak correlation ($r = -0.063$, $p > 0.05$).

Now consider the two main questions. How important is infill ratio compared to infill size and style? For compatibility, as predicted by the Weber–Fechner law, infill ratio had a larger effect than infill size. The within subjects variance component of the general linear model showed that as the infill ratio increased, compatibility decreased ($F(1, 748) = 650.54$, $p < 0.001$). Infill ratio had the largest effect of the variables considered (explaining 45.8% of the variance). The other effects were one or two orders of magnitude smaller. Infill style, which had the next largest effect, explained only 1.9% of the variance ($F(4, 748) = 6.86$, $p < 0.001$). The contrasts (Table 1) show the pattern of decrease in compatibility associated with increases in the infill ratio. The effect size of infill ratio (infill/exiting) increased for 1.32/1.15 to 1.52/1.32, and 1.74/1.52, but then decreased for 2/1.74.

For visual appeal (Table 2), style had the largest effect (explaining 21.9% of the variance; $F(4, 1475) = 143.55$, $p < 0.001$). The findings for infill ratio did not translate into visual appeal. Infill distance, infill size, and infill ratio had effects two orders of

Table 1
Study 1 standardized mean contrasts for compatibility MSE = 2.24.

Factor	Level	μ	d	r	$F(1, 713)$	α
Infill ratio	1.15	6.10	0.49	0.24	17.82	2e–05
	1.32	5.47				
	1.32	5.47	0.70	0.33	36.14	3e–11
	1.52	4.34				
	1.52	4.34	1.02	0.45	76.96	7e–23
	1.74	2.57				
	1.74	2.57	0.23	0.11	4.02	0.05
	2.00	2.20				
	1.15	6.10	2.72	0.81	553.48	5e–90
	2.00	2.20				
Infill size	15.00	3.86	–0.22	–0.11	3.63	0.06
	17.23	4.35				
	17.23	4.35	0.02	0.01	0.025	0.88
	19.79	4.31				
	19.79	4.31	0.09	0.05	0.64	0.42
	22.74	4.11				
	22.74	4.11	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.88
	26.12	4.07				
	15.00	3.86	–0.10	–0.05	0.70	0.40
	26.12	4.07				

Note. The MSE (Mean Square Error), which estimates the total error expected for a sample, is the sum of the standard error squared and the bias squared. The notation in the tables is slightly different from the notation in the text. In the text, results are reported in terms of the "p level" paradigm, in which the strength of a result is indicated by the number of asterisks in the computer print out. One asterisk means " $p < 0.05$ ", two means " $p < 0.01$ " and three means " $p < 0.001$." The tables, on the other hand, report findings using the effect size paradigm. Effect sizes are reported directly in terms of standardized mean contrasts, correlations, or similar measures. For reasons why the effect size paradigm is superior to the p level paradigm, see Rosenthal and Rosnow (1991). For guidance on how to use the effect size paradigm to facilitate research in environmental psychology, see *Summa Contra Pisces* at <http://home.att.net/~ieq>. In all tables, μ means an average of responses for the level of each factor indicated, d means the contrast between two levels (obtained by simple subtraction), that is divided by the square root of the MSE for the experiment. Examples of how to do these simple calculations are shown in Winer et al. (1991). The correlation is calculated from d according to the equation $r = d/\sqrt{d^2 + 4}$. Also, "p" is changed to " α ", because, statistically, there are two probability levels to consider when doing research: the α level and the β level. What social scientists are apt to label "p" is the α level, or the probability of reporting a false positive (e.g., confusing random noise with an actual effect). Focusing only on the α level and ignoring the β level (the probability of missing something) leads to disastrous, systemic mistakes in planning, reporting, and synthesizing scientific findings (American Psychological Association, 2001, Section 1.10; Cohen, 1988; Hedges & Olkin, 1985). Accordingly, the tables report the findings in terms of two measures of effect sizes (d and r), for the convenience of readers, and report α levels as " α " rather than "p", so as not to confuse α and β probabilities.

Table 2
Study 1 standardized mean contrasts for visual appeal, MSE = 1.75.

Factor	Levels	μ	d	r	$F(1, 1410)$	α
Infill ratio	1.15	3.41	0.02	0.01	0.06	0.81
	1.32	3.38				
	1.32	3.38	–0.05	–0.03	0.44	0.51
	1.52	3.47				
	1.52	3.47	–0.02	–0.01	0.77	0.78
	1.74	3.51				
	1.74	3.51	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.93
	2.00	3.50				
	1.15	3.41	–0.05	–0.03	0.36	0.55
	2.00	3.50				
Infill size	15.00	3.61	0.09	0.05	1.11	0.29
	17.23	3.45				
	17.23	3.45	–0.01	0.00	0.02	0.96
	19.79	3.46				
	19.79	3.46	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.98
	22.74	3.46				
	22.74	3.46	0.09	0.05	1.39	0.24
	26.12	3.30				
	15.00	3.61	0.17	0.09	4.55	0.03
	26.12	3.30				

magnitude smaller. The contrasts show small effect sizes for infill size and infill ratio.

2.3. Discussion

The effect of distance on compatibility suggests that as the more distance to an infill house increased, its compatibility increased. Thus, immediate neighbors might care more about an infill house than residents living further away. As for infill size and ratio, the results varied with the rating scale. For compatibility, the larger effect size for infill ratio agrees with the Weber–Fechner law. In further agreement, contrasts between adjacent levels of infill level of size had small effects. Visual appeal had a low correlation with compatibility. People’s ratings of visual appeal depended more on the overall style of the block than infill ratio, which did not have a substantially different effect size from infill size. These findings agree with research on façade coherence and differences in preference across styles (Nasar, 1989; Nasar & Devlin, 1989; Stamps, 1994).

The dominance of style in relation to visual appeal and the effects related to distance suggests two follow-up questions. With

style and distance controlled, would infill ratio have a larger effect on visual appeal (Study 2)?

3. Study 2: infill size, and infill ratio, with style and distance controlled

Study 1 showed the expected effects for compatibility but not for visual appeal. Study 2 sought to find if, with style and distance controlled, visual appeal depended more on the ratio of the size of the infill house to its context than on its absolute size. Following the Weber–Fechner law, we expected a larger effect for infill ratio.

3.1. Method

3.1.1. Stimuli and experimental design

This experiment used the 18 images shown in Fig. 3. Each one shows a color one-point perspective of one side of a suburban block with one infill house inserted in the middle. Each street had houses of one of two styles used in Study 1 (Sea Ranch and Ranch). Distance from observer was controlled by using one-point perspectives from equal distances to the infill house on each simulated block. The infill house on each block had one of three

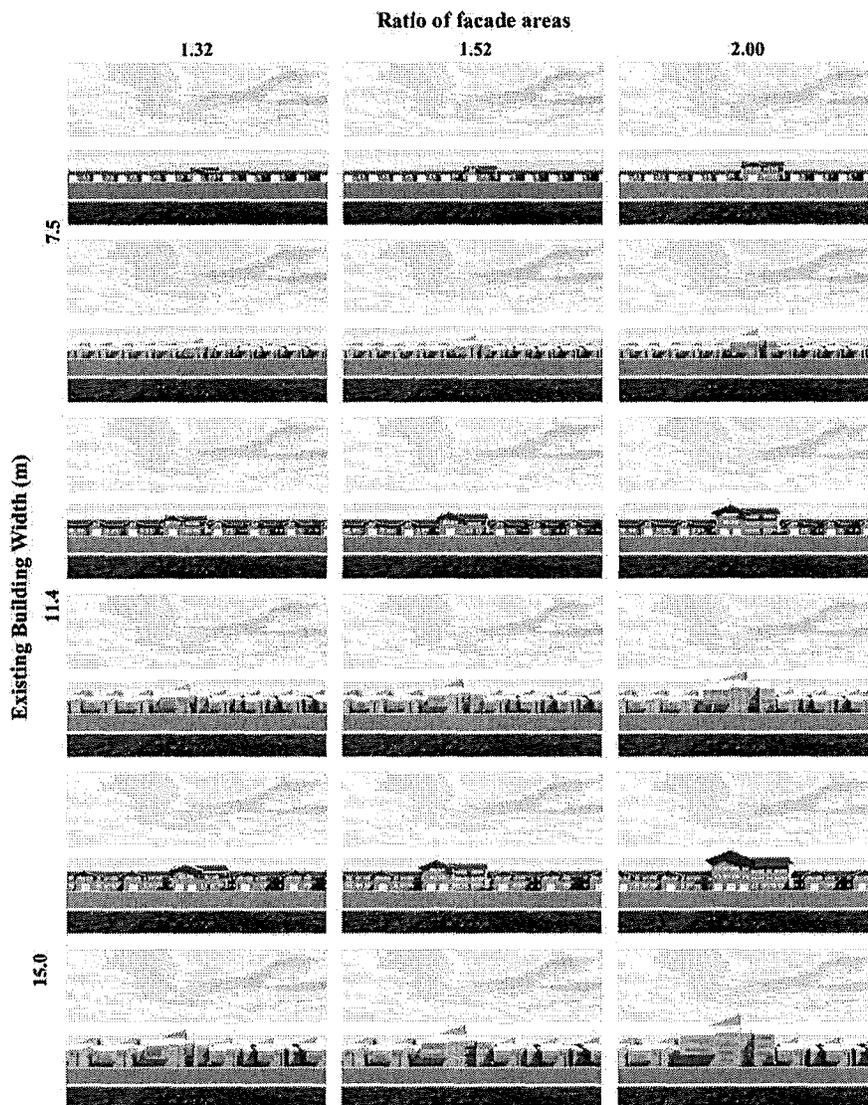


Fig. 3. Study 2 stimuli: infill house varies in size and infill ratio.

infill sizes (widths of 7.5 m, 11.4 m, 15 m) crossed with one of three infill ratios (façade areas of 1.32, 1.52, 2.00). To mitigate potential order effects, the study varied the order of presentation of the scenes.

3.1.2. Respondents

38 people (21 Females, 16 males, 1 none report, mean age 37.5 years, 11.2 SD) took part in this study. The sample had more homeowners (68.4%) than renters (28.9%), more Caucasians (84.2%) than other races (13.1%), more singles (50.0%) than married (39.5%) or separated, widowed or divorced (7.9%), and more people with no children at home (55.3%). Most had college educations (44.7%) or more (26.4%), but some of them had some college (23.7%) or a high school degree (2.6%), and a median reported income of \$80,000–\$100,000.

3.1.3. Tasks

Participants received the same instructions and forms as in Study 1, except that they viewed and rated the 18 scenes for Study 2 for visual appeal.

3.2. Results

As expected, the results showed trivial effects related to style (chosen because of the similar visual ratings in Study 1). The results of the within subjects variance component of the general linear model also echoed the findings from Study 1. For visual appeal, infill size and infill ratio did not matter; nor did style. None of the variables achieved statistical significance or explained more than 0.02% of the variance. Table 3 shows the contrasts for style, infill size and infill ratio. It shows a small difference between the two styles. Effect sizes for infill ratio and infill size are similar. Effects were so small that only one finding achieved a conventional " $p < 0.05$ " level even with 643 degrees of freedom for error.

3.3. Discussion

For visual appeal, Study 2 had similar results to Study 1. Changes in infill ratio or infill size did not have much effect, even with style and distance controlled. Both studies tested changes in infill size and infill ratio up to 2.00 (i.e. both the sizes and ratios tested doubled). While these sizes and ratios evoked expected responses for compatibility, they did not for visual appeal. The practical implication is that design guidelines drawing on the criteria used to create the blocks in Fig. 2 would not be efficacious. Perhaps larger infill sizes and ratios are needed to see if infill sizes and ratios

conform to the predictions of the Weber–Fechner law. Study 3 tests larger sizes.

4. Study 3: supersized

For *supersized* infill houses, Study 3 sought to find if compatibility translated into visual appeal, and if compatibility and visual appeal depended more on the ratio of the size of the infill house to its context than on its absolute size. Following the Weber–Fechner law, we expected the ratio to have a larger effect than the absolute size on both compatibility and visual appeal.

4.1. Method

4.1.1. Stimuli and experimental design

Study 3 used three infill sizes (widths of 30.00 m, 39.58 m, and 52.23 m) and three infill ratios (1/2.29, 1/3.03, and 1/4.00) representing the ratio of the infill façade area over the existing façade area (Fig. 4). This doubled the size tested in Study 1 and quadrupled the sizes from Study 2. The ratios increase from 1.7 times larger to twice as large as the ratios tested in Studies 1 and 2.

Interviews used the same procedures as in Study 1 to obtain ratings of the visual appeal of each scene from some respondents and ratings of compatibility from other respondents, but they responded to the 18 supersized stimuli.

4.1.2. Respondents

Fifty people took part in Study 3. Twenty-five (13 females, and 12 males) rated visual appeal. Most said they were homeowners (52.0%), with no children living at home (56.0%). The sample varied in race/ethnicity (68.0% Caucasian, 28.0% African American; 4.0% Hispanic, Asian or other), education (32% with some college or associate degree, 32% college graduates, 16% masters degree, and 4% post graduate degree), and marital status (40.0% married, 48% single, 12% separated, divorced, widowed or other). They reported median family income of \$40,000–\$60,000 (with a range from less than \$20,000/year to \$100,000–\$120,000/year), and a mean age of 28.9 (8.4 SD) years.

Twenty-five (10 females, 15 males) rated compatibility. Most said they were renters (60.0%), with no children living at home (72.0%). The sample varied in race ethnicity (56% Caucasian, 28% African American, and 16% Latino), education (52.0% with some college or an associates degree, 44% with a bachelor's degree, and 4% with a masters degree), and marital status (36.0% married, 44.0% single, and 20% separated, divorced, widowed or other). The reported family income had a median of \$40,000–\$60,000 (ranging from less than \$20,000/year to \$80,000–\$100,000/year), and mean age was 27.0 (5.8 SD) years.

For each sample, the interviewer approached up to five persons in any public gathering place on and off campus.

4.1.3. Task

Participants received the same instructions and visual appeal or compatibility form used in Study 1, but used it for each of the 18 blocks with supersized infill houses (Fig. 4). As in the previous studies, the order of stimuli was varied across respondents.

4.2. Results

For the supersized stimuli, compatibility translated well into visual appeal. The mean scores for compatibility and visual appeal for each block had a high correlation ($r = 0.98, p < 0.000$).

As predicted by the Weber–Fechner law, infill ratio had a larger effect on both visual appeal ($r = -0.79, p < 0.05$) and compatibility ($-0.76, p < 0.05$) than did infill size ($r < 0.04, p > 0.05; r = 0.05, p > 0.05$ respectively), and the effect of infill ratio decreased as the

Table 3
Study 2 standardized mean contrasts for visual appeal, MSE = 1.71.

Factor	Level	μ	d	r	$F(1, 643)$	α
Infill ratio	1.32	3.63	0.11	0.05	1.24	0.27
	1.52	3.46				
	1.52	3.46	0.03	0.01	0.08	0.78
	2	3.42				
	1.32	3.63	0.13	0.07	1.94	0.16
	2	3.42				
Infill size	7.5	3.51	0.12	0.06	1.76	0.19
	11.4	3.32				
	11.4	3.32	-0.24	-0.12	5.86	0.02
	15	3.68				
	7.5	3.51	-0.11	-0.06	1.20	0.27
	15	3.68				
Style	Sea Ranch	3.57	0.08	0.04	1.15	0.29
	Ranch	3.44				

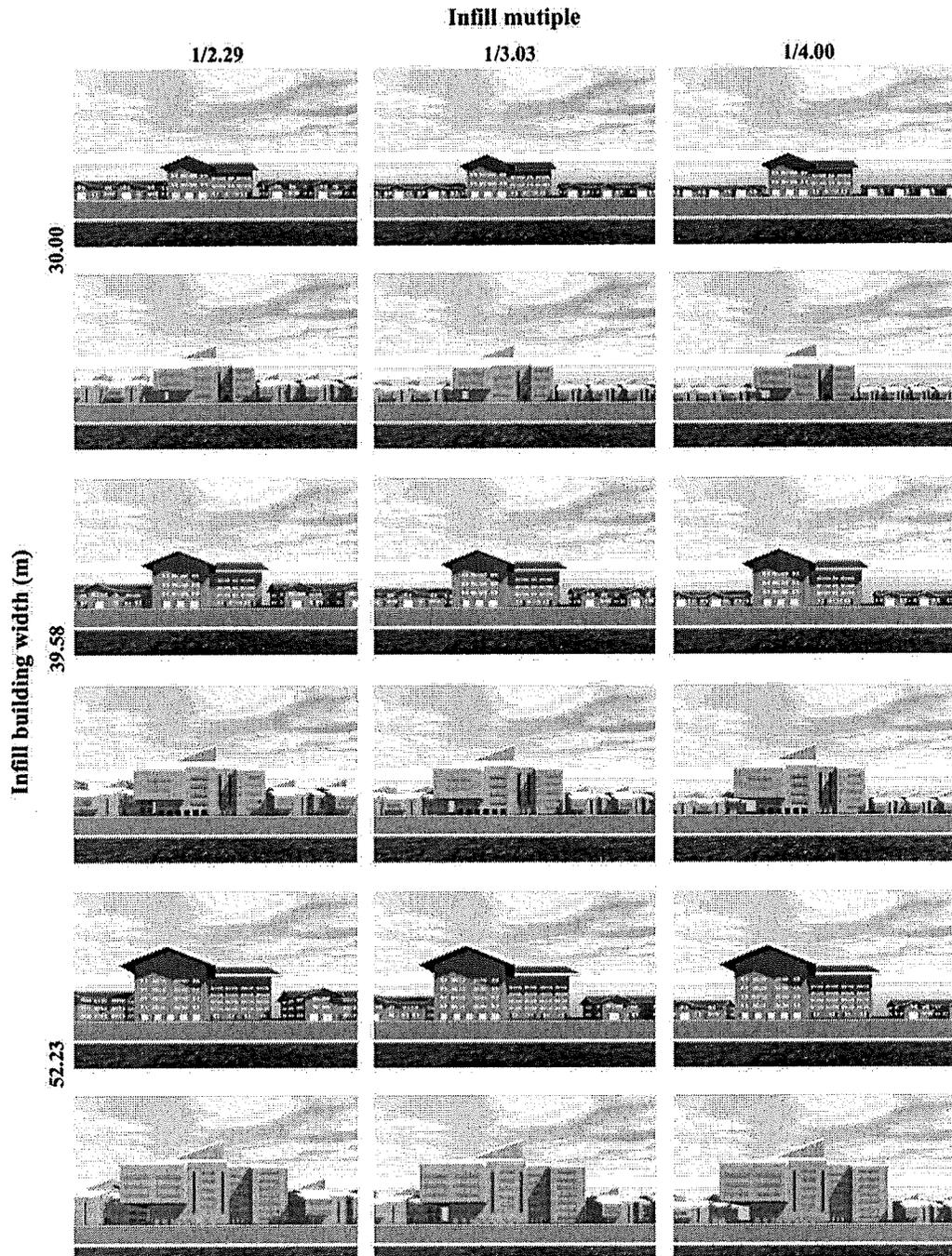


Fig. 4. Study 3 stimuli: supersized.

context size increased. For each scale, the results for infill ratio achieved statistical significance (compatibility: $F(1, 448) = 238.18$, $p < 0.000$; visual appeal: $F(1, 448) = 309.48$, $p < 0.000$). Infill ratio explained 34.04% of the variance in compatibility and 40.0% of the variance in visual appeal, two orders of magnitude larger than those found for infill size or style.

Tables 4 and 5 show the contrasts for compatibility and visual appeal respectively. For each scale, these reveal medium to large effects for infill ratio and small effects for infill size. In addition, the effect of ratios on visual appeal was four magnitudes larger than that obtained for the smaller ratios tested in Study 2.

4.3. Discussion

For the supersize houses, visual appeal related to compatibility; and the results agreed with the predictions of the Weber–Fechner law. For both compatibility and visual appeal, infill ratio had larger effects than infill size. The findings suggest a substantially larger negative impact on block appearance from the addition of one such supersized house. The first three studies suggest that the effects of size ratio become noticeable for larger sizes, at which point the effects conform to psychophysics findings. The ratios of size to the context have larger effects than the absolute size of the infill house.

Table 4
Study 3 (supersize) standardized mean contrasts for compatibility, MSE = 0.88.

