Attachment 'S'

Moises Monrroy Castillo

From: Joe Atkinson <atkinson_joe@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 3, 2022 9:43 PM
To: Moises Monrroy Castillo
Cc: Joe Disalvo; Steven Gorman; Chad Hannan; Chris Peterson; Roger Sandau; Kim; Paul Rosenberg
Subject: Concerns regarding proposed Whispering Oaks rezoning

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Mr. Monrroy,
I'm writing to express my family's concerns regarding the proposed rezoning for Whispering Oaks to allow BHI development of an apartment complex with commercial storefronts. My wife and I are strongly opposed to this change for the following reasons:

- The development would be inconsistent with the character of the Whispering Oaks/Forest Glen area, which is currently comprised entirely of single family homes and two-unit townhomes. My wife and I moved here 16 months ago and chose this area specifically because we believe that it's unique in Council Bluffs, and perhaps even in the Omaha metro area, for its combination of a quiet, rural feeling, well-maintained homes, and neighborhood association bylaws that ensure the continuation of that environment well into the future. Had it not been for this neighborhood, we'd be living in west Omaha today.
- At no time during that purchase process was the possibility of this zoning change mentioned to us. In fact, when we asked about plans for the field now under discussion, it was suggested that the city might be considering a portion of it for a park.
- There are many existing apartment complexes in Council Bluffs that have ample capacity, as well as numerous areas where new apartment construction could be accomplished without destroying the character of such a unique neighborhood.
- Similarly, Council Bluffs is already littered with vacant commercial bays in mixed-use applications much like what is being proposed here.
- BHI is horribly unresponsive to quality concerns on existing homes throughout the Omaha area. In Whispering Oaks alone, more than 25% of all BHI homeowners have reported warranty issues that BHI has repeatedly ignored, and in some cases, they've continued to do so for years. Given that, we have no confidence that they'll maintain much larger structures. If anything, that additional maintenance burden on BHI will leave them even less likely to respond to existing homeowners since rental properties would be given top priority due to city oversight of rentals.
- To the city, I understand that this is about adding tax dollars and appeasing a developer who's invested a great deal of capital in Council Bluffs. So while we are 100% opposed to this development, if it's determined that it will move forward in spite of our vehement objections, we'd propose the following stipulations:

    - Reject the extension of Sycamore St. that would connect our neighborhood with the apartment complex. Such a connection serves no purpose, as traffic could just as easily enter and exit Franklin Ave. from the planned Crown Road extension, but the connection puts children along

Sycamore, Blackthorn, Boxelder, and Balsam streets at risk due to greater traffic volume and higher speeds. It would also increase noise in what is today a very quiet neighborhood. If additional exits from the complex are required for safety purposes beyond the planned connections to Greenview and Franklin, a second Greenview access point could be added in the southwest corner of the complex.

- Increase buffer space around the perimeter, especially along the boundary with the Whispering Oaks neighborhood. Consider a city park as part of that buffer - something that this portion of the city is lacking.
- Limit construction to one- or two-story townhomes only. If apartments are absolutely unavoidable, limit structures to a maximum of three stories as originally proposed, with those taller structures limited to the low-lying center of the complex.

Thank you very much for considering our objections. If you have any questions or would like to discuss further, please feel free to reply to this message or call my cell at 402-306-4634.

Joe Atkinson
7 Boxelder St.
Council Bluffs