

From: [Matt Frigaard](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#); [CouncilHearing \(CI-StPaul\)](#); [Bill Dermody](#)
Subject: Matt Frigaard's Testimony Regarding Ord 23-42, 1500-1510 York Ave Rezoning Hearing on 09-13-2023
Date: Tuesday, September 12, 2023 6:34:46 PM
Attachments: [Matt Frigaard 1500-1510 York Ave Testimony 09-12-2023.pdf](#)

Good evening,

Please accept my written testimony for tomorrow's City Council Meeting, 09-13-2023.

I will also be in attendance to share the same.

Thank you,
Matt Frigaard
930 Barclay St, St Paul, MN 55106
612-812-5793

Good afternoon,

My name is Matt Frigaard and I live at 930 Barclay St., one half block from the proposed York Ave. entrance.

First, let me say that I am not opposed to multi-tenant housing, and I agree that we need more affordable housing in our city. At the same time, it's my perspective that we have our share of multi-tenant complexes in our immediate neighborhood (**Map 1**) and don't need more. With the current multi-tenant density of this neighborhood, how can the conclusion be made that the surrounding infrastructure can support more? Why aren't we building new and more affordable housing where there isn't any rather than area that is already dense with pre-existing units?

I'm a single father who works from home and I've lived at this address for the last 20 years. I'm here because my family has the potential to be very negatively impacted by this project, especially during construction. How/if this project proceeds, the quality and efficacy of mitigations on the construction process and the resulting complex will affect my neighbors' and my livelihood and quality of life.

I'll admit it is difficult for me to view this public input exercise as other than merely performative since:

- Land clearing has already begun, and the green space is already lost.
- A Zoning Commission member works for the architecture firm for this project and appears to have represented the firm and project in a meeting with the Greater Eastside Community Council who subsequently endorsed the project.

But because I appreciate the work the city has done to address other matters of public interest, I'm hopeful that our concerns on this matter will be heard and accommodation made. Below is my commentary and list of open questions I'd appreciate answers to depending on how things move forward.

Parking:

- There are already parking issues in the neighborhood. (**Map 1**)
 - Because Amberwood Place doesn't provide sufficient parking, its residents and single-family homes fill both sides of York between Barclay and Birmingham. This block is impassable in the winter and is single lane in all other seasons already.
 - I just requested a change in my daughter's school bus stop away from the York/Birmingham intersection because of the danger of trying to walk or drive on this block.
 - Residents of Amberwood Place and single-family homes already overflow park on Barclay.
 - Residents of Amberwood Place and single-family residents already park in the street on York between Barclay and Hazelwood making it single lane at times.

- The new complex, called The Parkway on E 7th, doesn't provide enough parking, and street parking has made the intersection at Birmingham and 7th more dangerous to navigate.
- Single family residents park up and down Hazelwood.
- The residents of the Stillwater cul de sac entrance already line both sides of that block with their cars.
- Several single-family homes are occupied by multiple generations and/or families (**Map 2**). This also drives up the current need for street parking because their garages and driveways don't provide enough space.
- Will tenants of the new complex be forced to pay for the underground parking? If so, that will further exacerbate the street parking, because not all tenants will be able to afford that additional cost.
- As currently planned, more surrounding streets will become dangerous single lane streets due to the overflow of this complex. Especially in winter. Current and future residents of this neighborhood, apartment or single-family homes, will be forced to park blocks away if the new project provides insufficient parking.
- I request that the developer provide 1.5 spaces per unit because there is barely such a thing as a single car family. One spot per unit will not be enough.

Traffic:

- There are significant numbers of children living and playing near or on the proposed entrances to the complex. (**Map 2**) Last I saw, there's a basketball hoop up on the Stillwater cul de sac that will become a pass-through for tenants of this complex. Increased traffic creates significant concern and risk.
- Every Halloween and Holiday season, we're gifted with wonderful neighborhood light and music displays that benefit charitable organizations. (**Map 2**) Tour buses and visitors come from all around to see these displays and at current traffic and parking levels, there are already challenges.
- To decrease the traffic impact on the neighborhood and increase tenant access to transit, a third or change of entrance should be added/moved to E. 7th St. access via the unconstructed lot at 1509 E. 7th.

Open Questions:

- Has there been an environmental assessment?
- Is the developer required to offset the environmental impact resulting from the removal of roughly 3 acres of trees?
- What mitigations will be in place to limit the local noise, air, and water pollution during construction?
- What protections to our quality of life are being provided? What recourse do we have?
- If this project makes working from home untenable, and my ability to make a living is negatively affected, what recourse can I pursue?
- How long will construction take?
- What hours during the day and on what weekdays will construction take place?

- What recourse do we have to ensure I'm able to maintain my quality of home life and property value?
- What is the process for lodging complaints regarding construction in the event it is necessary?
- As massive machines and truckloads of materials come and go down our residential streets, what happens to our road maintenance fees? Are the streets able to withstand the load without risk to water, gas, and sewer? If something breaks under the weight of development, who's responsible for repairs?
- Has a decision been made on the management company for the property? What are some other properties they manage? Who are they? What has been their pattern with handling neighbor and tenant issues? Do they have any past or outstanding violations of code or compliance?