Factor	Level	μ	d	r	$F(1, 448)$	α
Infill ratio	2.29	3.67	1.76	0.66	235.21	6e-43
	3.03	1.44				
	3.03	1.44	0.56	0.27	23.27	2e-6
	4.00	1.13				
	4.00	1.13	2.08	0.72	326.00	3e-55
Infill size	30	2.06	0.11	0.05	0.80	0.37
	39.58	1.91				
	39.58	1.91	-0.23	-0.12	4.07	0.05
	52.23	2.27				
	52.23	2.27	-0.13	-0.06	1.23	0.27
Style	Ranch	1.97	-0.14	-0.08	2.22	0.14
	Sea Ranch	2.19				

5. Study 4: width and visual appeal

The next two studies examined the effects of infill width and infill height on evaluative responses. Height was chosen because a survey of design review guidelines in 270 American cities indicated that 71% of the cities had guidelines for height (Stamps, 2000, p. 10). Width was chosen because another survey, this time of 73 British cities, indicated that 62% and 74% of the cities regulated extensions to houses (Stamps, 2000, p. 5). Furthermore, research suggests that the vertical dimension might have more importance (Hayward & Franklin, 1974; Stamps, 2003; Thiel, Harrison, & Alden, 1986).

Study 4 centered on visual appeal in relation to width. It sought to discover if visual appeal depended more on the relative width of the infill house to its context than its absolute size, for increases of 33%, 60%, and 100%. Following the Weber–Fechner law, we expected the width ratio to have a larger effect than width absolute size.

5.1. Method

5.1.1. Stimuli and experimental design

Study 4 used similar protocols to the earlier studies. It had three infill widths (15 m, 24 m, and 30 m.) and three infill width ratios (6/8, 5/8, and 4/8); and the widths for the existing houses that varied from 7.5 to 22.5 to fit the desired context for each width and width ratio. The widths are twice as large as the width in Study 2 as a basis for varying overall size; and the ratios represent increases of 33%, 60% or 100% over the existing widths, are similar to those (32%, 52% and 100%) in Study 2. A factorial design crossed three levels of infill width \times three levels of infill width ratio, with two styles (Ranch and

Table 5
Study 3 (supersize) standardized mean contrasts for visual appeal, MSE = 0.94.

Factor	Levels	μ	d	r	$F(1, 448)$	α
Infill ratio ^a	2.29	4.05	1.84	0.68	252.29	2e-45
	3.03	1.64				
	3.03	1.64	0.83	0.38	52.827	1e-12
	4.00	1.12				
	4.00	1.12	2.43	0.77	440.58	1e-68
Infill size (width)	30.00 m	2.17	-0.07	-0.03	0.37	0.55
	39.58 m	2.28				
	39.58 m	2.28	-0.05	-0.02	0.17	0.68
	52.23 m	2.36				
	52.23 m	2.36	-0.11	-0.05	0.94	0.33
Style	Ranch	2.06	-0.25	-0.13	7.23	0.007
	Sea Ranch	2.48				

^a Ratio of existing façade area over infill façade area.

Sea Ranch) in each cell. Fig. 5 shows black and white photos of the color stimuli.

5.1.2. Respondents

Twenty-six undergraduate students (80.8% male, 11.5% female, 7.7% not reporting their gender) in engineering voluntarily took part in the study. They reported their age on average as 20.9 years (SD = 3.6).

5.1.3. Task

Stimuli were presented in a class. The experiment was not announced ahead of time, so possible self-selection was controlled. Respondents saw the stimuli in a PowerPoint Show. It had two warm-up images to help respondents calibrate their responses, followed by the eighteen test stimuli. Stimuli were shown until all respondents finished their responses. Average presentation time was about 20 s. Presentation order was randomized with respect to the independent variables. Respondents rated each stimulus on a scale that ranged from 1 (*Dislike*) to 8 (*Like*).

5.2. Results

For width, all of the variables—infill width, infill width ratio and style—had statistically significant effects (width: $F(1, 466) = 12.34$, $p < 0.000$; width ratio: $F(1, 466) = 10.23$, $p < 0.05$; style: $F(1, 466) = 56.43$, $p < 0.000$). Table 6 shows the contrasts. Effect sizes were largest for the two styles.

5.3. Discussion

The effects of infill width were small for ratio's ranging from 0.625 to 0.75 ($d = 0.23$), but increased substantially with higher ratios ($d = 0.38$ for the difference between 0.5 and 0.75). The same effect was found for infill width, with the smaller changes in width having small effects ($d = 0.12$ for the contrast between 24 and 30 m, and $d = 0.55$ for the contrast between 15 and 30 m). These results suggest that, to be effective, controls on width should be applied only to very large differences between existing widths and width of infill construction.

6. Study 5: height and visual appeal

Study 5 examined visual appeal in relation to infill height. Would height ratios have larger effects than did width ratios, or would one need larger ratios (similar those in Study 3) to yield meaningful effects of ratios on visual appeal? We expected to find larger effects associated with the height than width changes; and following the Weber–Fechner law, we expected infill height ratio to have a larger effect than infill size.

6.1. Method

6.1.1. Stimuli and experimental design

Study 5 used similar protocols to earlier studies but for height. It had three infill heights (4, 6, and 8 stories) and three infill height ratios (0.75, 0.50, and 0.25). The infill heights have similar changes to those in the infill widths in Study 4. The infill heights increase 1.5 (small to medium), 1.33 (medium to large) and 2.0 (small to large); and the infill widths increase 1.6, 1.25 and 2.00 respectively. The infill height ratios represent increases of 33%, 100% and 400% over the existing heights. This study replaced a mid level increase in size (60%) from the width study with a higher one (400%) for height. The study had a factorial design: infill height (3) \times infill height ratio (3), and 2 styles (as before Ranch and Sea Ranch) in each cell. The heights of the existing houses varied from 1 storey to 6 stories to fit

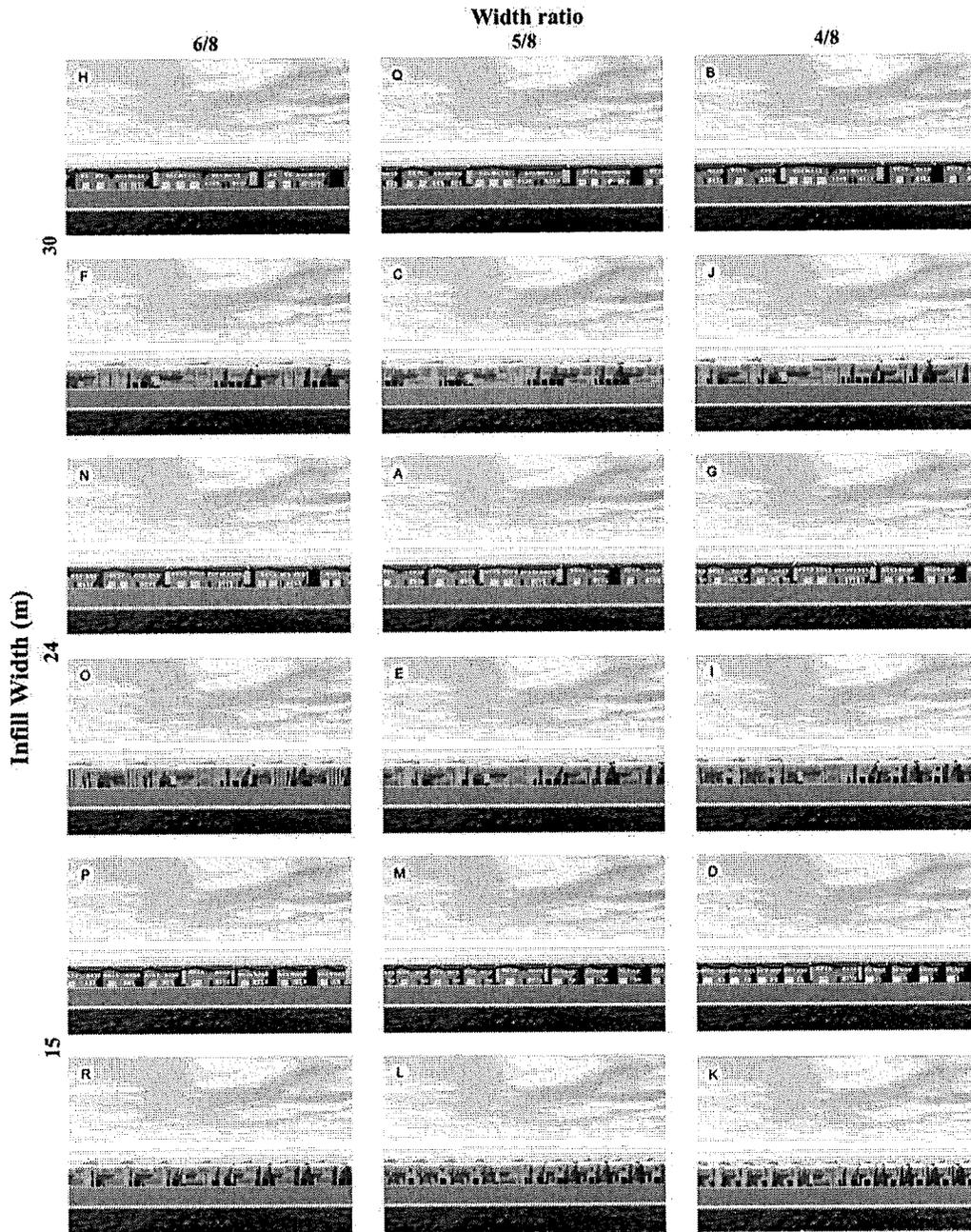


Fig. 5. Study 4 stimuli: infill house varies in width and width ratio.

the desired context for each height and height ratio. Fig. 6 shows black and white photos of the color stimuli.

6.1.2. Respondents

22 undergraduate students (72.7% male, 13.6% female, 9.1% not reporting their gender) in engineering voluntarily took part in the study. They reported an average age of 21.6 (SD = 2.0) years.

6.1.3. Task

Stimuli were presented in a class. The experiment was not announced ahead of time, so possible self-selection was controlled. Stimuli were shown in a PowerPoint Show. Two warm-up images were shown to help respondents calibrate their responses; then each stimulus was shown. Stimuli were shown until all respondents finished their responses. Average presentation time was about 20 s. Presentation order was randomized with respect to the

Table 6
Study 4 (width) standardized mean contrasts on visual appeal, MSE = 1.89.

Factor	Level	μ	d	r	$F(1, 339)$	α
Infill width ratio	0.750	4.42	0.16	0.08	4.23	0.04
	0.625	4.10				
	0.625	4.10	0.10	0.05	1.68	0.19
	0.500	3.90				
	0.750	4.42	0.27	0.13	5.46	0.02
	0.500	3.90				
Infill width	30	4.44	0.08	0.04	0.042	0.83
	24	4.28				
	24	4.28	0.30	0.15	14.33	0.0001
	15	3.69				
	30	4.44	0.37	0.18	10.32	0.001
	15	3.69				
Style	Sea Ranch	3.65	-0.50	-0.24	58.7	1e-13
	Ranch	4.62				

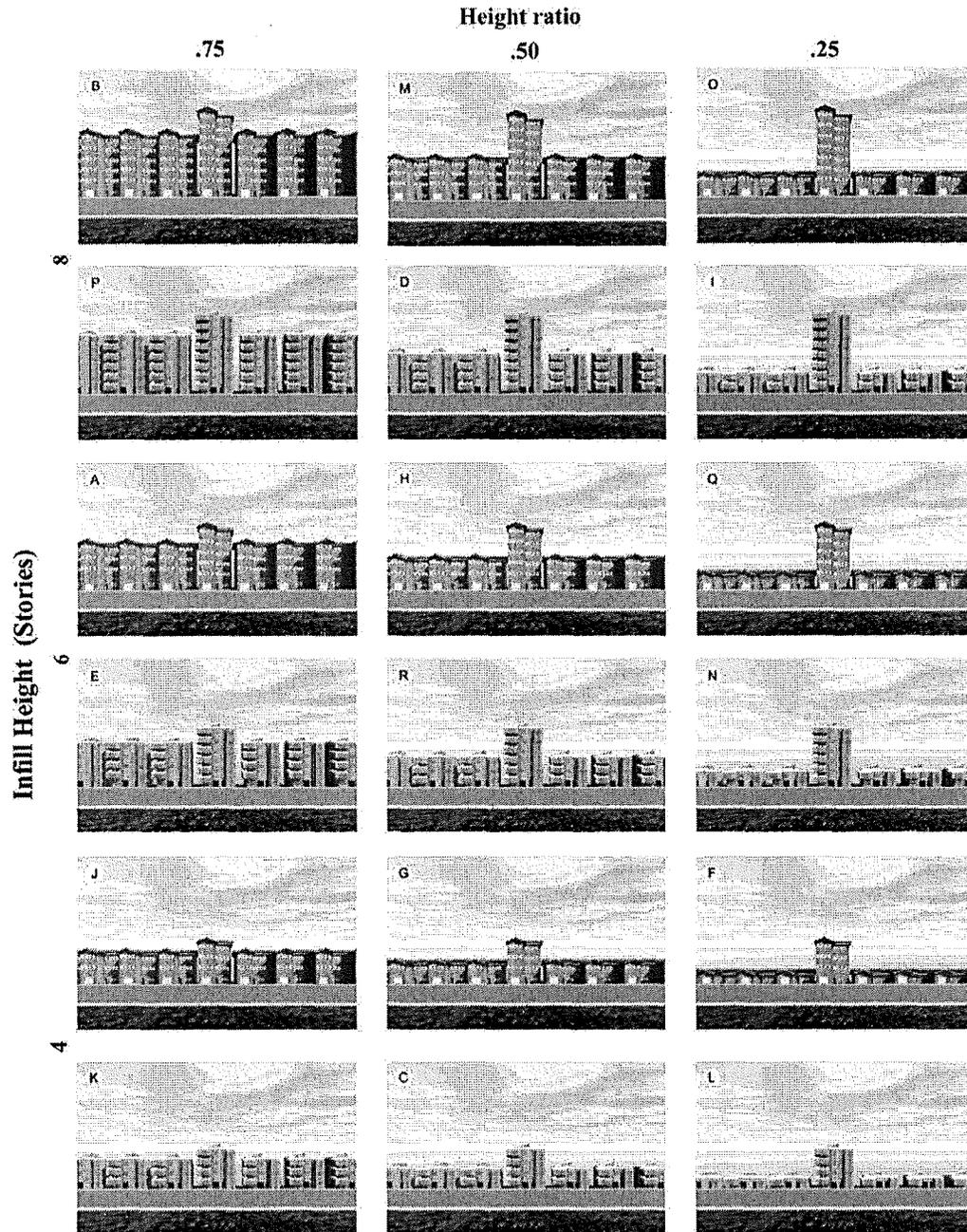


Fig. 6. Study 5 stimuli: infill house varies in height and height ratio.

independent variables. Respondents rated each stimulus on a scale that ranged from 1 (*Dislike*) to 8 (*Like*).

6.2. Results

The results of the within subjects variance component of the general linear model agree with the Weber–Fechner law. The overall effect size for infill height ratio was larger than that for infill height. Height ratio explained 4.5% of the variance ($F(1, 394) = 30.43, p < 0.001$), and infill height explained less than 0.1% of it ($F(1, 394) = 15.35, p < 0.001$).

Table 7 shows the contrasts. Even though the height study included a much larger size than did the width study, infill height did not have a meaningful effect (ds ranged from 0.00 to -0.01). Finally, the comparison of effect sizes of the height ratios in this

study and width in the previous study yielded the expected results. The effect size for infill height ratio was larger ($d = 0.25$ for the contrast between ratio's of 0.25 and 0.75), and it explained more of the variance (4.5%) than did width ratio (1.0%).

6.3. Discussion

In agreement with theory and findings for the vertical dimension (Hayward & Franklin, 1974; Stamps, 2003; Thiel et al., 1986), height emerged as more important than width for infill houses. Infill height ratios had larger effects on visual appeal than did infill width ratio. The findings also agreed with the Weber–Fechner law. Height ratio had a larger effect than absolute height.

Similar to width, and even considering the larger height, absolute infill height had trivial effects on visual appeal. If the findings

Table 7
Study 5 (height) standardized mean contrasts for visual appeal, MSE = 1.84.

Factor	Level	μ	d	r	$F(1, 357)$	α
Infill height ratio	0.75	4.33	0.06	0.03	0.17	0.88
	0.5	4.26				
	0.5	4.26	0.52	0.25	29.30	3e-07
	0.25	3.39				
	0.25	3.39	0.55	0.26	27.41	7e-10
Infill height	4 stories	4.01	0.02	0.01	0.05	0.817
	6	3.97				
	6	3.97	-0.02	-0.01	0.03	0.855
	8	4.00				
	4	4.01	0.01	0.00	0.002	0.969
Style	Sea Ranch	4.26	0.31	0.15	15.74	8e-05
	Ranch	3.72				

for width and height apply to real-world conditions, they suggest that controls of the absolute width or height of infill houses (up to the sizes tested) will not maintain or enhance visual appeal. Earlier studies suggest that the fit of the style to its context is more important for both compatibility and visual appeal. However, controls for the relative size of the infill house to its context, particularly for the condition when an infill house is twice as tall or taller than the existing houses, would be efficacious.

7. Study 6: fittingness of infill style and infill ratio

In the five previous studies, all houses on a block had the same style. In this study, the style of the infill house was either the same or different from the style of the existing houses. As many communities use design review, and in particular for historic districts, we assume that part of that review tries to control the fit of the infill style with its context. How important is the fit of the style to its context? Is it more important to control style than size ratio? In addition to investigating differences in style, this study also varied the infill ratios. As in Studies 2 through 5, it kept distance controlled. The study design allowed a test of the relative importance of infill style and infill ratio (for the smaller ratios), and whether in these conditions compatibility translates into visual appeal. Our previous findings led us to expect that style would have a larger effect than ratio and that compatibility (for these small ratios) would not translate into visual appeal.

7.1. Method

7.1.1. Stimuli and experimental design

Study 6 used similar protocols to Study 2. The stimulus set had the same three infill ratios (1.15, 1.52 and 2.00) used in Study 2, but changed the styles from two compatible styles (Sea Ranch and Ranch) to mixes of popular or nostalgic styles (Sea Ranch, Sea Side), and a "high" or modern style (I Beam). Blocks were constructed using one size of existing house (the smallest size, 7.5 m wide). Infill houses were then inserted into the middle of the block to mix or match style or to have a ratio of existing to new construction. The experimental design had existing style (3) \times infill style (3) \times infill size (3), for a factorial design with 27 stimuli. Because the experimental design was completely balanced, it was possible to estimate how strongly a contrast in style (infill style matches or does not match existing style) by simply looking at the stimuli, deciding which images showed infill styles that matched or did not match the existing style, and subtracting the average responses to images with matching styles from images with different styles. This number then becomes the contrast of same vs. different style. Fig. 7 shows black and white versions of the stimuli.

7.1.2. Respondents

Fifty people participated in Study 5. 25 people (54.2% male, 45.8% female) rated compatibility, and 25 people (56.0% male, 40.0% female, 4% no answer) rated the visual quality. For the compatibility and visual quality respectively, the samples had more Caucasians (80%, 68%) than other racial/ethnic groups (20%, 22%), no children living at home (68.0%, 70.8%), a median family income of \$20,000–\$40,000, and a larger percentage of people with some college (compatibility: 44% some college; 20% college graduate; 12% higher degree; and 24% high school graduate; visual appeal: 66% some college; 20% college graduate; 8% higher degree; 12% high school graduate). The compatibility group had more (58.3%) renters and a somewhat younger sample, mean age 36.6 (13.0 years), while the visual appeal group had more homeowners (66.0%) and a somewhat older group, 42.9 (SD 15.5) years old. Sampling took place in public gathering places, with five or fewer interviews per location.

7.2. Results

Compatibility did translate into visual appeal. Across the 27 stimuli we found a high correlation between the mean values for rated compatibility and rated visual quality ($r = 0.85$, $p < 0.000$).

In addition, the results showed that fittingness made a difference in both compatibility and visual appeal. For compatibility, the fit of the infill style carried the most weight: The within subjects variance component of the general linear model showed that people rated the infill styles that replicated their context as more compatible than those that differed from it ($F(1, 673) = 253.09$, $p < 0.000$). The fit of infill style had the largest effect (explaining 23.7% of the variance), four times larger than the effect of infill ratio (4.8%). Table 8 shows the contrasts for compatibility. For infill style, Same had a higher compatibility score than did Different, representing a medium to large effect size; even though the compatibility of each style did not differ and had trivial effects. For infill ratio, as the ratios increased compatibility scores decreased, representing a small to medium size effect.

Visual appeal showed a similar pattern of response but with smaller effects. The fit of infill style mattered more than infill ratio: the within subjects variance component of the general linear model showed that people judged the infill styles that replicated their context as more appealing than those that differed from it ($F(1, 673) = 71.53$, $p < 0.000$). Style had the larger effect (explaining 8.2% of the variance), while infill ratio explained 0.75% of the variance. Table 9 shows the contrasts. The Different style had a lower visual appeal score than did the Same style. Style had a small to medium-sized effect, while infill ratio had small effects.

