

# MEMO

Therese Campbell 1111 Mississippi Ave. Duluth, MN 55811 218-727-1966

**To:** Keith Hamre (Please forward to the Planning Commission members: Patricia Mullins, David Sarvela, Luke Sydow, Drew Digby, Marc Beeman, Timothy Meyer, Garner Moffat, Terry Guggenbuehl, and Zandra Zwiebel)  
cc: Joel Sipress, Jennifer Julsrud

**From:** Therese Campbell [tzcampbell@msn.com](mailto:tzcampbell@msn.com)

**Date:** Wednesday, August 20, 2014

**Re:** Proposed Townhouse Development off Lyons at Mississippi

Dear Planning Commissioners members:

You are all involved in considering this recent request of Green Capital to allow the building of six townhouses, each with 3 or 4 bedrooms in the area in which we live.

On August 12, 2014 about 40 members of our neighborhood attended a planning committee meeting at City Hall. I am among the citizens responding to the Mississippi/Lyons project. I would like to recall remarks made after the many representatives of our neighborhood spoke their reasons for opposing this particular request. The responses will be in the action report, as the proposal was tabled to investigate some unanswered questions, which Mr. Ross could not answer satisfactorily. The only illustration was a map of the area and how they would divide it, with no drawings.

The **major concerns** in the neighborhood were density (number of cars that would be parking on the street), traffic, storm water run-off, safety, and winter challenges on both Mississippi and especially on

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Lyons with a very steep grade, **NOT** renters/students etc. We welcome students and they are in our neighborhood in rental homes. They blend in beautifully. Parking issues have been addressed by the city and resolved (except in the winter-we are all challenged with snow plowing and unpassable lanes; check with the fire department).

1. One commissioner responded, he "was in a rental as a student and he turned out alright". What relevance is in this remark? We are NOT against "students". Discontinue using that as a reason.
2. One of the commissioners reflected on our concern using the math: 5/6 townhouses with 3 to 4 bedrooms and only 16 parking spaces. This illustrates the problem. Where would overflow of cars go? There are two "hilly" streets: Mississippi and Lyons. In the winter walking would be treacherous along with many other challenges we have living in the highly gradient area. The storm runoff comes under this concern.
3. I suggest that the commissioners drive to the area and consider the impact: benefits and drawbacks. The UDC could be reviewed with the concerns of the neighborhood: what are other choices for the property to be developed? Again, a member of the committee called for an "exception" to the UDC when considering engineering, traffic and safety issues brought to their attention.
4. It was remarked by one of the planning members that renters will "walk" and won't be driving? But they will still have cars!
5. Our neighborhood will help with growing the population in Duluth by building single family homes that attract long term residents; high end condos could be another option. These types of developments would enhance the property and supply opportunity to purchase housing. Can we agree about searching for other alternatives for development of the property on the corner of Mississippi and Lyons?

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I welcome your responses and concerns. Thanks for your time.

Therese Campbell 1111 Mississippi Ave. Duluth, MN 55811 218-727-1966

## John Kelley

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**From:** Keith Hamre  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 20, 2014 9:35 AM  
**To:** 'WILLIAM AND THERESE CAMPBELL'; billscampbell@hotmail.com; tcampbell@medinfosystems.org  
**Cc:** Charles Froseth; John Kelley; Joel Sipress; Jennifer Julsrud  
**Subject:** RE: Mississippi/Lyons  
**Attachments:** Mississippi-Lyons Plan B.DOCX

William & Therese,

Thank you for the questions and comments, I believe you've submitted some very thoughtful inquiries. Here are my responses to your questions:

1. Using the term "students or student rentals" – I agree we've moved past the 300 foot rule and are working towards more proactive rental licensing and we should not be using this reference.
2. Question of math regarding parking, hilly streets, storm water run-off – The storm water run-off has to be handled on-site and managed in compliance with City Engineering's requirements. The issue of hilly streets is not a technical standard of the Special Use permit as in Duluth there are a number of hills and tight turns and driveway entrances. That being said, the development should work towards reducing this impact. Parking standards under the UDC (or zoning) the developer is only required to provide 1 space per unit. Zoning does not differentiate between owner or renter occupied structures. The zoning is only looking at the structure size, density of units, storm water run-off items. The Rental Licensing does however regulate parking. The new licensing requirements were put in place to require all off-street parking to be provided by the development. So, if the developer looks to obtain a multi-tenant license, they will be required to provide 1 parking space per bedroom. So, if the developer has 16 parking spaces, they will be limited to 16 bedrooms.
3. UDC exception – The Comprehensive Plan that was adopted in 2006 called for a mixture of housing types in traditional neighborhoods, that included Single and two family structures as permitted uses and Townhomes to be allowed by Special Use permit, meaning they had to meet additional standards.
4. Renters will "walk"- while the Comprehensive Plan looks to promote more walking and other modes of transportation, like buses and bikes, cars are still a reality and unfortunately without a better public transit system we have to still plan for off-street parking.
5. Build single family homes to promote long term residents – Again, I'll reiterate, zoning does not control ownership. As we've seen in Duluth, single family structures can be both owner or renter occupied. It ends up being a housing market condition. With regards to site density in the R-1 zone for this site; there could be 5 single family structures, 4 duplexes (each requires 3000 square feet of area) or 6 town homes. The number of bedrooms for both single family and duplexes is also controlled by the multi-tenant licensing no more than 4 bedrooms per unit, but the off-street parking requirement is one less than the number of bedrooms or 3 per unit. So, with the Single family units it would be 20 bedrooms and only 15 off-street parking spaces. The duplexes could have 32 bedrooms and only 24 off-street parking spaces.

Your memo and these comments will be forwarded to the Planning Commission and the City Councilors that you referenced in the document. If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Thanks,  
Keith Hamre  
Director of Planning & Construction Services  
Room 208 City Hall  
218.730.5297

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August 14, 2014

The Duluth Planning Commission  
411 West First Street  
Duluth, MN 55802

RE: Kenwood Townhouses (PL 14-099)

Dear Members of the Planning Commission:

Thank you for listening to our concerns on Tuesday evening. I really appreciate your patience and feel like you truly heard us.

Before you reconvene on this issue in September, I would ask you to please do 2 things:

1. Come to the Brainerd Avenue alley to see where the proposed new alley will join this alley. Then, talk to the folks in the City who are responsible for snowplowing and ask them for their thoughts on how they plan to manage snow plowing in these two narrow alleys.
2. While you are in the neighborhood, please look at the quality and construction of the houses that are here. Then, drive to Chester Way and look at the quality and construction of the townhouses that were recently erected by this same developer, and determine if the quality and construction of the proposed townhouses will blend in and add value to the neighborhood

Thank you for your consideration.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



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