From: INA PROKIPCHUK
Date: November 13, 2023 at 8:46:41 PM CST
To: "Mayes, Brian"
Subject: Proposed re-zoning based on Federal Housing Accelerator Fund

Councillor Brian Mayes
St. Vital Ward

Brian:

Thank you for the conversation today on the proposed re-zoning being discussed tomorrow at EPC. I would have welcomed the opportunity to present in person but unfortunately cannot participate in person or via zoom. As you know, I am the President of the Niakwa Park Residents' Association, but my feedback will not be on behalf of the association, but rather from me as an individual resident, homeowner. In lieu of a formal statement, here are my thoughts in bullet points:

- The City of Winnipeg has spent years holding public consultation and creating infill guidelines and other planning documents to create a development strategy. If all this work was thoughtful and with a vision for our city's future growth, how can our Mayor and City Council entertain this offer from the Federal Government? If City Council pursues this proposal, it will have failed its electorate.

- My community, Niakwa Park, has 5 bays and years ago only one bay had its road rebuilt and its sewers upgraded to a dual sewer system. The rest of the homeowners on the remaining 4 bays continue to have single sewer systems that are problematic. During expected rainstorms we all are on our ladders in the pouring rain, cleaning out our eavestroughs and ensuring all downspouts are extended. During each and every downpour we remain on flood watch. But that is how we roll here, it is our way of life. In addition, our roads are in total disrepair and filling potholes with asphalt, a bandaid solution, is not sustainable. Why would the City want to build multiplexes in older communities where the infrastructure has aged beyond its expected lifespan, already taxed to support its existing population?

- I dislike the word NIMBY (Not In My Backyard). I find it offensive and inaccurate. I have a home built in 1955, on a 60 x 100 lot with 4 mature oak trees. I came to this community because of its unique inventory of mid century modern homes, with a lot size and yard that affords me privacy. Four-plexes dotted throughout the community would completely change the landscape here. Why is there public shaming towards a NIMBY? Why should I apologize for loving my community BECAUSE of its history, its architecture, and its green space? Why aren't we celebrating our communities each with their own history, unique housing stock, and aesthetic? Why should I have to worry that one day beside me, across from me, or behind me, there might be a 4-plex, negatively impacting my lifestyle and the market value of my home? My home is a significant piece of my investment portfolio. Why aren't my rights as a homeowner and taxpayer protected, respected?

- This proposal that is being considered will impact ALL Winnipeg communities, Tuxedo, Bridgewater, Sage Creek, etc. How would a homeowner in a newer development respond to this proposal? What if a home burns down in a new community? Could that rebuild potentially be a 4-plex? How will this proposal be received in established, mature communities like Tuxedo, or in newer communities like Sage Creek or Bridgewater?

- I have watched the community of Glenwood get butchered over the years, under the guise of densification. This city has given too much power to the developers, disregarding the rights of home owners, taxpayers. It is such a shame that with an aging population, the inventory of livable bungalows has been depleted. Also what has been the environmental impact? I subscribe to the idea that the most environmentally friendly home is the one that is already built. I recently watched the City tear down the former Windsor Park Library. It appeared to be torn down methodically, with abatement of asbestos and perhaps other environmental toxins. Why isn't there a similar protocol for residential properties? Have the developers who demolish an older home, lot split, and then build two homes on the same lot, been held to any environmental accountability? Do these developers remove and recycle old woodwork or other usable parts for resale prior to demolition? I suspect the homes in Glenwood have been bulldozed and taken to the dump. Does everything including the kitchen sink, hit the landfill? So how can our City Council be taken seriously on its environmental goals, when its policies create more waste in our landfills? City Council is entertaining collecting food scraps for a composting program, yet construction materials from entire homes are hitting the dump.

- Meaningful infill development is already underway in this city, the development at the Southwood Circle (U of M campus) and Public Markets (former Canada Packers site) for example. Also, I have watched apartments and condos being built in recent years along bus corridors such as St. Mary's Road, St. Anne's Road, Archibald Street, Taylor Avenue, Pembina Highway. New housing construction is happening everywhere I look. These are meaningful projects because they create numerous units of new housing in an impactful way. Why is the City wasting its time with introducing 4-plexes in already existing communities? Why does City Council want to create a climate of distrust and animosity with its homeowners? The Property and Planning Department should be spending its limited resources on large and impactful projects, ones that create a large number of housing units, creating new pockets of community.

- The cost of building infrastructure to service urban sprawl has been the argument to justify infill development in mature communities. If this is the case, why does the City continue to approve construction of new developments? Is the City prepared to cease all plans for construction on new developments, putting a moratorium on all future new housing developments?

- The Federal Government has overstepped its reach. The jurisdiction for housing is with the provincial government. Does City Council even have the authority to entertain the Federal Governments's proposal? It would make more sense for the City to seek a partnership with the Federal Government to relocate our rail lines and rail yards. If the rail yards were removed out of the city limits, infill development would occur naturally and organically, contributing to densification in a much more meaningful way.

- There was a plebiscite on our election ballot 2018 on how Winnipegers felt about removing the barriers at Portage & Main, opening it up to pedestrian traffic. The entire City of Winnipeg had the opportunity to weigh in on this proposal. It would seem logical that a proposal of this magnitude, a re-zoning proposal that would permit a 4-plex on ANY city lot, is entitled to just as much discussion and debate as we had on opening up Portage & Main.

This re-zoning proposal is such a deviation from city planning documents, and has ramifications for each and every community in this city. This re-zoning was not reflected in the election platforms of our Mayor and City Councillors, and was not the mandate given to City Council last October. For these reasons this proposal must be defeated. The integrity of the electoral process in this City and the integrity of City Council itself, is at stake.

Sincerely,

Ina Prokipchuk
Resident of Niakwa Park