7.3. Discussion

Respondents responded primarily to stylistic differences. The fit of the style had large effects on compatibility and medium effects on visual appeal. Relative sizes had medium-sized effects on compatibility but this did not translate into visual appeal, where relative size had small effects. However, as shown in Study 3, larger infill ratios might have larger effects. Still, the results suggest that communities should try to control the fit of the style of the infill building to its context.

8. Summary

Study 1 sought to discover if compatibility translated into visual appeal. It also examined the effect of the ratio of the infill house size to its context, its absolute size, its style, and the distance to it on compatibility and visual appeal. It found that that style dominated (particularly for visual appeal) and that distance made the infill

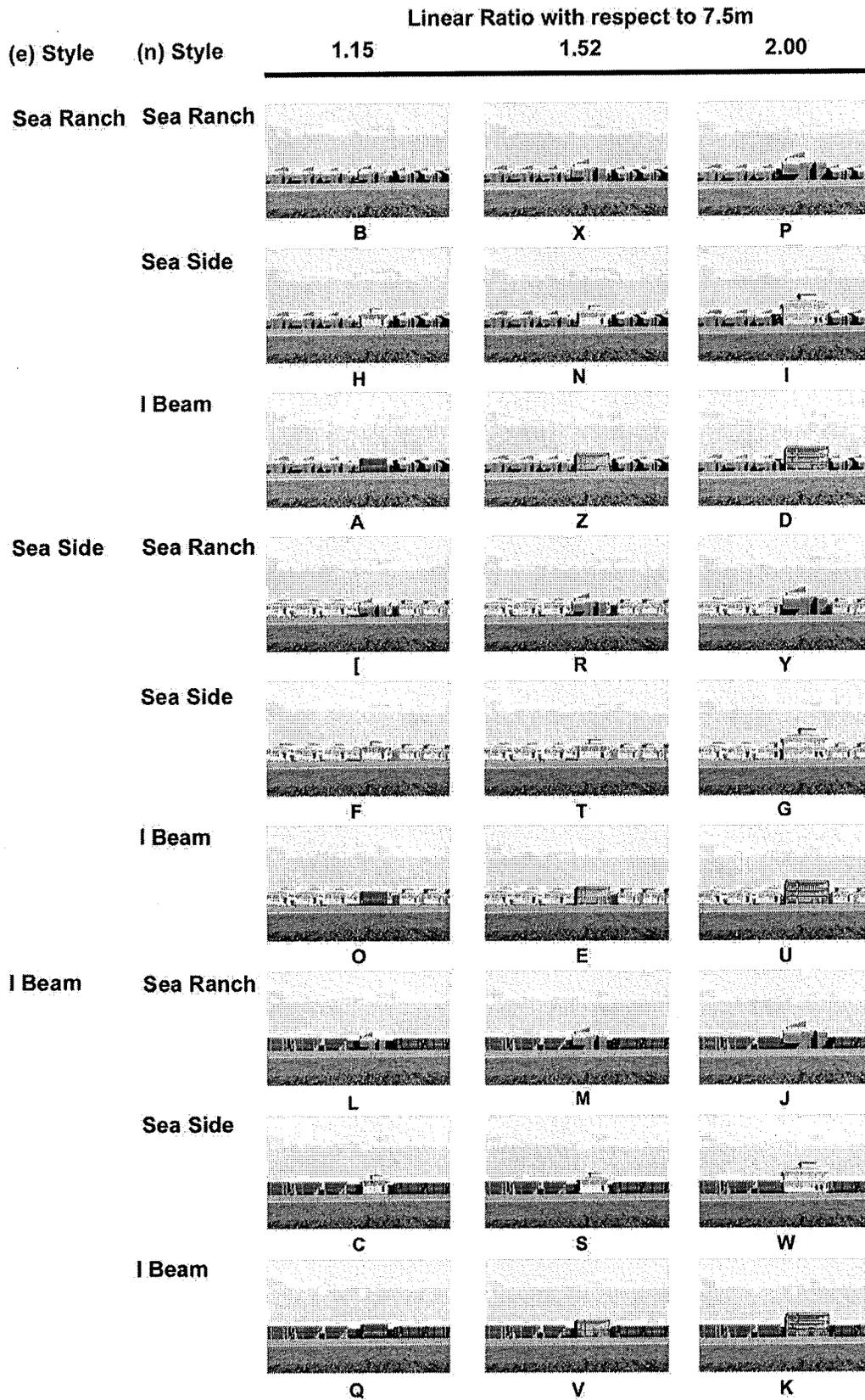


Fig. 7. Study 6 stimuli: infill house varies in size ratio and fit between styles.

Table 8
Study 6 (style fit) standardized mean contrasts for compatibility, MSE = 2.21.

Factor	Levels	μ	d	r	$F(1, 648)$	α
Infill ratio	1.15	3.95	0.10	0.05	1.69	0.19
	1.52	3.76				
	1.52	3.76	0.35	0.17	23.24	1e-6
	2.00	3.09				
	2.00	3.09	0.43	0.21	37.47	1e-9
Infill style	Same	4.82	1.08	0.48	366.65	1e-64
	Different	2.88				
	Sea Side	3.43	-0.26	-0.13	0.18	0.89
	Sea Ranch	3.95				
	Sea Ranch	3.95	0.27	0.13	0.12	0.73
	I Beam	3.43				
	Sea Side	3.42	-0.01	-0.00	0.00	0.95
	I Beam	3.43				

Table 9
Study 6 (style fit) standardized mean contrasts for visual appeal, MSE = 2.15.

Factor	Levels	μ	d	r	$F(1, 648)$	α
Infill style	Same	4.04	0.59	0.28	87.68	1e-19
	Different	3.04				
	Sea Side	3.41	-0.03	0.02	14.36	2e-4
	Sea Ranch	3.47				
	Sea Ranch	3.47	0.02	0.008	0.026	0.87
	I Beam	3.36				
	Sea Side	3.41	0.03	0.01	15.60	1e-4
	I Beam	3.36				
Infill ratio	1.15	3.45	-0.08	-0.04	0.86	0.77
	1.52	3.58				
	1.52	3.58	0.22	0.11	7.63	0.006
	2.00	3.20				
	1.15	3.45	0.14	0.07	3.35	0.07
	2.00	3.20				

houses less disruptive. Study 2 controlled for style and distance and focused on visual appeal to examine the relative importance for visual appeal of the ratio of the size of the infill house to its context and its absolute size. Both Studies 1 and 2 found small effect sizes for the size variables. Study 3 used larger sizes and ratios to test the effect of ratio and absolute size on compatibility and visual appeal, and to see if, at this larger scale, compatibility translated into visual appeal. The results fit expectations. Compatibility did translate into visual appeal, and size ratios had larger size effects than did absolute sizes. Next, we tested the effects of width (Study 4) and height (Study 5) sizes and ratios. Ratios again had the larger effects. Study 6 compared compatibility and visual appeal of house style and house size ratio, and confirmed the relative importance of style.

9. Conclusion

The six studies suggest that style and the fit of infill style to its context affects compatibility and visual appeal. People judge infill styles that fit their context as more compatible and appealing than styles that differ from their context. As for the Weber–Fechner law, ratings of compatibility agreed with its prediction. Infill ratios had larger effects than did infill sizes on compatibility. This effect generalized to visual appeal in two conditions: (1) controls of height ratio; and (2) ratios larger than 2.28. For a more precise understanding of the ratios that matter, research could compare logarithmic ratios with other non-linear functions suggested by psychophysical researchers (Laming, 1991; Stevens, 1936).

For application the findings of the six studies suggest that controls for the contextual fit of the style would have favorable effects on compatibility and visual appeal. Controls for the relative size of the infill house would have favorable effects on compatibility,

and, for ratios larger than 2.28 they would also have favorable effects on visual appeal. Controls of absolute size, whether through size, width, or height, may not be worth the effort. They did not produce any meaningful effect on compatibility or visual appeal.

In five of the studies all existing houses on each test block had the same architectural style and same size. While homogeneous, the simulations are similar to much housing development in the U.S. Due to codes, developer and consumer preferences, many blocks have houses of similar size, with minor variations in style. Nevertheless, infill houses on blocks with more variation in style, setback, vegetation and size of houses may have different effects from those found here. Recall that Stamps (1999a) found that people responded more negatively to a taller building relative to buildings of uniform height than to buildings of mixed heights. Because the effects of style or size ratio relate to the context, we would expect that more variation among the existing houses would reduce the negative effect of infill styles or size ratios. However, neighbors immediately affected on a daily basis by an infill house may react more intensely than the less involved observers tested in these studies. To untangle such real-world issues, one would need to gauge neighbors' reactions to various sizes and styles of infill houses in relation to their real-world context.

In certain historic districts, no tear-down infill house would be desirable. Given the tax benefits of infill houses, and the need of certain cities and inner ring suburbs for additional income, communities may want to find a way to accommodate infill houses without sacrificing appearance. If the findings hold, they suggest that communities should try to maintain stylistic consistency, and limit the size of infill houses to less than roughly twice the size of the neighboring houses. Alternatively, they could simulate the infill house in its context and test responses to see how it affects compatibility and visual quality. A well-designed house may both fit in and contribute to the overall appearance of the block. Subsequent tests of the character of the infill that results from such policies can fine-tune the policy for the particular neighborhood context. This can build a better knowledge base on the perceived evaluative quality of infill houses to maintain or improve the visual appeal of the area to residents and visitors.

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Heather Branigin

From: J4classic@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2014 12:05 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Birchcrest Neighborhood Street Reconstruction

Dear Mayor Hovland

Jim, I am witting to express my thanks for you understanding and support for the repair of the concrete streets in the Birchcrest Neighborhood. I think that you did your best and acted with the best intentions for the residents and the City. I do not feel like I lost the battle. I feel more that the City has lost the battle. After all, I will get a new street.

I totally understand the bias the engineers have for asphalt streets. They can almost always say it is cheaper and easier to install and maintain. But the point was lost in last nights discussion that asphalt has many maintenance steps that are needed to extend its useful life to that of concrete. For example, staff indicated that about every five years, the asphalt street would need to be seal coated. After 15 years it will need a mill and overlay which starts the seal coat process over again. After thirty years the street will need to be replaced.

So what about concrete? In that same thirty year period, concrete streets may need some minor crack and after thirty years some of the concrete may need to be areas replaced which would then extend the life if the street for another thirty years. Fifty to sixty year of service from a concrete street is very typical.

I do agree that there are situations where concrete fails badly such as on Tracy but there is more to that story that should be evaluated to determine why it failed. Putting asphalt back over the street may fail just as fast or faster than the concrete.

Enough, sorry to rattle on but I truly feel that the City will be loosing an asset in exchange for future pot holes and maintenance.

Thanks again for your support.

Judd Rietkerk
6109 Tingdale

Heather Branigin

From: Paul Manley <pmanley@northlandcapitalmarkets.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2014 12:53 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Grandview Property

To the Members of the Edina City Council,

As longtime resident of Edina, I am quite concerned about the Grandview District possible development. I encourage the City Council to vote for proceeding with the Request for Interest which calls for engaging a consultant to look at ideas for the former Public Works site located at Eden Avenue. I strongly oppose the idea of working with a developer as the developer will not take into consideration what our residents want. He will only do what will put the most money into his firms pockets.

I believe our great city of Edina has fallen behind other communities when it comes to a "City Community Center". We need to have a new facility built as our current "Community Center" does not meet standards we should have in Edina. There is also a need for more meeting/class rooms, gyms, and work out facilities.

Sincerely,

Paul Manley
6654 Parkwood Road

Paul M. Manley
Vice President- Institutional Sales
Northland Capital Markets
Direct- 612.851.5948
Cell- 612.834.1804
Trading- 800.851.4595
AOL IM: pmanleyns
pmanley@northlandcapitalmarkets.com



45 South 7th Street Suite 2000
Minneapolis, MN 55402

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Heather Branigin

From: MICHELE VANDERSALL <vmtv@me.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2014 1:59 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Grandview Square

I urge the City to further exploration and refine potential projects and amenities for the former Public Works site before proceeding with a development partner;

Perhaps we could build a school to which ALL EDINA TAXPAYERS' children would have access!

Michele Vandersall
PARKWOOD KNOLLS
vmtv@mac.com
Do good.

Heather Branigin

From: Charles Flinn <charlesflinn3rd@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2014 2:04 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Grand View Input

Dear City Council,

I am asking the Council to delay partnering with a private developer until the potential community uses for the GrandView site are thoroughly analyzed. I believe that the site should be redeveloped with full input from the Edina community.

I personally am frustrated with the lack of restaurant options in the Edina area west of highway 100. I also believe at least part of the redevelopment of the Grandview area should include casual restaurants that cater to families. As a father of two teens I also a strong supporter of including space where teens could gather.

Thank you,
Charles Flinn

Heather Branigin

From: Jasmine Hoedeman <jhoedeman@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2014 2:51 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Opinion on Grandview Square

I understand that there is some potential decisions being made on a partner to help develop this unused city property. I wanted to express my thoughts, ideas & concerns:

1. I do not think the city should elect a “partner” until there is SPECIFIC direction and agreement from the city taxpayers on the space use (ie, community center, etc)
2. I am concerned about the school bus depot being moved & the cost this would cause taxpayers – I live in the Hopkins school district & I cannot understand why Edina schools will not allow our area to annex but wants EVERYONE to cover the costs of moving the public school bus depot. And, is this really necessary?
3. I look at other communities around ours & see so many new facilities popping up that not only serve the community directly, but also through revenue-generating options (ie, pool passes, space rental, etc).

Thank you for your time.

Jasmine Hoedeman (5017 Kelsey Terrace, Edina)

Heather Branigin

From: Rosalie Goldberg <riw1121@earthlink.net>
Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2014 5:11 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Re: Birchcrest B Neighborhood Roadway Reconstruction

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.
--Rosalie and Fred Goldberg--
P.S. Sorry you hit my spamblocker!!

On Apr 21, 2014, at 9:05 AM, Edina Mail wrote:

Dear Rosalie and Fred,

Thank you for your interest in the City of Edina.

I have forwarded your message to Mayor Hovland.
If I can be of additional assistance to you please contact me.

 **Lynette Biunno, Receptionist**
952-927-8861 | Fax 952-826-0389
lbiunno@EdinaMN.gov | www.EdinaMN.gov
...For Living, Learning, Raising Families & Doing Business

From: Rosalie Goldberg [<mailto:riw1121@earthlink.net>]
Sent: Sunday, April 20, 2014 10:45 PM
To: Edina Mail; Mary Brindle; jonibennett12@comcast.net; joshsprague@edinarealty.com; swensonann1@gmail.com
Cc: Mike and Linda Dammon; mdamman@hotmail.com; Fred Goldberg; Bonnie LeRoy; Shelly Kanwar
Subject: Birchcrest B Neighborhood Roadway Reconstruction

Dear Mayor Hovland and Members of the City Council,

I am writing in response to the notification, received on Saturday, April 19, 2014, of the presentation of recommendations for the street project in our neighborhood to the City Council on Tuesday, April 22, 2014.

I was in attendance at the council meeting back in December that discussed the various road projects that are occurring this summer where we were allowed to offer our opinions. Unfortunately, I had to leave before I could offer comments as it was a work night for me and the meeting ran very late.

Although we have only lived in the neighborhood for the past 7 years, my husband and I are very displeased with the idea of replacing our concrete roads with bituminous. We are also upset that we will be assessed approximately \$12,000 for a project that does not seem to be a wise choice for our neighborhood.

Our preference is the option to repair the concrete roads instead and are in complete agreement with the email that was sent to you by Linda and Mike Damman. Repair of the concrete seems to be a much better option as well as a much better long-term solution for our neighborhood.

We urge you to select Schedule A and Schedule C as the best path forward for those who live on and use these streets on a daily basis.

Respectfully and sincerely,

Rosalie and Fred Goldberg
6104 Tingdale Ave.

Heather Branigin

From: Vickman, Scott J. (US - Minneapolis) <svickman@deloitte.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2014 5:22 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Grandview District Development

To the Members of the Edina City Council,

I am writing to you with respect to an upcoming decision to be made by the Edina City Council regarding the Grandview District development. I would like to ask the City Council to vote in favor of proceeding with the Request for Interest which calls for engaging a consultant to further refine the type of potential projects to consider for the former Public Works site located at 5146 Eden Avenue. I understand, based on the results of the resident survey conducted by Morris Leatherman in January 2014, the "Community Facility Inventory for the Grandview District Project" completed in February 2014, and the majority opinion of the Grandview District Community Advisory Team, there is much more work that needs to be done to define the best public amenities for this city-owned site before proceeding with a private sector development partner.

There are clearly a wide range of possible uses for this valuable site. I personally find the concept of a city-owned fitness center/workout facility or children's indoor play and recreation area to be the most intriguing. Therefore, it is premature to engage with a private developer before the needs of the site have been more fully defined by the community.

I hope you take this into consideration and take the time to make the right decision for all of the citizens of Edina and their interests.

Sincerely,

Scott Vickman
5029 Green Farms Road

*******Any tax advice included in this written or electronic communication was not intended or written to be used, and it cannot be used by the taxpayer, for the purpose of avoiding any penalties that may be imposed on the taxpayer by any governmental taxing authority or agency*******

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v.T.1

Heather Branigin

From: Bruce Jacobson <bjacobson@cunningham.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2014 9:18 AM
To: Edina Mail; Scott Neal
Cc: 'Bob Close'
Subject: FW: Highway air rights project
Attachments: Commissioner Zelle Letter, Fisher.pdf

Mayor Hovland and Mr. Neal;

Good morning – the key messages I hope to convey via this email include:

1 – through participation with the Minneapolis Downtown Council 2025 Plan / Development Committee, we have had an opportunity to study an aggressive, but feasible strategy to capture and/or create unused land adjacent to and over the top of the major freeway connections throughout the metro area

2 – this pilot project/study brings focus to a potential land bridge/connection between the U of M and downtown Minneapolis (also connecting Cedar Riverside)

3 – one of the Architecture/Urban Design Studios at the U (led by Mic Johnson – interim Director of the Metropolitan Design Center) modeled this downtown district and provided a much more detailed baseline for further analysis

4 – at the same time, Bob Close and I were asked to participate with Mic and Tom Fisher as Research Fellows at the Metropolitan Design Center

5 – all of this led to a series of meetings with key stakeholders including Commissioner Zelle, President Kayler, CPED Leadership and others – hosted by Tom Fisher and the Metropolitan Design Center Team . . . please read the attached letter from Tom Fisher to Commissioner Zelle to get a sense of where this is heading

6 – a preliminary financial feasibility study has been prepared by Jones Lang Lasalle; presenting some very compelling numbers that not only support this project, but also illustrate how this strategy might be applied to other locations around the Metro

7 – the Grandview District Development Framework included recommendations for a pedestrian bridge connection over Highway 100 and also (through meetings with MnDot as part of the planning process) talked about closing/reconfiguring some of the highway ramps based on safety, access, land value/revenue generation and other considerations

8 – the Metropolitan Design Center (including Bob and myself) is prepared to offer assistance to further explore possibilities for bridging the freeway, capturing underutilized land, perhaps also integrating transit/parking and other infrastructure needs for the district and the surrounding neighborhoods

Bob and I would like to meet with you (no more than an hour of your time) to show you the East Downtown Minneapolis 'Pilot Project', the financial report, and then talk about how this might support/enhance objectives for redevelopment of the Grandview District.

Are you interested and can we set up a time to meet?

Thanks for your kind attention to this email!

Regards, Bruce

From: Tom Fisher [<mailto:tfisher@umn.edu>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2014 5:37 PM
To: charlie.zelle@state.mn.us
Cc: Mic Johnson
Subject: Highway air rights project

Dear Charlie,

Please see the attached letter as a follow-up to our conversation about leveraging the air rights above our urban highways. Let us know if this is something that you would be interested in further exploring.

Best,

Tom

--

Thomas Fisher, Professor and Dean

College of Design
University of Minnesota
101 Rapson Hall
89 Church Street S.E.
Minneapolis, MN 55455

612-626-9068 - telephone
612-625-7525 - fax
tfisher@umn.edu - email
www.design.umn.edu - web
[@MnDesignDean](https://twitter.com/MnDesignDean) - Twitter

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Twin Cities Campus

College of Design

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*Office: 612-626-9068
Fax: 612-625-7525
www.design.tmm.edu*

April 23, 2014

Charles Zelle, Commission
Minnesota Department of Transportation
Transportation Building
395 John Ireland Blvd
St. Paul, MN 55155-1899

Dear Charlie:

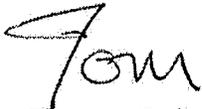
Thank you, again, for your interest in the highway air-rights project over I-35W between Downtown East and the West Bank. We really appreciate you and your staff taking the time to visit the Metropolitan Design Center to give us your input on the project and your supportive remarks at the event in the IDS Crystal Court.