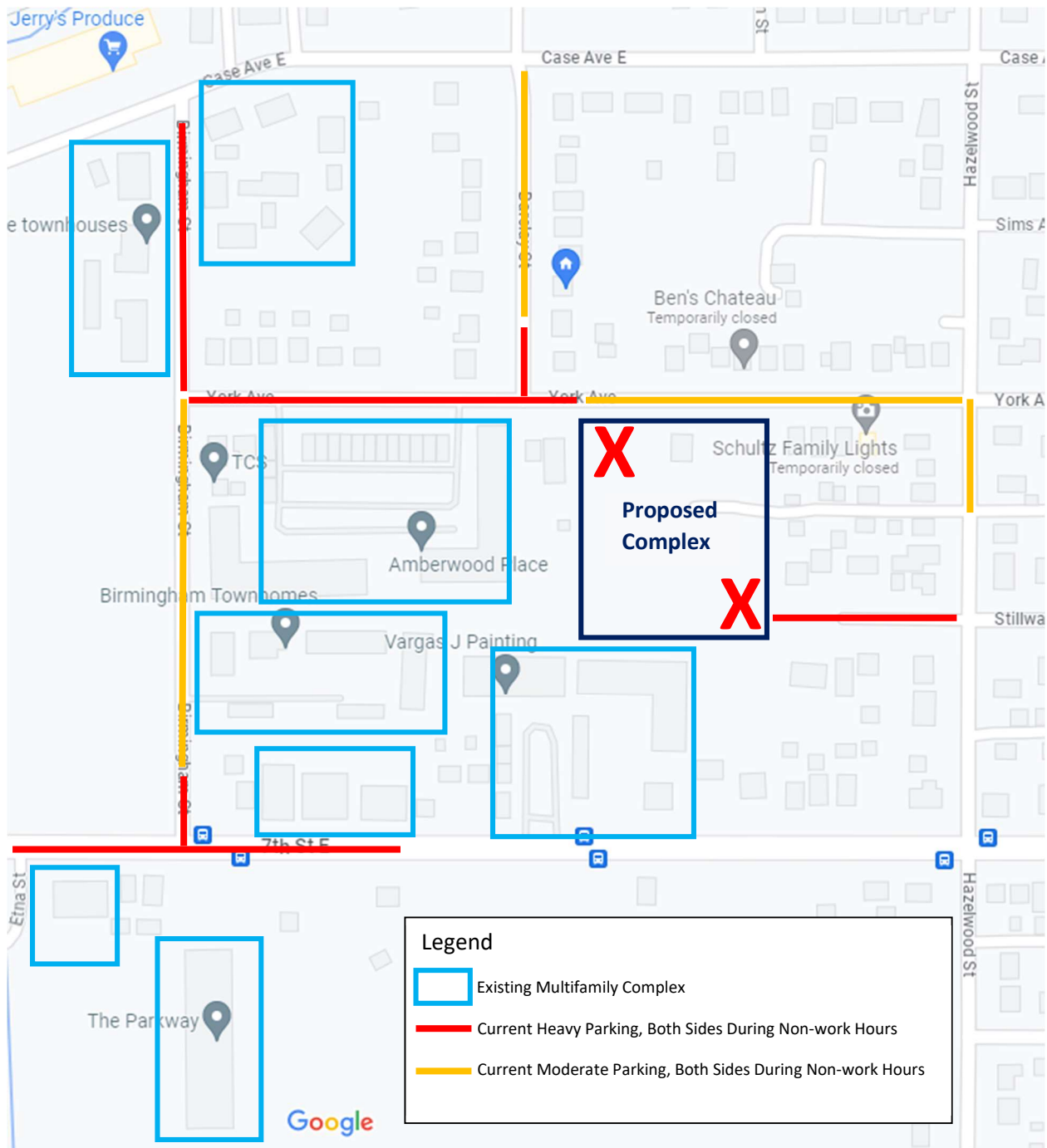
Wrapping Up:

I want to express my sincere gratitude to Bill Dermody and Nellie Jerome for their patience, professionalism, and expertise when addressing my questions thus far. I appreciate that their job is not easy and I'm thankful for their willingness to hear and include me in this process.

I understand that increasing the value of the tax base is important to the city and that available housing is tight. I ask, however, that serious consideration be given to the taxpayers already living and caring for this neighborhood. Based on the testimony and letters I've read so far, we are in universal opposition to this development. This is our home and WE, not any council, committee, board, developer, or architect, are going to have to live through and with this decision. We've invested all that we have in our homes and neighborhood. I am not in favor of this rezoning, property development design, or the resulting expectations and burdens that will be placed on our neighborhood and its people if this project moves forward.

Thank you,
 Matt Frigaard
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 612-812-5793

Map 1 – Existing Multi-Tenant Complexes and Parking



Map 2 – Neighborhood Kids and Multi-Generational/Family Occupancy of Single-Family Homes