We would like to explore with you how the University might help MnDOT realize the full potential of the highway right-of-ways and air rights under your control. We believe that this work could solve many challenges simultaneously, including raising revenues for road and infrastructure repair and improvement without having to raise taxes, improving the value of the land and the health of the people living and working next to our urban highways, increasing the amount of open space and population densities in our cities without interfering with existing neighborhoods, and stitching back together the communities divided by our highways 50 years ago.

If you think this is worth exploring, we would welcome a chance to discuss how we might move this work forward with your help and do a study with your staff that would be of greatest value to you. We can leverage the diversity of disciplines at the University needed to do such a study, including applied economics, architecture, civil engineering, landscape architecture, public policy, transportation planning, and urban design. And we can build on the relationships we have already created with public- and private-sector partners, ranging from city staff to companies like Jones Lang Lasalle and Ericksen Roed & Associates

Thank you, again, for your interest in this work and we look forward to hearing your thoughts about this idea.

Sincerely,



Thomas Fisher
Professor and Dean

Cc: Mic Johnson

April 25, 2014

Mayor Jim Hovland
Edina City Hall
4801 W. 50TH ST.
EDINA, MN 55424

RE: Olinger Boulevard Pavement Rehabilitation

Dear Mayor Hovland,

The purpose of this correspondence is to strongly object to the proposal to add bike lanes to Olinger Boulevard as a part of the rehabilitation of the pavement.

As outlined in the attached letter from the Director of Engineering, the installation of bike lanes would eliminate parking on Olinger Boulevard. This proposal makes little sense from a safety perspective or a transportation perspective and is a major inconvenience to those of us who live on this street.

From a transportation perspective, there is already a bike path in Bredesen and Countryside Parks that run almost the full length of the street in question. Does it really make sense to add a bike lane when there is a path less than one-hundred feet away?

From a safety perspective, do we really want to encourage more people to bike on what already is a busy street, with cars that often exceed the speed limit, as opposed to having folks bike on a safe paved bike path in the parks mentioned above?

Finally, as you know parking is already restricted to one side of Olinger Boulevard. While this is inconvenient, those of us who live along this street understand it is price we pay for living across the street from Bredesen Park. The complete elimination of parking on Olinger would be troublesome at best. It is already difficult for residents and guests to find parking on Olinger. In addition, regular home maintenance efforts such as snow removal, garage cleaning, yard work etc. will now become more difficult if not impossible.

It would seem to me that we have learned very little if anything from the attempt to put bike lanes on another busy street (Wooddale). In the case of Olinger Boulevard the problem would only be exacerbated by the fact that traffic is already fast paced, there is a biking alternative, and parking is already limited.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Kevin Kajer
6012 Olinger Blvd
Edina, MN 55436

Cc: Mark Nolan
Chad Miller



Olinger Boulevard Pavement Rehabilitation (Vernon Ave to Tracy Ave)

April 21, 2014

Dear Resident:

This summer, the pavement along Olinger Boulevard from Vernon Ave to Tracy Ave will be rehabilitated. We will be using a technique called mill and overlay which means we mill off the top few inches of pavement and place a new layer in its place.

In the City's Comprehensive Plan, Olinger Boulevard is a primary bike route. As part of this work, staff is considering adding bike lanes. In order to accomplish installation of bike lanes, parking on Olinger Boulevard would be eliminated.

Please plan to attend a meeting to provide feedback on bike lane installation and parking:

Thursday, May 1, 5-6:30 p.m.
Public Works and Park Maintenance Facility
7450 Metro Blvd

If you're not able to attend the meeting but would like to provide feedback, please contact Mark Nolan at mnolan@EdinaMN.gov or 952.826.0322 or me at cmillner@EdinaMN.gov or 952-826-0318.

Sincerely,

Chad A. Millner, PE
Director of Engineering

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

7450 Metro Boulevard • Edina, Minnesota 55439
www.EdinaMN.gov • 952-826-0371 • Fax 952-826-0392

Heather Branigin

From: Werbalowsky, Jeffrey <JWerbalowsky@HL.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2014 3:15 PM
To: Edina Mail
Cc: 'K B Montgomery'; mary werbalowsky; Lou Ann
Subject: Grandview Project

Edina City Council Members:

I appreciate your efforts on the Grandview development. I commend you for soliciting community involvement and creating an "inclusive" process that has played out over the last several years. However we have not made a lot of progress notwithstanding these efforts to arrive at a galvanizing community or governmental vision on an immediate action plan, while the property that we all hope will advance the quality of life in Edina remains empty. That's a frustrating and unacceptable place to be after all of this time, and I am personally sympathetic to those who say "let's let a private developer give us their plans for the space to move us from this status quo." We need a PLAN, and a private developer will certainly provide one which we can modify, debate, or accept.

However (and you knew there would be an however), that appears to me and many others I have discussed this with a substantially inferior approach to determining the optimal public utilization of the space, and then requesting development partners who could work within those parameters. Some might say that we have tried that route, per the above paragraph, and failed. I would agree. However that process has hopefully set the stage for a community inspired plan to be rapidly set forth by a consultant to be hired by the city who would synthesize the various opinions extant and come back with a definitive plan for Grandview. I have debated this with my friend Kim Montgomery who I salute for her substantial zeal and efforts, and have told her I would not support another consultant who could come in and give some ideas and input to provide some more perspectives for debate and public discussion. ENOUGH. As in any complex project, NO ONE will be satisfied, and NO ONE will agree on everything if enough constituencies are involved and solicited for their input. Someone needs to take all the ideas, the good and the bad, the best perception of public needs and wants, talk to you and the other key decision makers and dedicated input providers, put a sharp eye on the financial issues and the public's revulsion for tax increases, and come up with a plan. One plan. It is possible that some will complain and pillory the consultant and you whatever it says (I know this is not a surprise)-but it's better than an empty lot which is what we will have after a developer comes in and suggests their value maximizing approach-even if sensitive to community issues-and hordes rise up in horror. That approach, however well-intentioned and executed (and I question how much real work a developer will put into something this contested, ephemeral and contingent), has a substantially lesser chance of creating a galvanizing plan than a consultant based approach with the right consultant. It's not impossible, but it is much less likely in my opinion.

I challenged Kim on this issue (and many others beyond the scope of this letter) and opined that consultants consult rather than show leadership in creating a plan like this in my experience, but she represented that within SIX months the consultant used by Vancouver when faced with a similar challenge:

“using an open community process, created the following: market analysis, concept design, programming, site evaluation, expense (capital and operating) and revenue projections as well as a funding plan for a community center”.

That is exactly what we need. Six months to a comprehensive plan, presentation to you, community comments, maybe some tweaking, and then we have a PLAN that you can adopt, take out to private developers and ask for their ideas, refinements, bids, etc. Break ground in a year from today (my timing aspirations are unsupportable I assume, but unless you set the bar high no one jumps). All disappointments will be hopefully washed away by a lot of happy citizens. The sin is not the failure to have the perfect Grandview project, it's the failure to have any Grandview project. The social costs of inaction are more substantial than any “mistake” we could make following the process above. I don't know what such a consultancy would cost, but maybe we could go to the Edina Community Foundation where we are contributors to defray some expense if they are daunting. That appears to me both the success maximizing and time minimizing approach, and I wish you all luck in getting to a great result here for Edina.

Jeffrey Werbalowsky
Co-Chairman

HOULIHAN LOKEY
612.215.2240 Direct
612.338.2910 Main
JWerbalowsky@HL.com

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April 25, 2014

Mayor Jim Hovland
Edina City Hall
4801 W. 50TH ST.
EDINA, MN 55424

RE: Olinger Boulevard Pavement Rehabilitation

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Sincerely,



Kevin Kajer
6012 Olinger Blvd
Edina, MN 55436

Cc: Mark Nolan
Chad Miller



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April 21, 2014

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Sincerely,

Chad A. Millner, PE
Director of Engineering

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

7450 Metro Boulevard • Edina, Minnesota 55439
www.EdinaMN.gov • 952-826-0371 • Fax 952-826-0392

Heather Branigin

From: liza schwab <lcschwab@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, April 26, 2014 2:56 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Proposed 6 story apartment building

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Good Afternoon,

I really hope you all don't read emails on weekends! I was just on the website trying to find some more information and plans about the proposed redevelopment on the border of Edina/Richfield where the current Borofka's Furniture is located.

I live less than a block away and am planning on attending the city hall meeting on May 6th, but I would like to be as fully informed as possible about what is being proposed and to help my neighbors separate rumors from facts so we are informed.

We are all deeply concerned about this as Xerxes is already extremely busy and it has become increasingly difficult for families with children to send them, safely, across the street to Cub to get things and our seniors have had difficulties crossing because of traffic and the amount of cars that now park on Xerxes and many have just stopped walking to Cub and started driving instead to be safer.

It has been a few years now that we have been able to see what the other redevelopment has done on the corner of 69th and Xerxes/York and it has increased traffic significantly into Richfield, CVS even has their people pour out of their driveway into Richfield. 69th used to be a 'sleepy' street that is now even difficult to cross in a vehicle during rush hour times and such, especially when you have France and Crosstown torn up.

As you can tell, I have a lot of concerns and few answers, so if you could either forward me the information/plans on what has been proposed, I would appreciate it, so I can be most prepared for speaking at the city hall meeting on the 6th of May.

Enjoy your weekend!

Liza Schwab

The Outspoken Mom

Wife, Mother, and Blogger Extraordinaire

lcschwab@comcast.net

www.outspokenmomblog.com

Heather Branigin

From: Ken Potts <KPotts@mcgough.com>
Sent: Saturday, April 26, 2014 5:00 PM
To: Edina Mail
Cc: michael.platteter@target.com; claudiaj.carr@yahoo.com
Subject: Tree Ordinance

Dear City Council,

I am writing with enthusiastic support for the tree ordinance developed by Planning Commissioners Carr and Platteter. This is a well thought out ordinance that supports the goals of the City to protect our natural resources.

Once a mature tree is lost, it cannot be replaced. A great deal of the character of Edina is due to our stock of mature trees both on private and public land. They need protection and this ordinance is one important step in the right direction.

Please vote "yes."

Thank you,
Ken Potts

Heather Branigin

From: Iyer, Surya <IyerS@polarsemi.com>
Sent: Monday, April 28, 2014 8:31 AM
To: Edina Mail; 'Joni Bennett'; 'swensonann1@gmail.com'; 'joshsprague@edinarealty.com'; Mary Brindle
Cc: 'Michael.Platteter'
Subject: RE: Planning Commission Tree Ordinance

I apologize for the duplicate email – I realized I had some very old email addresses and wanted to be sure that this gets to your current emails.

Thanks
Surya

From: Iyer, Surya
Sent: Monday, April 28, 2014 8:24 AM
To: 'James Hovland'; 'Joni Bennett'; 'Ann Swenson'; 'Mary Brindle'; 'Sprague, Joshua S'
Cc: 'Michael.Platteter'
Subject: Planning Commission Tree Ordinance

Honorable Mayor / Council Members:

I am writing to you in support of the Tree Ordinance proposed by the Planning Commission – as proposed by Commissioners Platteter and Carr.

I wish I could have testified in-person on May 6th but I am in Vermont on business on that day.

As a former chair/member of the EEC, I strongly believe that the ordinance is a step in the right direction to control and protect the tree cover in Edina – an essential component of environmental protection.

My understanding is that the residential working group of the PC put in a tremendous amount of effort that included substantial community input to come up with this ordinance.

This ordinance does a few things that (to me) are very crucial – (1) highlight tree protection as a priority for City hall and residents, (2) allow for data collection that is crucial towards making intelligent decisions going forward to further improve our tree cover, (3) suggests practical categorization and replacement options.

I give kudos to the PC team for coming up with an ordinance that will be effective, enforceable, and practical. Please consider this ordinance favorably and approve it when it comes before you.

Respectfully,
Surya Iyer

Surya Iyer, PhD
6621 Southcrest Drive, Edina, MN 55435
612-309-2392

This e-mail and any attachments may contain confidential and privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender immediately by return e-mail, delete this e-mail and destroy any

Heather Branigin

From: Ed Schwartzbauer <ejsbauer@peoplepc.com>
Sent: Monday, April 28, 2014 10:37 AM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Performing Arts

Dear Jim (Mayor Hovland)

An article in the Sun newspaper about two weeks ago discussed the ongoing question of what to do with the former public works site on Eden Avenue. The article mentioned your interest in a performing arts center. I am writing (belatedly) to second that idea.

I have often thought Edina should have more facilities for the arts, to complement its many facilities for sports. Bloomington has its main stage Schneider Theater where several groups perform, i.e., The Bloomington Civic Theater and many other groups, such as the Medalist Concert Band, the Angelica Cantati Youth choir, the Bloomington Chorale, etc., and it has its Black Box Theater for small serious productions. I assume most of these pay rent. There are also many small theater groups in the Twin Cities that would rent an Edina arts center for their productions, for example the Frank Theater which seems to play in a different theater building for every play. In April, they produced the Three-Penny Opera at the Southern Theater at Seven Corners. A few years ago, Frank had to rent space in the old Sears building on Lake Street. So an Edina Center could be the source of revenue producing events that do not necessarily connect with Edina.

A performing arts center could be combined with a new art center, as Bloomington has done. And Edina should have a community theater. Several years ago, an Edina teacher produced the play "The Sound of Music" and called the production one by the Edina Community Theater, which, of course, didn't really exist. I was already too old to play Captain von Trapp, though I would have loved to play it--instead I got the non-singing role of Franz, the butler. Several young Edina wives were thrilled to have the chance to be on stage (they played both nuns and aristocrats).

This year, the Edina Chorale had only one concert in Edina (at the Colonial Church) and must go to Hopkins for its May production. This would seem to be a situation which calls for a survey of art-centered organizations to see whether they want more space and would use a performing arts center if one were built. But in the meantime, nothing should be done that would preclude the use of the land for this purpose. I would hate to see the last piece of public land sold off for another apartment.

If a new performing arts hall were to be built, perhaps it should be a joint public/private venture, and solicitations be made throughout the community for pledges. I hope there is support within the council for such a venture.

Edward J. Schwartzbauer
6085 Lincoln Drive
Edina, MN 55436
952/935-4205

Heather Branigin

From: AKKajer <akkajer@earthlink.net>
Sent: Monday, April 28, 2014 10:46 AM
To: Edina Mail; jonibennett12@comcast.net; Mary Brindle (Comcast);
joshsprague@edinareality.com; swensonann1@gmail.com
Cc: Mark K. Nolan; Chad Millner
Subject: NO BIKE LANE on OLINGER

Dear Mayor Hovland and City Council members,

My name is Andrea Hart Kajer and I live at 6012 Olinger Blvd. I am writing to oppose adding bike lanes to Olinger Blvd.

My family built this house in 1968 at a time when Olinger was a gravel dead end road with the hopes of lake Killarney across the street. Now, raising my family in the same house, I have watched it grow into a very busy street. I have also worked in municipal government for 20 years so I truly understand the tough choices a city needs to make and I am an avid biker myself.

Currently there is a bike lane in Bredesen park that runs nearly the full length of the proposed bike lane. I believe that would serve the goals you are trying to meet.

For me as a life long resident of Edina, I believe a side walk on the park land across the street would better serve people wanting to walk along the park. Cars go by so fast, there is not a safe way to even walk your dog except walking in the street. A few well marked crosswalks would assist people trying to get into the park. Changing the speed limit to 25 would also help those of us in the neighborhood.

Parking is already restricted to one side of Olinger. Completely eliminating all parking is just out of the question and an unworkable solution.

I will not be able to attend the hearing on May 2 but please know I am totally against this proposal.

Thank you,
Andrea Hart Kajer

Heather Branigin

From: Virginia Kearney <vmkearney@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, April 28, 2014 6:49 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: For the City Council

To the City Council,

I am writing to request that the city council issue an RFI for a **consultant-lead, community-based process under the guidance of the current CAT to first define the public uses for the former public works site in GrandView** and to stop the process to select a developer partner.

I see the need in this community for a true Community Center. The former site of the Public Works offers a huge opportunity to house a community center in a publicly owned, centrally located space. Please do not let this valuable piece of land fall out of public hands.

Virginia Kearney
4226 Grimes Ave. S.
Edina, MN 55416

Heather Branigin

From: Megan Uland <megan.ulland@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 29, 2014 2:16 PM
To: Edina Mail; jonibennett12@comcast.net; Mary Brindle (Comcast);
joshsprague@edinarealty.com; swensonann1@gmail.com
Subject: Olinger Blvd Resurfacing Project from Vernon to Tracy Ave

Hello,

As a newer resident of Edina, I think it's important that I contact the city council regarding the resurfacing project that is set for Olinger Blvd. I am very disappointed to hear that the parking is going to be taken away from Olinger Blvd. I strongly feel it will negatively affect the property values of the houses in the area around Bredesen Park as well as negatively affects the quality of life of the neighborhood residents. Below is the email I sent to Chad Millner. I want to strongly urge you to stop this project from negatively affecting our neighborhood. Please do **not** take away parking on Olinger Blvd. It is also critical that we start putting in sidewalks around the neighborhood to keep our children safe as they walk to school and each other's houses.

Thank you,
Megan

Dear Mr. Nolan and Mr. Millner,

We received the letter from the city of Edina regarding the Olinger Boulevard Pavement Rehabilitation project yesterday and though I can't attend the meeting in May, I wanted to write with my concerns regarding the project.

First, let me say that I am fully in support of city action to make bikers and pedestrians safer in our neighborhoods, on our streets and sidewalks and throughout our city. That said, installing bike lanes on Olinger is a terrible idea for traffic patterns and the safety of the kids who live in our neighborhood. For starters, there is a bike trail along Bredesen that can and should be used for bikers going northbound around Olinger. But, more importantly, if you eliminate the parking on Olinger Blvd, the natural outcome will force traffic trying to access Bredesen park as well as traffic coming to the houses on Olinger onto the residential streets that abut Olinger. We live on Jeff Place. One of the reasons we bought the house was that there was limited traffic on the block and few, if any, cars parked on our street. That means safer streets for our kids. This is critical for me and my family because our young kids walk to and from school every day and there are no sidewalks between our house and Countryside Elementary school. So, for our children to get to school, they **must** walk in the street. By eliminating parking along an already designated busier through street, you would inevitably force cars onto the streets like 61st and Jeff Place. That causes more harm than good.

The bikes and cars share the road now and I continue to believe they can share the road without a designated lane. I am very respectful of bikes as I drive but, probably more importantly, I am respectful of the road signs and rules/laws when I bike as well. That cannot be said for all bikers (as well as those runners who feel it is easier for them to run in the street, which in itself causes safety problems around Olinger and Tracy where there actually **are** sidewalks). I think that by adding a bike lane, you create a dynamic in which the bikes no longer actually pay attention to cars as much that would cause more problems.

Please do not take away the parking on Olinger Boulevard when you repave the road. If you are going to do any improvements of the road other than repave, I would rather see the money and time spent putting in sidewalks on the east side of Olinger making it safer for kids to walk to each other's houses as well as to and from school. It's time to keep our kids safe and encourage them to be walking instead of driving everywhere.

As one more note, in the year we've lived here, I have only ever seen a handful of bikes on Olinger, which, to me, means the numbers do not merit a bike lane replacing the parking.

Thank you,

Megan

Heather Branigin

From: Ken Potts <KPotts@mcgough.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 29, 2014 5:21 PM
To: Scott Neal; Edina Mail
Cc: David Fisher; Cary Teague; RKnutson@ck-law.com; Chad Millner; Heather Beal (constellationcreate@comcast.net)
Subject: Follow up to your response dated 4/17/14
Attachments: 4 29 14 Scott Neal.pdf; Complaint response from City 04 17 14.pdf

Scott,

Attached are followup questions which you invited in your response to us, thank you.

I have cc'd the same individuals and ask that this message and attachments be distributed to Council. Attached is a signed version of our letter (text follows) and a copy of the letter to which it responds for reference purposes.

Ken Potts

Dear Scott,

The City's response to our written complaint leaves us with mixed feelings. On one hand we are happy to hear the City has changed its process for plan review to conform to State Code. On the other hand, the response to many of the other items only emphasizes the poor information you have been receiving internally. Following is a summary of erroneous items in your response followed by facts that are supported by documents available at City Hall (either part of City Code or in the project file).

Item 4 states that City Code Section 830.06F has not been enforced "because it has not been practical to do so."

When does inconvenience become an excuse to not enforce a code section?

Item 5 states that the "contractor has repaired and reinstalled the diversions each time they have failed and also cleaned those areas."

In reality, REFINED's actions to correct damage to our property has been poor. Over the past days and weeks, water has continued to spill off the 4238 Crocker Ave property and dump silt against our foundation. Repair and cleaning has not taken place "each time they have failed."

Item 7 states that the "permit expires six months after the last act of work completed at the site."

This is not supported by Section 830.07 Issuance of Permit Subd 2 which states that the permit "shall be nontransferable and shall expire six months from date of issuance."

Item 8 implies that REFINED has been proactive in conferring with City staff when there are changes to the site plan.

If you refer to correspondence you will see that the City had to request a revised site plan once the City realized that construction was out of conformance with the approved plans. The City then allowed REFINED to take nearly two months to submit a revised site plan (and then accepted one that did not meet the City's own site plan requirements).

Item 9 states that the drainage review was overseen by a licensed professional at the City.

There is no evidence of this. Such a review is to be indicated with a stamp and signature.

Item 10 states that code compliance is demonstrated "per the plans submitted as part of the building permit."

Different documents in the original submission contain conflicting information and this was never caught by either REFINED or the City. The only way the plans submitted comply is if the City ignores the grades shown on the grading plan. And it is the "proposed final grade" that is the measure of conformance.

Item 11 states that the "Building Official has discretion to approve the variances." "The Building Official reviewed the proposed retaining walls and approved construction..."

Note that the Building Official reviewed AND APPROVED for construction a set of plans (June 3, 2013) that did not indicate ANY retaining wall along the shared property line in question. If a variance is granted, either by discretion or public process, there should be a record of such variance (especially to an IRC provision). There is no such record in the file.

We continue to maintain that the process is severely compromised and needs to be corrected in short order so that quality of life, not to mention public safety, can be protected in the City of Edina.

Ken Potts (and Heather Beal)

Heather Beal and Ken Potts
4236 Crocker Ave
Edina, MN 55416
April 29, 2014

Scott Neal
City Manager, City of Edina
4801 W. 50th Street
Edina, MN 55424

Dear Scott,

The City's response to our written complaint leaves us with mixed feelings. On one hand we are happy to hear the City has changed its process for plan review to conform to State Code. On the other hand, the response to many of the other items only emphasizes the poor information you have been receiving. Following is a summary of erroneous items in your response followed by facts that are supported by documents available at City Hall (either part of City Code or in the project file).

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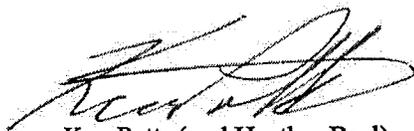
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Note that the Building Official reviewed AND APPROVED for construction a set of plans (June 3, 2013) that did not indicate ANY retaining wall along the shared property line in question. If a variance is granted, either by discretion or public process, there should be a record of such variance (especially to an IRC provision). There is no such record in the file.

We continue to maintain that the process is severely compromised and needs to be corrected in short order so that quality of life, not to mention public safety, can be protected in the City of Edina.

Sincerely,



Ken Potts (and Heather Beal)
4236 Crocker Ave residents since 1993
Property ID: **07-028-24-42-0055**

Cc: Mayor and City Council Members
Roger Knutson, City Attorney
David Fisher, Building Official
Cary Teague, Community Development Director
Chad Millner, City Engineer



April 17, 2014

Heather Beal and Ken Potts
4236 Crocker Avenue
Edina, MN 55416

RE: March 26, 2014 Formal Complaint

Dear Heather and Ken;

The City received a formal written complaint from you on March 26, 2014 regarding the City's regulatory oversight of the ongoing construction project at 4238 Crocker Avenue. This letter is the City's response to your complaint. I will repeat and concisely respond to each observation, allegation or claim from your complaint.

1. The construction documents on file at City Hall for the project at 4238 Crocker do not have a stamp with the appropriate date and written statement pursuant to MN Code 1300.0130(6).

City Response: City staff have remedied this situation with a new manner of documenting the transmission and credential information. The remedy was implemented on April 14, 2014.

2. The City has not enforced the provisions of City Code section 830.06(A) by allowing additional fill materials to be imported to the site.

City Response: This element of this project is regulated by the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD). City staff has verified that the project has a valid permit from the (MCWD).

3. The City has not enforced the provisions of City Code section 830.06(E) by allowing the building contractor to disturb too much of the existing grading of the site.

City Response: The standard in City Code is that the building contractor may disturb no more than the smallest amount of the site as practicable at any one time. In our judgment, the building contractor complied with the intent of this Code section.

4. The City has not enforced the provisions of City Code section 830.06(F) by allowing the building contractor to have the site ungraded for a period of time in excess of sixty days.

City Response: The City acknowledges that the building contractor had exposed grading on the site for a time period in excess of 60 days. It has not been the operating practice of the City, however, to enforce this provision of City Code for single family lots because it has not been practicable to do so. Because the City had not previously enforced this Code provision on single family home redevelopment sites, the City's legal counsel advised us not to enforce it on this site. Legal counsel has prepared an amendment to City Code for the City Council to consider that would address this issue more directly. It will be considered by the City Council at their May 20 Council meeting.

CITY OF EDINA

4801 West 50th Street • Edina, Minnesota 55424
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5. The City has not enforced City Code section 830.06(l) by not requiring the placement of storm water erosion control diversions at the site.

City Response: Storm water diversions have been installed on the construction site at 4238 Crocker. The diversions meet generally accepted standards. The City acknowledges that the diversions have failed on more than one occasion causing silt trespass on your property. The building contractor has repaired and reinstalled the diversions each time they have failed and also cleaned those areas.

6. The City has not enforced City Code section 830.06(K) by requiring the building contractor to install property constructed retaining walls.

City Response: The City's Building Official reviewed and approved the proposed retaining walls on the site, pursuant to City Code.

7. The City has not enforced the provisions of City Code section 830.07 by allowing work to continue at the site with an expired building permit.

City Response: The building permit was issued on June 3, 2013. A building permit expires six months after the last act of work completed at the site. The building contractor has been working regularly at the site both before and after December 3, 2013, which keeps the building permit active and lawful.

8. The City has not enforced the provisions of City Code section 830.08 by allowing work to be completed at the site that does not conform to the approved site and building plans.

City Response: The building contractor has proposed several changes to the site and building plans during the construction of the project. This is not unusual for a project of this nature. The building contractor has conferred with City staff at appropriate junctures during the project to seek our review and approval of proposed changes. As of the date of this letter, the project remains incomplete. The building and site plans will be amended at the completion of the project to reflect the "as built" conditions. The project will comply with all applicable building codes when it is complete.

9. The City has not enforced the provisions of City Code section 850.07 by failing to have a licensed professional engineer review and approve the drainage plans for the site.

City Response: The majority of the review activities of the drainage elements of this project were completed by one of the City's staff engineering technicians. The City's engineering technicians work under the general supervision of the City's licensed professional engineers. The engineering technician who reviewed the drainage plans for this project included the City's licensed professional engineering staff members at appropriate stages in the review of the plans.

10. The City has not enforced the provisions of City Code section 850(11) by failing to enforce the interior side yard setback requirements.

City Response: The City will enforce this provision of City Code by requiring the building contractor to modify the grading of the north side yard to enable the height of the building to meet the City's R-1 building height limits, per the plans submitted as part of the building permit, which do demonstrate code compliance. This site change will be implemented before the project is completed.

11. The City has not enforced the provisions of the 2006 International Residential Code (IRC) by allowing the placement of the building too close to slopes steeper than 1 unit vertical in 3 units horizontal.

City Response: The Building Official has discretion to approve the variances to this provision of the 2006 IRC. In the case of 4238 Crocker, the Building Official reviewed the proposed retaining walls and approved the construction of the current building.

You have requested the City to require the building contractor to post a \$75,000 bond to assure that the project will comply with all applicable codes upon completion. Because the City has neither a history nor justification for demanding a bond of this nature from a building contractor, I must decline this request. I understand that you believe your property has been damaged during the construction process at 4238 Crocker. Your remedy to be compensated for that damage is to pursue the responsible party through a civil court action.

If you have other questions, please advise.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott H. Neal", written in a cursive style.

Scott H. Neal,
City Manager

Cc: Mayor and City Council Members
Roger Knutson, City Attorney
David Fisher, Building Official
Cary Teague, Community Development Director
Chad Millner, City Engineer

Heather Branigin

From: K B Montgomery <kmschoolmail@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 30, 2014 11:07 AM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: To the City Council--Citizens for a Better GrandView Community Center Proposal
Attachments: Grandview_Council_CC_pref-1.doc; CBG_Community_Center_Proposal.pdf

Hi Lynette,

Could you kindly forward this to the City Council?

Many thanks,
Kim

Dear Mayor Hovland and Edina City Council Members:

Over the past few months, Citizens For A Better Grandview has been gathering community input, meeting with professionals in the areas of urban planning, architecture, community recreation, culture and education, attending public meetings, and reviewing public documents. The result of these efforts is a draft proposal for a new Edina Community Center located on the former public works site at 5146 Eden Avenue: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B7qbXzwNg6owQl9fandzcDVaREE/edit?usp=sharing> This document is also accessible at Citizens for a Better GrandView's website at: <http://abettergrandview.weebly.com/>

The proposal is intended for information purposes and as a starting point for discussion. It is not intended as a final plan, but is offered to present ideas, provide a vision, give a realistic, fact-based overview of costs, and start a community-wide conversation about the best possible uses for the land.

As part of our research, CBG visited Firstenburg Community Center in Vancouver, WA—an intergenerational, vibrant, life-filled, publicly owned and run community center (see cover photo). Vancouver's political leaders recognized the value of publicly owned and run community spaces. From that determination, they hired a consultant/architect specializing in community-based, public buildings. In six months using an open community process, the consultant team created the following: market analysis, concept design, programming, site evaluation, revenue and expense (capital and operating) projections as well as a funding plan for a community center.

In order to move the GrandView process forward, CBG requests that the Council follow the process outlined below:

1. Citizen's Steering Committee

Repurpose the current Community Advisory Team (CAT) to assess public needs, create a community-based process and design a community-based facility (# 4, pg. 49-Framework) with the guidance of a consultant who specializes in public facilities. Also use the CAT to guide implementation of the remaining unaddressed points on page 49 of the Framework (#'s 2,3, 5-10).

2. Planning Documents

Use soon-to-be updated planning tools (Vision 20/20 update and Parks and Recreation Master Plan) as a starting point in defining community needs.

3. Data Gathering

Have consultant specializing in public facilities gather cost and market data on national standards and local practices.

4. Hold Public Meetings

Present all relevant planning, cost and market data in well publicized public meetings in order for the public to make informed decisions.

5. Create a Community Center Master Plan

The scope of this plan should include a market analysis, cost data, programming, site analysis, a preferred concept design and phasing options. This planning process should take no more than six months.

Thank you, as always, for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, Kim Montgomery, Chair—Citizens for a Better GrandView



GrandView Community Center Proposal Draft

Prepared April 2014
by Citizens for a Better GrandView
www.abettergrandview.weebly.com

*Vision for a community resource to include activity,
aquatic, community, and cultural spaces*

NOTE:

This document is intended as a starting point for discussion and information purposes. It is not intended as a final plan; it is offered to present ideas, provide vision, give a realistic, fact-based overview of costs and garner community-wide conversation about the best possible public uses for the former public works site.

EDINA COMMUNITY CENTER AT GRANDVIEW DRAFT PROPOSAL

The mission of Citizens for a Better GrandView (CBG) is to raise awareness, invite conversation, and join together as a community to preserve the public land at 5146 Eden Avenue (former public works site) for a public use.

We are asking the City of Edina to immediately stop the process to pursue a private redevelopment partner and begin an open and inclusive process to study and plan for community uses for the site.

BACKGROUND

On May 20, Edina City Council is slated to discuss issuing a Request for Interest (RFI) for the last centrally located, public land in Edina (5146 Eden Avenue). Two RFI proposals are before the Council as follows:

1. A proposal, put forth by Edina's Economic Development Manager Bill Neuendorf, for the City to select a development partner. This scenario will not favor public retention and use of the land.
2. A second proposal, endorsed by a majority of the Community Advisory Team, calls for a consultant to help the community fully explore public uses for the site before entertaining private development.

Citizens for a Better GrandView (CBG) has assembled the following information as part of a draft proposal to create a new Edina Community Center at 5146 Eden Avenue. In four years of process, the City has not devoted efforts to defining potential community needs for this site. CBG has stepped into that vacuum with this proposal. It is intended as a starting point for discussion and information purposes.

OUR VIEWPOINT

What is now called Edina's "Community Center" is a 1948 school building that is owned and operated by Edina Public Schools, and is not openly available for the community's use. Our city lacks a true community center that is a central place to gather, exchange ideas and information, to learn, to play and to connect. The public land at 5146 Eden Avenue presents an opportunity for that place. (Please see "The Case for a Community Center" on page 10).

OUR PROCESS

CBG interviewed fourteen professionals in the areas of Urban Planning, Architecture, Community Recreation, Culture and Education. In addition, we reviewed public testimony by six individuals and did a comprehensive study of ten public documents regarding civic buildings and planning. (Please see the attached "Research Resources" page on page 11).

CALL FOR ACTION

Citizens for a Better Grandview is asking the City of Edina to delay partnering with a private developer until the potential community uses for the GrandView site are fully explored.

Additionally, CBG is asking the City of Edina to use the following best practices to define the public needs and community spaces on the site: Create Planning Documents, Gather Data, Seek Citizen Input, Hold Public Meetings, and Create a Community Center Master Plan. (Please see "Best Practices" on page 12 of this document for full outline of common best practices.)

GrandView Community Center Concept



Building Area (Interior)
Approximately 105,000 square feet

350-500 Parking stalls

Estimated Cost (Building Only)
\$26,000,000

Activity Spaces

Recreational pool

Lap Pool

3 Gymnasiums

Elevated walk/jog track

2 Group exercise studios

Cardio/weight room

Fitness assessment/wellness center

Child Care Center



Community Spaces

Intergenerational lounge

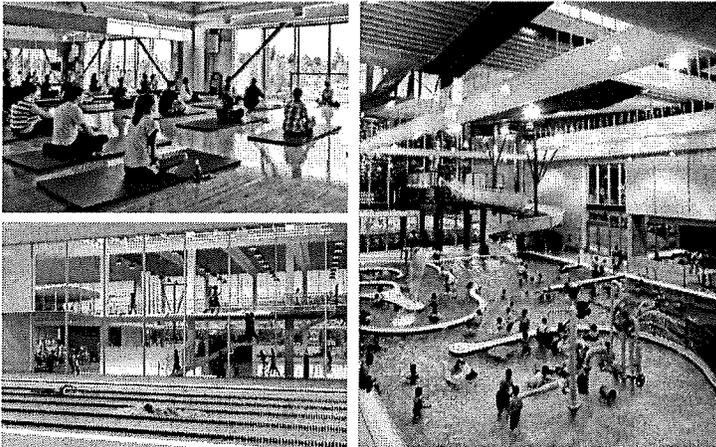
Shared game room

Community Room(s)

Kitchen

Special Events Room

Shared Work Space



Arts and Culture Spaces

Community Performance Room

2 Rehearsal Rooms

Gallery/Arts Classroom



Administrative Spaces

Entry Lobby with Reception Facility

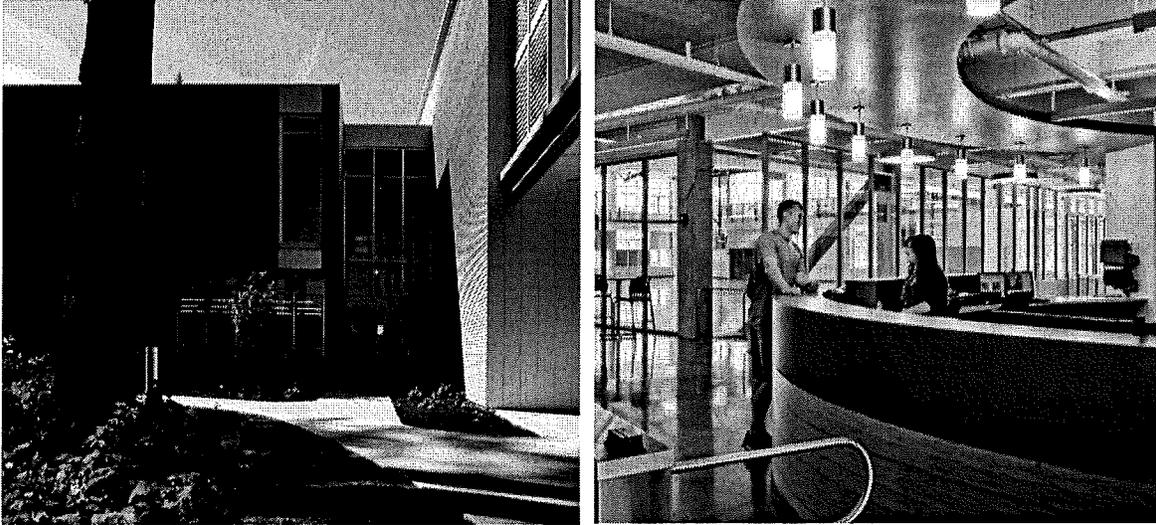
Manager Offices Coordinator Offices

Staff offices

Storage



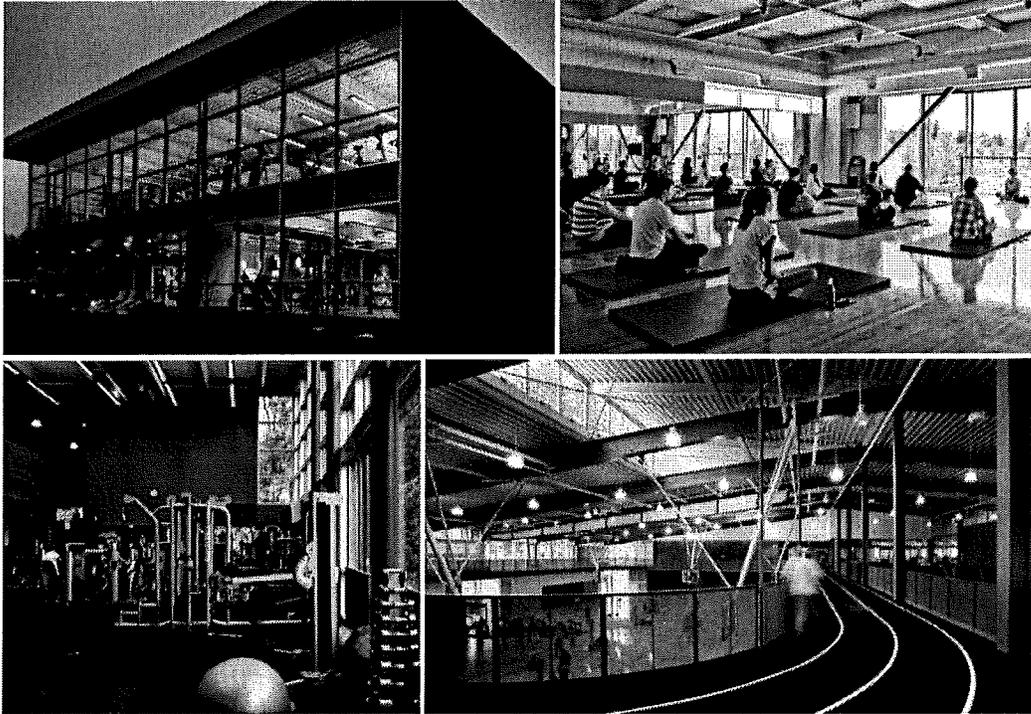
A. OPERATIONS-BUILDING SUPPORT



Images courtesy: Opsis Architecture

Program Estimate	Program sq ft	\$/SF	Cost
Entry Lobby	1200	230.00	276,000
Reception/access control	300	205.00	61,500
Storage	80	180.00	14,400
Vending alcove	150	255.00	38,250
Locker Room-Women's	1700	255.00	433,500
Locker Room-Men's	1500	255.00	382,500
Family Locker Room	300	230.00	69,000
General Building Storage	400	168.00	67,200
Maintenance/Receiving Offices	500	168.00	84,000
Facility Manager Office	120	189.00	22,680
Asst. Facility Manager	120	189.00	22,680
2 Coordinator Offices	240	189.00	45,360
3 Staff offices	240	194.00	46,560
TOTAL OPERATIONS/SUPPORT	6850		\$1,563,630

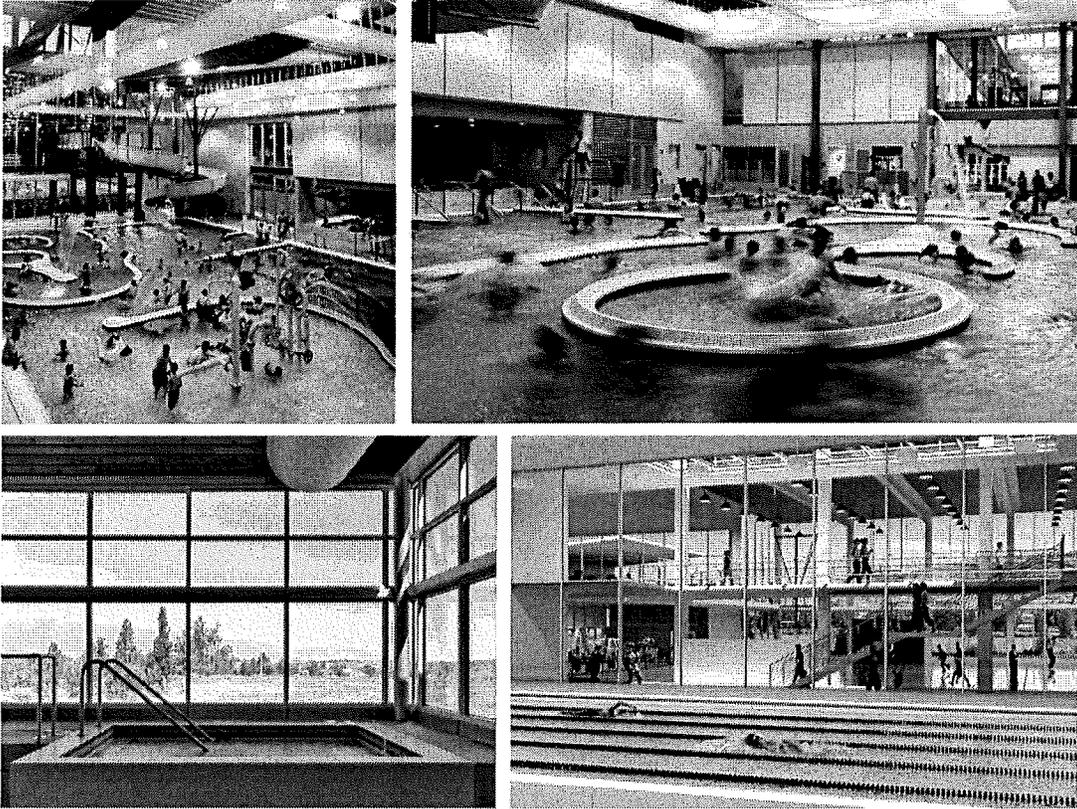
B. ACTIVITY SPACES



Images courtesy: Opsi Architecture

Program Estimate	Program sq ft	\$/SF	Cost
3 Multi-purpose gyms (each at 50' x 74')	18,000	195.00	3,510,000
Gym storage (300 sf per gym)	900	154.00	138,000
Elevated walking/jogging track	8,000	225.00	1,800,000
Multi-purpose group exercise	2,400	210.00	504,000
Multi-purpose group exercise	2,000	210.00	420,000
Group exercise storage	350	165.00	57,750
Fitness Studio	1,000	215.00	215,000
Fitness Studio Storage	150	165.00	24,750
Cardio/Weight Room	6,000	225.00	1,350,000
Cardio/Weight Room Storage	150	165.00	24,750
Fitness Assessment/Wellness Center	3,000	225.00	675,000
Climbing Structure	1600	210.00	336,000
Child Watch Room	1,000	200.00	200,000
Child Watch Storage	100	165.00	16,500
TOTAL ACTIVITY SPACES	43,050		\$9,272,350

C. AQUATICS



Images courtesy: Opsis Architecture

Program Estimate	Program sq ft	\$/SF	Cost
Natorium*	13,500	345.00	4,657,500
Pool construction	N/A	N/A	1,260,000
Water play equip	N/A	N/A	885,000
Spa	250	500.00	125,000
First Aid Office	80	214.00	17,120
Pool Mechanicals	1,100	189.00	207,900
Aquatics Storage	500	189.00	94,500
Pool Sanitation Storage	140	145.00	20,300
TOTAL-Aquatics	15,570		\$7,237,320

* Includes 6000 sq. ft. recreational pool

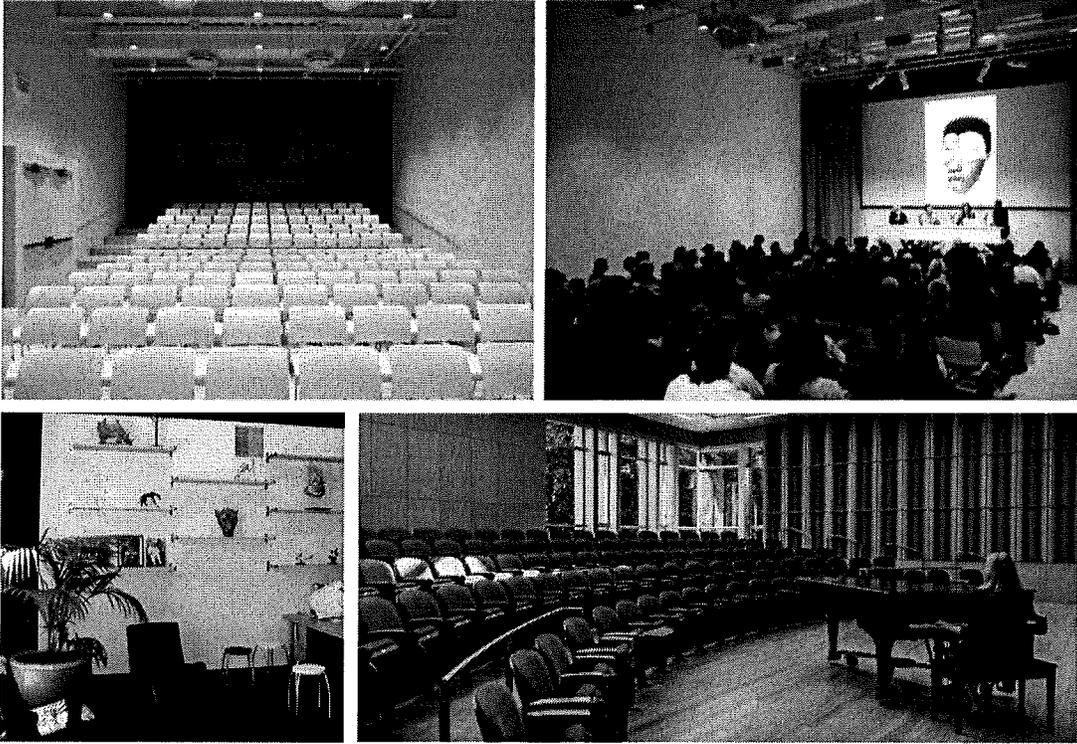
D. COMMUNITY SPACES



Images courtesy: Opsis Architecture

Program Estimate	Program sq ft	\$/SF	Cost
Casual Intergenerational/Lounge	1,200	205.00	246,000
Game room	1,000	215.00	215,000
Community Room (Divisible into 3)	3,000	230.00	690,000
Community/Caterer Kitchen	800	355.00	284,000
CR Restroom (2 Unisex)	600	305.00	183,000
Flexible classroom	1,000	230.00	230,000
Classroom storage	100	165.00	16,500
Special Events/Party room	700	255.00	178,500
Special Events/Party storage	80	165.00	13,200
Meeting/Conference	600	205.00	123,000
Workroom/storage	350	204.00	71,400
Total-Community Spaces	9,430		\$2,250,600

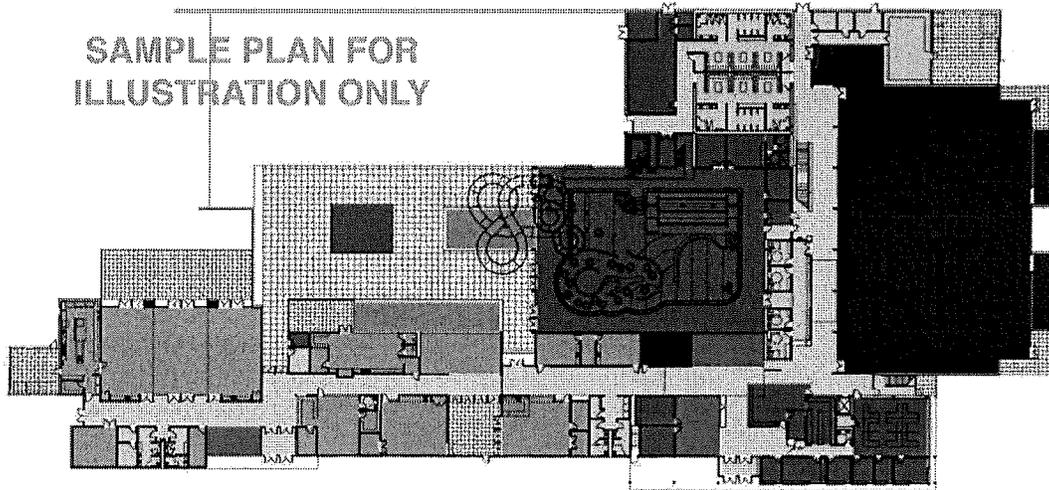
E. ARTS AND CULTURE SPACES



Images courtesy: Opsis Architecture and New Museum

Program Estimate	Program sq ft	\$/SF	Cost
Community Performance Room	3,500	250.00	875,000
2 Dressing Room (ea. at 300 sq ft)	600	200.00	120,000
Community Performance Storage	500	165.00	82,500
Community Performance Activities Storage	300	165.00	49,500
2 Rehearsal Rooms 9 (ea. at 1,200 sf)	2,400	210.00	504,000
Arts Classroom/Gallery	1,000	230.00	230,000
Arts Classroom/Gallery Storage	200	165.00	33,000
Total-Arts and Culture	8,500		\$1,894,000

F. CIRCULATION/MECHANICAL/ETC.



Example Diagram Only - Image courtesy of Opsi Architecture

Program Estimate	Program sq ft		\$/SF	Cost
Natorium Circulation (Mechanical, Walls, etc.)	4201		205.00	861246
Building Circulation (Mechanical, Walls, etc.)	20391		185.00	3772335
TOTAL CIRCULATION/MECHANICAL	20,508			3,855,320

G. TOTAL ESTIMATED SPACE AND COSTS

Program	Sq ft	\$ Cost
OPERATIONS	6,850	1,563,630
ACTIVITES	44,650	9,272,350
AQUATICS	15,570	7,237,320
COMMUNITY SPACES	9,430	2,250,600
ARTS/CULTURAL	8,500	1,894,000
CIRCULATION/MECHANICAL	20,508	3,855,320
TOTAL BUILDING	105,508	\$26,073,220*

*This amount is based upon information provided by Opsi Architecture of Portland, Oregon, and does not include landscaping or parking construction.

THE CASE FOR A COMMUNITY CENTER

Background

When discussing the possibility of a new Community Center in Edina, one may hear: “Why do we need a community center -- we have a perfectly good one across the street?”

This is usually said in reference to the building known as the “Edina Community Center” on Normandale Boulevard. While called a community center, this building is a school district building, housing district offices, an elementary school, early childhood education, and numerous community-based organizations. Also, District Community Education programming uses the building, making it the apparent community center.

However, this building does not serve as a true community center for many reasons:

- Most of the space is neither intended nor available for community use
- The building is cumbersome, confusing, and very outdated
- Parking is limited and can be unavailable if there is a function at the middle school
- There are little to no “open” times in the building,
- The building is closed on Sundays

What is called the Edina Community Center is not a community-focused building, but rather a school district entity neither operated by the city nor fully available to city residents.

What We Have and What We Lack

Edina has many public facilities, to be sure. However, not one of them exists solely for the use and benefit of the community at large and on a year-round basis.

- The Aquatic Center has a narrowly prescribed use and season
- The Edina Art Center has limited focus and extremely limited space.
- Edinborough Park has limited space that is shared with residential and commercial entities
- Braemar Golf Course is another example of a single focus, seasonal amenity
- The Senior Center/Library space is also narrowly prescribed in use or has limited hours
- Arneson Acres is limited in space, focus and times of use as well.

What Edina lacks is a facility that serves the *entire* community in both structured and unstructured ways, that is accessible seven days a week year round. A facility that is centrally located and designed for this new millennium.

What we have are disparate facilities that each serve a segment of the community with a special interest. What we lack is a central place to gather, to exchange ideas and information, to learn, to play and to connect.

The Opportunity

With the public land we already own, with vision and commitment from our leaders and citizens, we could have have a facility designed to be the community's center, a focal point of civic pride and a resource for every Edina resident. We have an opportunity right now to designate this site as the crowning jewel for our town.

RESEARCH RESOURCES

As part of our research, CBG met with the following individuals. The views expressed in this proposal are those of Citizens for a Better Grandview and not necessarily the views of any individual listed below. We thank these individuals for the time they took to meet and the professional insight they provided.

- Jim Kalvelage Opsis Architecture, Portland, OR
- Angela Brosius, Manager-Firstenburg Community Center, Vancouver, WA
- Kelly O'Dea, Manager, Williston Fitness Center, Minnetonka, MN
- Melissa Falb, MacPhail Center for the Arts, Director of Group Instruction
- Megan Balda, Executive Director, Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies
- Lucy Thompson, City of St. Paul Planning Department
- Kyle Coolbroth, Founder-CoCo (shared work space-1 of 7 Google Test Sites)
- Mic O'Brien-Edina Basketball Association
- Kerry Middleton-Edina Basketball Association
- Carrie Klein, Social Worker-South View Middle School
- Paul Andress-Counselor-South View Middle School
- Hope Melton-Urban Planner
- Colleen Carey, The Cornerstone Group
- Bryan Paulsen, Paulsen Architects

The result of public testimony by:

- Ann Kattreh to Community Advisory Team, December, 9, 2013
- Michael Frey to Community Advisory Team December 9, 2013
- Gil Penalosa, 8-80 Cities Presentation-Urban Land Institute-Minneapolis, MN 9/28/12
- Dan Burden-Livable and Walkable Communities presentation, South Maui-12/12
- Bill Morris/Peter Leatherman to Community Advisory Team, February 24, 2014
- Valerie Burke, Director-Edina Community Education

In addition, CBG relied upon the public documents from:

- City of Edina Comprehensive Plan
- Indoor Recreation Facilities Master Plan: Hillsboro Parks and Recreation Department
- Minnetonka Center for the Arts, Burnsville Center for the Arts,
- Hopkins Center for the Arts, Bloomington Center for the Arts
- City of Maple Grove-Community Center
- Chaska Community Center
- City of Chanhassen Recreation Center
- Civic Campus Master Plan for East Vancouver
- West Linn Recreation Center: Concept Design and Operational Plan
- National Recreation and Park Association database

Finally, CBG visited several websites for insight into community centers in and outside Minnesota, including:

<http://www.cityofvancouver.us/firstenburg>
<http://www.planetizen.com/toppublicspaces>
<http://beta.eminnetonka.com/activities/williston-fitness-center>
<http://www.maplegrovern.gov/community-center>
<http://www.edenprairie.org/index.aspx?page=216>

BEST PRACTICES

Citizens for A Better Grandview is asking the City of Edina to use the following best practices to define community spaces for the former public works site:

1. Planning Documents

Use Visioning statements, Parks and Recreation Master Plans and Comprehensive Plans as a starting foundation.

2. Data gathering

Hire experts to gather cost and market data on national standards and local practices.

3. Creating a Citizen's Steering Committee

Repurpose the current Community Advisory Team to assess public needs, create community-based process and design a community-centered facility.

4. Hold Public Meetings

Present all relevant planning, cost and market data in public meetings in order for the public to make informed decisions.

5. Create a Community Center Master Plan

The scope of this plan should include a market analysis, programming, site analysis, a preferred concept design and phasing options. This planning process should take no more than six months.

CBG requests that the City of Edina follow the above structure in defining the public needs and community spaces on the former public works site. The enclosed document is intended as a fact based guide to be used as a starting point in discussions.

Heather Branigin

From: Lisa Nelson <lisanelson50@mac.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 30, 2014 11:36 AM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: ORDINANCE NO. 2014- AN ORDINANCE AMENDMENT REGARDING TREE PRESERVATION

I am writing to express my objections to this ordinance.

First, this ordinance is not narrowly tailored to the issue of a speculator clearing a property of all trees to make it easier to build on, and, in any case, it doesn't appear that is even occurring in Edina. It limits property owners who are building their own home, and encompasses much more minor remodels and accessory structures by existing homeowners who may have changing needs and preferences.

Second, the city should not be telling residents how wooded or sunny their lot should be. Many homeowners want open space for kids to play, for flower, herb and vegetable gardens, for solar panels, or because they have SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder), grew up in a sunny location, just plain old prefer the sun or for many other reasons. Furthermore, they ought to be able to change their preferences whenever they wish, regardless of whether their neighbors like shade better. This ordinance is even more over-reaching in that it is ordering owners to *increase* shade on their lot in the long run. To then mandate what kind of trees are acceptable further reduces a homeowners right to landscape their property.

Third, the requirement to plant one tree on public property if there isn't room for two trees on the lot is just a hidden tax to fund re-forestation of public land. It may be that the City is lagging in replacing trees through out the city; it may be that residents agree that more shade in the City is desirable; it may even be that residents are willing to approve a tax to fund that; but none of that justifies requiring home owners to replace or add trees to their lots, as opposed to imposing an additional fee on construction permits to fund a re-forestation fund.

Last, but certainly not least, is the cost of enforcement of this ordinance and the cost of dealing with the disputes that will inevitably result from it, especially the three-year monitoring requirement. To have this bind new owners for three years may inhibit home sales and encourage disputes with new neighbors.

I do not believe that any aspect of this ordinance should be approved. In addition, without making sure that information about this gets to the public through the Sun Current, I doubt that you can truly have a sense for how the community feels about this.

Heather Branigin

From: Edina 499 <499@bwld.onmicrosoft.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 30, 2014 12:08 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Buffalo Wild Wings Edina VIP dinner

Hello Mayor and Edina City Council Members,

I would like to cordially invite each or you and a guest to attend our first and only complimentary food and beverage VIP dinner at our newest Buffalo Wild Wings in Edina! We'll have full bar/alcohol service available, cash only, all proceeds donated to the Minneapolis Boys and Girls Club.

We start seating at 6:00pm, with seatings every 20 minutes, the last session at 7:40pm. We like to keep these to parties of 2-4, if you have a larger group, or any further requests, please let me know.

Thank you for your support and I look forward to placing all of your names on our seating list.

Sincerely,

Marty Mongoven
General Manager
Buffalo Wild Wings
Edina, MN

Heather Branigin

From: Tim Gill <par72discgolf@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 30, 2014 12:24 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Fred prospect

Hello council members.

My name is Tim Gill. Owner/operator of Par 72 Disc Golf and resident of Edina. Disc Golf course design is our specialty. With The Fred closing and the land becoming park land, I feel we could add value with the addition of a Disc Golf course. I was the lead consultant with the course at Rosland Park when the high school kids put the course in as part of their May term project back in 2002. I worked closely with John Keprios and the kids to build a fun for all course. As you probably already know, the Rosland course is a very popular course and crowded at times. A basic course could be built or we could install a high end course which could be a "pay to play" course. I have been the lead consultant for all of the the Three Rivers Parks courses which are pay to play and very successful. Three Rivers charges \$5/ round or \$35 for a season pass for all 3 of their courses.

Thank you for your time, please let me know if this could be a possibility and what steps I can take to make it happen.

--

Tim Gill
President
www.par72discgolf.com
612-281-3192

Heather Branigin

From: Bruce Kieffer <bruce@kieffer.us>
Sent: Wednesday, April 30, 2014 2:50 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: The Grandview Site

Please issue an RFI for a consultant-lead, community-based process under the guidance of the current CAT to first define the public uses for the former public works site in GrandView and to stop the process to select a developer partner.

Bruce Kieffer
bruce@kieffer.us
<http://kieffer.us>

Heather Branigin

From: Gregg guider <gregg.guider@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 30, 2014 3:36 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Chickens in Edina!

Hello Edina City Council:

We kept chickens when we lived in SW Minneapolis, and are hoping to keep them in the future now that we've moved to the Morningside neighborhood of Edina.

Minneapolis has a very sensible approach for people wishing to keep to keep chickens, and I think Edina could do well by copying there approach and regulations. Those rules can be found here.

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/www/groups/public/@citycoordinator/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-122042.pdf>

Please let me know what I can do to help bring this in front of the city council.

Thank you,
Gregg

Heather Branigin

From: Twinoaks50@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, April 30, 2014 5:15 PM
To: Edina Mail
Cc: bascacat@aol.com
Subject: Proposed Tree Preservation Ordinance for Redevelopment Projects

Dear City Council Members,

Kelodale Garden Club (est. 1957, Edina) respectfully requests that the Edina City Council oppose the proposed *Tree Preservation Ordinance for Redevelopment Projects* in Edina.

Kelodale members are concerned that the proposed ordinance calls for the planting of two trees from an approved list if one tree is removed in a redevelopment project. This was thought by Kelodale members to be too restrictive, and to limit the beneficial ways residents can use their yards.

Kelodale members expressed concern that shade from large trees can interfere with solar panels, ponds, and the ability to plant small stature trees. This would have the effect of limiting trees that provide berries for wildlife and birds. Increasing the amount of large trees on a lot can also shade out vegetable and flower garden space, which also has an effect on pollinators.

For these reasons, Kelodale Garden Club respectfully asks that City Council Members carefully consider the impact the proposed tree preservation ordinance will have on limiting the ways residents can enjoy their yards.

Thank you for your consideration,

Elizabeth Franklin and Mary Yee
Co-Presidents
Kelodale Garden Club

Heather Branigin

From: Lori Grotz <lori@lorigrotz.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 01, 2014 7:24 AM
To: Edina Mail; jonibennett12@comcast.net; Mary Brindle (Comcast);
joshsprague@edinarealty.com; swensonann1@gmail.com
Subject: Tree Ordinance

May 1, 2014

Mayor Hovland

Council Members: Joni Bennett, Mary Brindle, Ann Swenson, Josh Sprague

I am in support of the proposed tree preservation ordinance put forward by the Planning Commission. Trees not only add to the beauty of our neighborhoods, but also clean the air, deaden noise, save energy, provide a windbreak, provide privacy, and absorb water.

Trees are an overlooked integral part of drainage and storm water management plans. With the large homes being built, there is considerably less permeable area left to absorb water. Trees can absorb 100 gallons per day and also help to control erosion. Many properties have already been damaged from contractors not containing storm water but instead directing it to adjacent properties. Trees are valuable resources that need to be protected. The Builders may not like the tree ordinance but this proposed ordinance is for the benefit of the City and residents and not for the Builders.

I thank Michael Platteter and Claudia Carr for their time and effort in writing this proposed tree ordinance.

Lori Grotz

5513 Park Place

Heather Branigin

From: Don Henrich <uechenrich@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 01, 2014 9:34 AM
To: Edina Mail

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Mayor Hovland and City Council,

I support the proposed tree ordinance relating to residential construction. It is too late for many neighborhoods, but if it will save some trees or replace them, it will certainly help other neighborhoods! Please pass it!

Sincerely,

Don Henrich

Heather Branigin

From: Jim Lehman <jlehman@medalistmanagement.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 01, 2014 9:44 AM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Braemar GC

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Mr. Hovland

I am the manager/agent for Tom Lehman and get involved in most of his business activities. I'd like to meet with you to discuss the Braemar golf course project and Tom's possible involvement. As you know, he did the Edina CC renovation which was a success, and he is very interested in the Braemar project as well. Please let me know if you have a few minutes to meet and discuss.

Jim

James M. Lehman
Medalist Management, Inc.
601 Carlson Parkway, Suite 1290
Minnetonka, MN 55305

Office: 952-476-2100
Cell: 612-865-8311

Heather Branigin

From: Susan Furlow <susanfurlow@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 01, 2014 10:24 AM
To: Edina Mail
Cc: jonibennett12@comcast.net; 'James Hovland'; Scott Neal
Subject: Development of Grandview Site (Old Public Works Site)

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear City Council Members,

My husband and I are in full support of stopping the process to select a commercial development partner for the former Edina Public Works Site (Grandview). Instead, we urge you to create an RFI for a **consultant-lead, community-based process under the guidance of the current CAT to first define the public uses for the site.**

Edina has always prided itself on the excellence of its community based services and programs. We have always felt that Edina lacked a cohesive public multi-purpose facility such as the community centers we see in other communities in our area and beyond.

Our existing community activity facilities are largely single purpose (golf, ice arena, community ed classes housed in a shared building). Our current "community center" is housed within a shared use building and does not provide the type of open, easily accessible community gathering and activity space we need in this community. As a converted school building which is operated by the school district its layout is confusing and outdated, it has very limited hours and most of the space is neither intended nor available for community use. Further, if there is an event at the Southview Middle School there is little or no parking available there for any community center user.

We are in favor of creating a multi-purpose community center for the former Edina Public Works site -- one that would combine auditorium/performance space, community meeting spaces, an indoor aquatic center, other sports and fitness facilities, art facilities (since our current art center has very limited space), and other shared event space. Our families, our youth, our seniors, and all other Edina citizens would benefit from this type of community gathering place.

We look forward to your support in this endeavor, and ask that you create the RFI needed to generate the proposals for the development of a new public use space such as a community center.

Thank you for all do for our city!

Susan Furlow and Larry McCann
6537 Cherokee Trail
Edina, MN 55439

952-944-5212

Heather Branigin

From: Dianne Latham <Dianne@LathamPark.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 01, 2014 11:10 AM
To: Ann Swenson; James B. Hovland; Joni Bennett; Josh Sprague; Mary Brindle (Comcast)
Cc: Scott Neal; Brian Olson; Tom Horwath; Edina Mail; Cary Teague
Subject: Please Oppose the Proposed Tree Ordinance

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

5-1-14

Honorable Mayor Hovland and City Council Members,

I am writing in opposition to the proposed Tree Ordinance because the proposed ordinance:

1. Far exceeds the scope of the perceived problem
2. Prevents residents from achieving alternative environmental objectives
3. Over reaches private property rights
4. Requires large amounts of nonexistent staff time
5. Unreasonably restricts work space in construction projects
6. Unreasonably restricts relandscaping options
7. Is impractical from a horticultural view point
8. Is vague in many places
9. Is easily circumvented, thus saving few trees
10. By forcing a landowner to donate trees to city parks when they cannot comply with the proposed ordinance, constitutes a tax on those seeking to renew and upgrade their property

The proposed tree ordinance far exceeds the scope of the perceived problem

The Energy and Environment Commission's (EEC) Urban Forest Task Force (UFTF) had substantially different findings than did the Planning Commission's Residential Task Force with respect to the need and scope of a tree preservation ordinance. The EEC's UFTF report states "The UFTF found that generally, there was little wonton removal of trees on public or private property within Edina other than in isolated instances. It is very costly to remove a mature tree and consequently trees are generally only removed in cases of disease or of relandscaping; such tree removals are not in need of regulation. When trees are removed in such circumstances they are generally replaced with new trees within a few years... Although teardowns occur throughout Edina, most complaints stem from those teardowns on lots less than 75 feet wide. As such the UFTF believed that it would not be prudent to design an ordinance applying to the entire city to address the localized problem of small lot teardowns. Problems unique to small lot teardowns should be addressed by the Planning Commission's Residential Task Force (RTF) and any enforcement accomplished by the proposed city teardown overseer."

Michael Platteter of the Planning Commission indicated that at the Planning Commission's hearings on tear downs, 80% of those testifying did not mention tree removal as being a problem. Thus, the proposed tree ordinance far oversteps any possible need in instances of small lot tear downs, by applying not only to all tear downs, but also by applying to "all

demolition permits; building permits applications for a structural addition; and building permits for accessory structures including a garage, deck or a pool.”

Prevents residents from achieving alternative environmental objectives

The ordinance requires:

- 1) Two for one replacement if any of 16 varieties of over story and large conifer Protected Trees of any size are removed more than 10 ft from the building pad and outside of the driveway or parking area.
- 2) One for one replacement of any Removable of over 5 inches in diameter including invasive species.
- 3) One to one replacement of a Protected Tree of any size, or Removable tree over 5 inches in diameter including invasive species within 10 ft of the building pad of a new or remodeled building or within driveways and parking areas.

The replacement trees must be of one of the 16 specified varieties, all of which are very large at maturity. On small lots, one or two of these large trees in the front and back yard is about all that a lot could accommodate. On even a large lot (1/2 acre or more) doubling the number of Protected Trees through the two for one requirement of over story trees would completely shade the lot, if the lot could even accommodate the number of required trees and still allow them to be healthy.

Although the specified over story and large conifer replacement trees constitute a worthwhile environmental objective, residents should not be compelled to landscape their lots for the resulting shade. Many worthy environmental objectives require sunny lots. This includes vegetable gardens, pollinator gardens and wildlife ponds. By restricting choices to just 16 varieties of trees, lots will begin to look quite similar. Small stature trees (15ft – 30ft) are eliminated because they are not on the list of specified replacement trees and there won't be room for them. Many of these small stature native trees have beautiful spring flowers, fall color and berries for birds. This includes Pagoda Dogwood, Service Berry or Nanny Berry. Many beautiful small stature ornamental trees such as Magnolia or Japanese Tree Lilac are similarly eliminated by being squeezed out a proposed landscape plan by the required over story and large conifer replacement trees. Oftentimes a small stature tree serves a small lot far better than larger trees, which can be out of scale with the small lot and overlap their neighbor's yards.

It is important to encourage residents to invest in solar panels. The best time to design a home for solar panels is when a home is rebuilt or remodeled. Large designated replacement over story trees can prevent a homeowner or their neighbor from using solar panels, whereas smaller stature trees are compatible with them.

The proposed tree ordinance prevents residents from achieving alternative environmental objectives for which they should have the choice, and thus the ordinance far over reaches private property rights.

Requires large amounts of nonexistent staff time

The city forester is a part time 4/5 position whose time is presently fully engaged. Even if converted to a full time staff person the following requirements of the proposed ordinance could not be accomplished:

10.82 (6) Approve the removal of any Protected Tree if the owner proposes that it is “diseased or hazardous”. What constitutes diseased or hazardous? How diseased or hazardous does a tree need to be before it can be removed? The ordinance is vague. It is often extremely difficult to know if a tree is diseased to the extent that it must be removed. Homeowners could be left with trees that are not thriving. Conversely, a tree capable of recovery, with some horticultural assistance, could be taken down. These decisions should be left to homeowners. If the tree looks bad to the homeowner and they have the resources to remove it, they should have that option. To do otherwise oversteps private property rights.

10.82. (4) (d) “Replacement tree plans are subject to approval by the City Forester before implementation” – Over 100 tear down permits have been issued for each of the past two or more years. If all the “demolition permits; building permits applications for a structural addition; and building permits for accessory structures including a garage, deck or a pool” are added, the number would be much larger. And what is it that the City Forester is supposed to do with all these plans? No policy of guidelines state when he should approve or disapprove them. The ordinance is vague.

10.82 (4) (e)” If a replacement tree location cannot be found on the property, it must be placed in a public area, subject to approval by the City Forester.” The ordinance is vague – what is a public area? Is it a city park? Boulevard? A large number of trees could be donated, which could over run the city’s ability to find suitable locations, plant, mulch and water them. The EEC donated 16 small trees to Braemar Park and it was with some difficulty that enough places were found to plant them. The result was that the two large stature conifer seedlings were improperly planted in what was intended to be a prairie, which was supposed to be kept sunny. In addition, two deciduous over story trees were planted in an open area with peat under laying it, causing the trees to die.

10.82 (7) “The survey must indicate how the Protected Tree would be protected during the construction, subject to staff review and approval.” And what is it that the City Forester is supposed to do with the survey? No policy or guidelines state when he should approve or disapprove them. The ordinance is vague.

10.82 (7) “City staff monitoring is required for all projects with affected Protected Trees and/or replacement trees to ensure that all such trees are properly established and maintained for three (3) years.” Multiply the number of annual demolition permits (tear down, remodeling, decks, garages, pools) times 3 and the City Forester will have a staggering number of trees to review annually. No one can guarantee that a newly planted tree will last for three years despite their best efforts. This is due to acts of God such as drought, insects, storms, etc. And what happens if the City Forester finds that a tree died? If it was not the homeowner’s fault, should they have to replace it? How do you decide whose fault it is? The ordinance is vague.

In 2002, both the Planning Commission and the City Council expressed concerns about the proposed 2002 tree ordinance proposal because the City Forester did not have enough time to comply with all the demands of the proposed ordinance. If anything, the demands of the proposed 2014 tree ordinance are greater than those of the 2002 proposed ordinance and most assuredly more impractical.

To the extent that the City Forester has any surplus time, or to the extent that the City Forester position would be converted to a full time position, the EEC’s Urban Forest Task Force had substantially different findings than did the Planning Commission’s Residential Task Force with respect to the best use of the City Forester’s time. The UFTF found as follows:

“To more effectively control noxious weeds and address other environmental issues in the park system, the UFTF recommends hiring a full-time Natural Resource Manager, as opposed to a part-time Forester. More knowledge of ecology is required today given the arrival of many invasive plant, insect and aquatic species. A passive forestry program with a philosophy of ‘Natural Forest Succession’ and one primarily focused on tree diseases such as oak wilt and Dutch Elm Disease, is no longer adequate... With a full-time Natural Resource Manager the following can be accomplished: more grants can be applied for, more parks can be certified as Audubon Cooperative Sanctuaries, more trees can be planted, more buckthorn and other noxious weeds can be controlled, more habitat can be restored, and more educational programs can be offered to residents.”

Unreasonably restricts work space in construction projects

The City of Minnetonka Tree Protection ordinance at City Code 300.28, Subd. 19 states that:

“R-1: For the construction of a principal structure on a vacant R-1 lot or for redevelopment of an existing R-1 lot, protected trees may be removed with no mitigation only within the “basic removal area”. The “basic removal area” is defined as:

- a. Within the areas improved for reasonably-sized driveways, parking areas and structures without frost footings and within ten feet around those improvements;
- b. Within the footprints of, and 20 feet around buildings with frost footings; and
- c. In areas where trees are being removed for ecological restoration in accordance with a city-approved restoration plan.

Edina’s proposed ordinance at 10.82 (5) only allows removal of trees within “a ten-foot (10’) radius of the building pad of a new or remodeled building” (as opposed to Lake Minnetonka’s 20 ft) and “within driveways and parking areas” (whereas Minnetonka gives these a 10 ft radius). Removed protected trees in Minnetonka’s above ordinance need not be replaced, while Edina’s must be replaced one for one.

Contractors need room to work and the Lake Minnetonka Tree Ordinance provides that. Edina's proposed ordinance does not. Neighbors do not appreciate it when contractors leave construction materials on sidewalks, in streets or on their property as a result of having insufficient room in which to work. It would be very difficult to protect a tree, especially one in the front yard on a small lot less than 75 ft wide, which is filled with construction vehicles, equipment, tools and building materials. It would be more successful to remove the trees and relandscape, which probably needs to be redone anyway due to new sight lines and aging or overgrown trees.

But here is the catch 22. The only complaints about tree removal seem to be coming from the neighbors of tear downs on small lots less than 75 ft wide, which tend to exist predominately in Morningside. With 750 residences, Morningside constitutes 5% of the city's approximately 14,000 residences. Demolition permits elsewhere in the city do not result in tree removal complaints and have no need of regulation. If you give contractors the room they need to work as under the Lake Minnetonka Tree Ordinance, virtually no trees will be preserved in either the front yard or the side yard of tear downs on small lots less than 75 ft wide. Trees in the back yard would be protected, especially on deep lots, but few of those are being impacted in any event.

I do not recommend even trying to preserve trees in the front or side yards on small lots less than 75 feet wide as it is grossly impractical given all the construction vehicles, equipment, tools and construction materials that must be amassed there. Furthermore, it is not good governance to design an ordinance that meets the needs of only 5% of the city. A city wide ordinance needs to be suitable for the vast majority of residents, and the proposed ordinance clearly is not.

Unreasonably restricts landscaping options

When housing is renewed by virtue of a remodeling or a tear down project, so too must the landscaping be renewed. It is not possible for the city to micromanage this re-landscaping process as too many personal choices must be made. With housing renewal, the sight lines change. If perfectly healthy mature tree what once made sense in its location, no longer does so, it must be removed. When we enlarged our deck and put in a pond and gazebo we found that that we had to remove two mature locust trees and one standard apple tree so that we could see the new landscape features from the new deck. We also found that the 5 mature pines along the back of the lot that screened us from the neighbor looked pretty threadbare after over 40 years of the utility company's repeated pruning to keep them off the power lines. We replaced them instead with four native Pagoda Dogwoods that would grow but 15 ft high and would not need any pruning by the utility company. They would furthermore provide flowers in the spring, fall color and berries for the birds. The service berry, planted near the pond does as well, plus being a small stature tree, it will never reach over to the pond and drop unwanted leaves into the pond. We also added an espalier of five honey crisp apples, one magnolia, one over story gingko tree seedling, two white pine seedlings, two 3 ft tall Techny Arborvitae and one 6 ft tall black hills spruce.

In our remodeling and re-landscaping project we removed a total of 7 mature trees, 6 of which would have been considered Protected Trees. We replaced them with 15 trees, only one of which would have been allowed from the list of required replacement trees and of the required size. Under the proposed ordinance we could not have landscaped our yard as we did. Our yard has been on many garden tours, won awards and been featured in magazines and newspapers. The proposed ordinance would have instead required us to plant 13 over story or large conifer trees from the approved list of 16 trees. With the 13 required (2 for 1 of the 6 protected trees and one for one of the one non protected tree) over story or large conifer trees, a shady yard would have resulted and we would not have been able to have a vegetable garden, pollinator garden, wildlife pond, or the small stature pagoda dogwood trees fitting in under the power lines and providing berries for birds. It took us a year to plan our re-landscaping project using a professional landscape architect. There were multiple revisions of the plan. Surely the City Forester cannot be expected to become involved in such projects. The proposed ordinance far oversteps private property rights.

If residents are forced to plant more over story and large conifers then they can use – where will they plant them so as to preserve their sunny yard? Most likely they will plant them on the property line where they will unreasonably shade their neighbor's yard and force their neighbor to rake their tree's leaves or trim those portions of the tree that overhang the neighbor's property. This will increase neighbor disputes.

Vague

Many instances where the ordinance is vague have been cited above. In addition, note the following:

10.82 (2) The list of Protected Trees needs to provide the scientific names, not common names. Birch can include paper birch, which is not suitable for zone 4. Maples can include Norway and Amur maple, which are on the DNR Do Not Plant list. Furthermore, the list is arbitrary and capricious and seeks to micromanage a resident's choice of trees.

10.82 (2) (b) Missing citation/URL for DNR list of invasive trees. Is it the intent to include trees from the DNR Do Not Plant list as well? If so, another citation/URL is needed.

10.82 (3) "Demolition and building permit applications must include a certified tree inventory." Certified by whom?

10.82 (4) (a) "Replacement trees must be varied" By how much? Does each have to be different? What percent can be alike?

10.82 (4) (b) "Replacement trees must not be subject to known epidemic diseases or infestations". What is "known"? Is there a list of diseases or infestations? Known by whom? If a homeowner is not aware of it, is that sufficient?

10.82 (7) states "The permit holder shall not leave any Protected Tree without sufficient guards or protections to prevent injury to the Protected Tree in connection with such construction." What constitutes "sufficient"? What constitutes "injury"? During our garage enlargement project new footings extended 45" deep and the trench extended 3 feet from the trunk of a mature honey locust tree, which constitutes a Protected Tree under the proposed ordinance. Three inch diameter roots were severed and hung over the trench. Does that constitute an injury? What, if anything, would be required to protect such a tree? We did nothing. Would we have been in violation of the ordinance? If so, what is the penalty? Does the City Forester actually have to look into each construction trench and render an opinion? Tom Horwath, the City of Edina Forester, estimates that about 75% of trees in such situations survive. In fact, our trench tree is still thriving 9 years later behind the garage. Trying to regulate something that you really can't do much about is folly.

Impractical from a horticultural view point

Many instances where the ordinance is impractical have been cited above. Furthermore, the ordinance is impractical from many horticultural perspectives. This is undoubtedly because the Planning Commission's Residential Task Force, which drafted the proposed tree ordinance, neglected to invite the City of Edina Forester to a single meeting. The Energy and Environment Commission's Urban Forest Task Force had the Forester participate at every meeting.

Sidewalks and Driveways - The proposed ordinance does not allow tree removal when a tree is immediately adjacent to a sidewalk or driveway, though Lake Minnetonka does. In these situations tree roots will cause the pavement to heave and become a tripping hazard. And who wants to have a tree right next to a drive way when you are backing out at night, or are backing out on a slippery surface. Trees next to driveways are well positioned for accidents. Trees within 10 feet of sidewalks and driveways need to be removed as provided in the Lake Minnetonka tree ordinance.

Swimming Pools - Having to replace Protected Trees two for one when a swimming pool is being added is utterly impractical. Pools cannot have trees in proximity or they become dirty with leaves and other tree debris.

Wildlife Pond – We added a wildlife pond in our relandscaping project. For these you cannot use chemicals to kill the mosquito larvae or you will poison the wildlife that comes to the pond. To control mosquito larvae you must add fish to the pond, which will eat the mosquito larvae. When you have fish you must have cover or the small pond becomes too hot during the summer and the fish die due to lack of oxygen in the water. The best way to do this is to add water plants such as water lilies, lotus, etc., as we did. These aquatic plants need sun, thus you can't have the over story trees as required by the ordinance in proximity to a wildlife pond. Such trees also cause the water to become dirty with tree debris, which negatively impacts the fish.

Saplings – 10.82 (4) states "If a Protected Tree is removed... it must be replaced with two (2) trees" Tree seedlings in the list of 16 protected trees often come unbidden, carried in the air, by water, or by squirrels and other animals via their feces or through their food storage habits. No size is specified for a protected tree. Does this mean that every unbidden sapling/seedling must be replaced or allowed to grow?

Conifers - 10.82 (4) (c) Requires replacement conifers to be at least 7 feet tall. Transplanting a large conifer over 6 feet tall is extremely expensive and difficult. The success rate of transplanting medium or large conifers is very poor. Our

neighbor purchased a 6 ft pine and had it professionally planted. It died in less than a year and the landscaper would not honor the warranty as each pointed the finger at the other. As part of our relandscaping project we had a 6 ft black hills spruce professionally planted for \$600. It lived but did not thrive. After ten years we had it removed. As part of the relandscaping project we also had two 3 ft tall Techny Arborvitae professionally planted. One died in less than a year and the landscaper replaced it. The two white pine seedlings that we planted as part of the relandscaping thrived and grew rapidly. Nine years later the seedlings are 6 ft tall. The smaller the tree the easier it is to transplant not only from a labor perspective but also from a success rate perspective. Requiring 7 ft conifers is expensive and more likely to fail.

Overgrown Conifers – Turning overgrown conifers into Protected Trees discourages residents from removing them. Having overgrown conifers from in front of home doors and windows poses a security risk. Robbers often target homes with overgrown conifers obscuring entry ways. A former neighbor of mine was twice broken into by robbers who kicked in her front door. With overgrown conifers obscuring her front door the robbers could work with needed cover. Residents should not be penalized for removing overgrown conifers, which often are out of scale with the home as well as being positioned so as to become a security risk.

Buckthorn and other weed trees - 10.82 (2) (b) includes buckthorn as a removable tree because it is defined by the MN DNR as an invasive species. 10.82 (6) states “If a removable Tree greater than five inches (5”) is removed, it must be replaced with one tree.” Drive through Indian Hills or any areas where there are large lots. There you will see many buckthorn trees greater than 5” in diameter. Requiring residents to replace these on a one for one basis would only discourage a homeowner from removing their buckthorn. Buckthorn is a shade tolerant understory tree, which grows closely together. Replacing them from among the sun loving trees on the required list of 16 trees would necessitate replacement trees being planted so closely together that the replacement trees could not thrive. This is highly impractical. And do you really want to compel residents to replace other Removable Trees such as weedy trees like silver maple, box elder, Siberian elm, etc? The resident likely did not plant them. They were volunteers that arrived unbidden and no one got around to weeding them out.

The ordinance is easily circumvented, thus saving few trees

10.82 (8) states “If Protected Trees were removed within one (1) year prior to the date that the development, demolition and building permit applications were submitted, these Protected Trees are also subject to the replacement policy set forth in paragraph (4) above.”

It takes considerable time to plan a remodeling project. All a homeowner needs to do is to remove any Protected Tree one year and a day prior to applying for the permit, then spend the year planning their remodeling project before applying for a demolition permit. In the alternative, the resident could wait until the remodeling is finished, then begin the tree removal and relandscaping. A savvy developer will tell their prospective seller to do the tree removals prior to closing and then add the removal cost to the selling price of the home. The seller who removed the trees won't be applying for the permit, and by the time the developer/purchaser closes on the home and applies for the permit, the lot's Protected Tree survey will show a bare lot. In the alternative, a builder can simply donate trees to the city and raise the cost of an already high priced home.

The bottom line is that if a property owner does not want a tree, it will be removed sooner or later and there is little that a city can do about it other than to educate residents about the value of trees, or perhaps provide discount trees for residents like the City of Plymouth does. With all the loop holes, the ordinance isn't really about protecting trees. It's about hurling roadblocks in front of developers in a misguided effort to discourage tear downs.

Constitutes a tax on those seeking to renew and upgrade their property

Forcing a landowner to donate trees to city parks when they cannot comply with the proposed ordinance constitutes a tax on those seeking to renew and upgrade their property. This has been done primarily to discourage tear downs on small lots less than 75 feet wide and has overzealously been extended to remodels, additions and pools on lots of all sizes.

Solutions

I believe that tree removals are not really the problem here. Trees are a renewable resource. No one builds a \$500,000 - \$1,000,000 home and then fails to relandscape with trees. Although they may not relandscape immediately, due to time

and financial limitations, they will eventually relandscape. Developers are required to submit a landscape plan. That should be part of the meeting with the neighborhood. If the neighborhood meeting finds the landscape plan insufficient they should talk to the developer about it and work it out with the City tear down supervisor. If the tear down supervisor has some landscaping guidelines, the proposed ordinance is unnecessary.

Residents can hardly complain about large trees being replaced with young trees because all their lots once had young trees when their homes were new. You need to constantly renew the urban forest before trees age out. You don't want to wait until a tree falls on your home or on another structure.

Some residents have complained to me about tear downs. But when they sold their own homes, they sold them to developers who they knew planned to tear them down. They did so because the developers paid them more money. Residents cannot have it both ways.

Let's face it, tree removal complaints are a smoke screen for the real complaint – tear downs. Council needs to solve the right problem, and it is NOT tree removals. Unless Council is willing to make Morningside or other affected small lot tear down areas a historic preservation district much like Country Club, or at least designate some homes in these areas for historic preservation, tear downs will continue. And frankly, some of the homes have been poorly maintained and do warrant being torn down and replaced with homes that are energy efficient and better meet the needs of modern families. But for the vast majority, it is a loss of affordable starter homes. If that loss is not of concern to Council, the accompanying tree loss should not be of concern to council. Whereas the trees can and undoubtedly will be replaced, the starter homes cannot be replaced.

Everyone needs to understand that as long as it is legal to renew a home by remodeling it or tearing it down, so too must it be legal to renew the landscape to fit the renewed homes' needs. Micromanaging residents landscaping is nothing but a sink hole for city staff time and does little to preserve trees in the long run.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my views. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me.

Dianne Plunkett Latham
7013 Comanche Ct
Edina MN 55439-1004
952-941-3542

Heather Branigin

From: Dianne Latham <Dianne@LathamPark.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 01, 2014 11:31 AM
To: Ann Swenson; James B. Hovland; Joni Bennett; Josh Sprague; Mary Brindle (Comcast)
Cc: Tom Horwath; Brian Olson; Cary Teague; Edina Mail; Scott Neal
Subject: Please Oppose Proposed Edina Tree Ordinance

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

5-1-14

Please include the following in the 5-6-14 City Council packet. Thank you.

Dianne Plunkett Latham
Edina Garden Council
Chair, Conservation Committee
7013 Comanche Ct
Edina MN 55439-1004
952-941-3542

From: Twinoaks50@aol.com [<mailto:twinoaks50@aol.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2014 10:28 AM
To: dianne@lathampark.net
Subject: Cutting down Trees

Hi Dianne,

Minnesota garden writer Don Engebretson (*The Renegade Gardener*) has some strong and humorous views on the right to cut down trees without replacing them. In light of the proposed tree ordinance, you may enjoy these columns.

~Elizabeth

The 10 Tenets of Renegade Gardening

Full version is required reading:

<http://www.renegadegardener.com/content/ttenets.htm>

1. Gardening should be challenging, relaxing, and fun.
2. Renegade Gardeners are cautious and wise when perusing the plethora of products and plants sold by the commercial gardening industry.
3. Gardening involves commitment.
4. Renegade Gardeners learn the Latin names of the plants they grow.
5. Gardening is not always easy.
6. Renegade Gardeners come to realize that lawns are essentially a dumb idea.
7. Gardening and rock music do not mix.
8. Renegade Gardeners buy first from local growers.

9. **There is nothing wrong with cutting down a tree on your property.**

10. Irreverence is essential.

"9. There is nothing wrong with cutting down a tree on your property.

It's your tree, and just like any perennial, shrub, or concrete statue of a little boy with a fishing pole, for that matter, if it's fallen into disfavor, it's perfectly all right for you to make it go away. People have extrapolated news of the deforestation of the Brazilian rain forest into a belief that trees should no longer be cut down. Trees should no longer be cut down in the Brazilian rain forest because the loggers there are clear-cutting, lack any reforestation program, and ample substitutes are available for the hard woods being harvested.

This has nothing to do with that damn spruce planted by a previous owner seven feet off the corner of your house that has had the audacity to attempt to grow twenty feet wide, or the white pine planted by the owner before that, that now sits half-dead under the sixty-foot canopy of a red oak that, when planted, was the same height as the pine. If you want to plant a tree every time you cut one down, great, but if you remove a tree from your property because it's planted in a dumb spot, has been improperly pruned, succumbed to disease or storm damage, or simply impacts your ability to create the landscape you envision and you don't plant a tree afterwards, that's fine too. Never take any grief about it from the twelve year-old kids on your block, or their socialist parents, either. "

On Cutting Down a Tree, or Three

<http://www.renegadegardener.com/content/81cutdowntree.htm>

My neighbor Dave wandered into my yard the other day and we lied to each other about what we were planning to accomplish in our gardens by season's end. I mentioned one event definitely taking place on my humble half-acre during the winter: The removal of three excruciatingly mature trees (an oak, an elm, and, to be fair, a maple) from my front yard.

Dave withered, slumped, his face grew white and his eyes started rolling back in their sockets. He recovered, gave a low whistle, looked at his shoes, shook his head. I knew what was coming. Since we were standing beside the maple, he started his cross-examination there.

"You're going to take down this maple? This beautiful tree?" he asked.

The maple in question is forty-five feet tall with a crown width of around twenty-five feet. It's a Norway, *Acer platanoides*, referred to by many in these parts as a "black" maple. I pointed out to David that the tree in question had been pruned, badly, as a youngster, so that the trunk now splits into two large trunks at a point about seven feet above the ground. The dual trunks immediately curve in parallel to the southwest, and exhibit all manner of lesions, cracks, and wounds. The crown is jagged, lop-sided, and gives the impression the tree is off balance. It has never provided any noteworthy fall color display.

Despite my pruning and the professional trimming I paid for a decade ago, it remains the ugliest maple in Deephaven, and that's saying something. The final strike against it is that whereas it sits in a good spot for a tree, *it's the wrong tree for the spot*. It's too close to my house for a large tree, it's out of scale, it looms over and clutters my driveway, and it shades an area in front of my house for five hours in the afternoon. Plus, as I've already stated, it's ugly. A proper gardening solution? Remove it.

The best advice I can give new gardeners, particularly those who have just purchased a home and yard, is **FIX YOUR TREE SITUATION FIRST**. Had I taken the maple out fifteen years ago, and planted in its spot the tree that I'll be planting next spring (an Eastern Redbud), the redbud would be sixteen feet tall by now, nearing its max, and looking gorgeous.



Deephaven maples

I'm always floored by people's reactions to the thought of having trees removed from their yards. Where I live, many of the trees in literally a thousand yards were not planned, were not planted as an element of landscape design. They just grew, maples especially. I refer to maples in ridiculous locations in a yard as a "Deephaven Maple," and every spring I remove over a hundred of them from my front, back and side yards. These trees are an inch or two tall and are sprouting up from the previous year's seed drop.

Every spring, everyone in my neighborhood does the same. Fail to do it and ten years from now, one would have a thousand, twelve-foot maples growing on a half-acre lot. But that never bothers anyone, removing over a thousand maples from their yards in a decade, because they are young. But let a few grow until they cause problems, then cut one down, and you get anonymous letters in the mail.

How many big trees were removed when my house was built in 1946? Ten? Twenty? Fourteen very large trees remained when I bought the house, so I imagine at least ten were given the ultimate prune by the builder when he put in the foundation and driveway. No one ever thinks about that. People who live in their \$550,000 wood homes and decry the loss of six trees when a builder finally wrestles away ownership of an undeveloped lot across the street from them don't ever think about the fifteen trees that were cut down when their house was built. Or the forty that were cut down to supply the lumber for it.

Two of my original fourteen trees — classic Deephaven Maples — were in my back yard, too close together, right off my patio, blocking the view from my kitchen and dining room windows. They existed for no reason except they hadn't been pulled by a previous owner when they were a few inches high. I neglected them, and one died, gratefully, following the drought of the early 1980s. When I took it out I took the other one out.

Everyone hears about the deforestation of the various rain forests on the globe, particularly in South America, and many people curse logging (sometimes justly, sometimes unjustly), but these

situations don't equate to tree removal in residential landscapes. In fact, it's fair to say that the number of trees being planted (and new trees slowly working their way to one hundred-year-old status) in residential America are up from previous decades.

Proof? Development of the southern, western, and northern, second-ring suburbs of Minneapolis — and probably your nearest city. These were farmlands, some as close as two miles from my current home. They were clear-cut by farmers one hundred and fifty years ago, and farmed for generations.

Guess what? The U.S. doesn't need as much farmland as it once did; yield per acre is much higher than it was in the 1800s, or the 1950s, for that matter. All across Minnesota, treeless farmland is being turned into residential home developments, with, granted, ghastly street names. But my point is that trees are being planted, by the thousands across the Twin Cities, and by the millions across America.

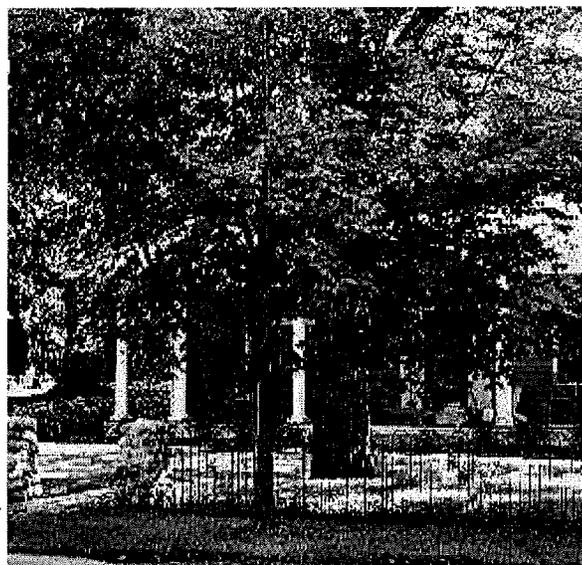
Builders are getting better at not dooming so many trees when they do build homes, and have learned not to change the soil level around trees they want to save. New, disease resistant strains of trees, from crabapples to elms, are being developed and marketed, and nurseries can't keep up with demand from builders, landscapers and homeowners.

Getting back to my trees, the maple, as discussed, is history. The elm is coming down (I explained to Dave) because it's very old, parts of it have been lost in numerous storms, and if I leave it up it will certainly go down in a storm, possibly on my house, within the next five years. It's also in a really dumb spot, smack in front of my house, up way too close.

The red oak, which sits eight feet from the elm, is a nice-looking tree but is also in a dumb spot, even closer to my house (twelve feet) than the elm. This oak is fifty feet tall and could well be one hundred years old. I've debated the oak, but decided finally to take it out because in my new front yard plan, I'd never put any type of tree where it stands. I'm having it removed in eight, ten and twelve-foot lengths, then calling up a friend of mine with a portable sawmill he tows behind his pickup. Come spring he'll saw it into 8" x 8"s and 10" x 10"s for use in an elaborate arbor structure I'm going to build off my home's new addition. I like that.

I'm sure one reason the elm and the oak were left (they most certainly existed before the house was built, and were not planted as a part of any landscape plan) was to shade and cool the house. They sit directly south. Air conditioning was not available to the original owner in the 1940s, so these two trees provided shade to the roof and front of the house in summer, then lost their leaves and allowed the sun to shine on the house in the winter. Well, I put in central air conditioning four years ago. This opens up my options.

So I'm taking three trees out. Big ones. Before you phone the Sierra Club and report me, may I also point out that I am planting three trees in my yard. I mentioned this to Dave and he was



Deephaven maple after new home construction:
Would you plant a tree there?

immediately back to liking me, so I didn't mention that my planting three trees was sheer coincidence. You don't need to plant a tree every time you take one down (see [Tenet 11](#)).

Some people find that hard to believe. I was doing a yard consultation last week with a young couple down the road, nice house and lot, many beautiful trees, and as we walked around a corner of their house we came upon the second ugliest maple in Deephaven. Twenty years old, perhaps. A previous owner had hit the tree, repeatedly, with the mower blade, so that the trunk actually grew in a brazen "s" as it struggled for sunlight under a full canopy of far more mature trees. It was too close to the house, all alone, fixing to die in one of the few areas on the entire one-acre lot in which I would never plant a tree.

The couple asked me what I thought about "the little maple." It goes, I said. "That's what the neighbors all say, but we wanted an expert opinion." I know when to bite my tongue. Then the wife asked, "So what type of tree should we plant there after it's gone?"

Heather Branigin

From: Frank Petrovic on behalf of Edina Mail
Sent: Thursday, May 01, 2014 6:14 PM
To: 'Stephanie Platteter'
Subject: RE: Edina Tree Ordinance

Hi Stephanie,

I will pass this along to Administration.

Thank you,
Frank



Frank Petrovic, Customer Service Representative

952-826-0347 | Fax 952-826-0389

FPetrovic@EdinaMN.gov | www.EdinaMN.gov

...For Living, Learning, Raising Families & Doing Business

From: Stephanie Platteter [<mailto:platt013@umn.edu>]
Sent: Thursday, May 01, 2014 12:56 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: Edina Tree Ordinance

I am writing today to voice my overwhelming support for the Tree Ordinance that the Edina City Council will consider at their May 6 meeting. The trees are so important to the character of our neighborhoods and to the value of our homes because they differentiate us from other suburban neighborhoods. It has been heartbreaking to see so many mature trees come down in my Morningside neighborhood. The proposed Tree Ordinance is a fair and effective way for Edina to ensure that trees continue to add character and environmental benefits to our neighborhoods.

Thank you,
Stephanie Platteter
4304 Branson Street

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Stephanie Platteter | Executive Director of Marketing and College-wide Enrollment Management|
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Heather Branigin

From: Frank Petrovic on behalf of Edina Mail
Sent: Thursday, May 01, 2014 6:36 PM
To: Heather Branigin
Subject: FW: I support the tree ordinance

Marian supports the tree ordinance.



Frank Petrovic, Customer Service Representative

952-826-0347 | Fax 952-826-0389

FPetrovic@EdinaMN.gov | www.EdinaMN.gov

...For Living, Learning, Raising Families & Doing Business

From: Marian Cracraft [<mailto:marcray33@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Thursday, May 01, 2014 4:56 PM
To: Edina Mail
Subject: I support the tree ordinance

Marian



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®
EDINA

May 2, 2014

Dear Members of the Edina City Council:

For over 30 years, LWV Edina has supported creating and maintaining a community center in Edina that responds to the diverse and changing needs of all age groups.

While Edina has a variety of public facilities, none alone or together meets all the needs of our growing and changing community. A new community center that offers a range of activities, from arts and culture to recreation, for residents of all ages and in a central location, would meet these needs and encourage more connections among all our residents.

The former public works site is a rare parcel of centrally-located available public land. The current process to seek ideas for redevelopment of this property provides an opportunity to explore the possibility of a new community center. The January 2014 residential survey shows support for devoting the site to community amenities such as a fitness center, performing arts space, art center, outdoor plaza, multi-purpose rooms, indoor pool, and athletic courts. A new community center at this location would also be accessible by transit.

The current process to consider potential uses for the land is housed in Economic Development. A process to determine the best uses for public land should not be driven primarily by economic concerns. LWV Edina believes that the public's interests and needs, balanced with fiscal responsibility once those interests and needs are known, should drive the redevelopment of public land.

To this end, LWV Edina recommends that the City Council:

- End the current Economic Development process;
- Solicit the involvement of the Parks and Recreation Department going forward; and
- Begin a process to explore current and future public needs that may be met by this public land, including the possibility of a community center.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Debby McNeil".

Debby McNeil
President, LWV Edina

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.