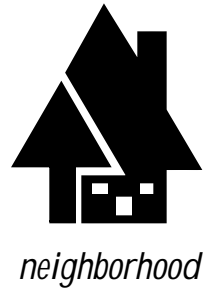


Councilmember Richard Conlin,
Chair, Neighborhoods, Sustainability,
and Community Development Committee,
1100 Municipal Building,
600 Fourth Avenue,
Seattle, WA 98104



October 8, 2001

Testimony on Madison-Miller Rezoning Proposals

Dear Councilmember Conlin,

Let me start by thanking you for facilitating this process. I would also like to thank Jory Phillips of DCLU for his expertise in analyzing the zoning possibilities and for his skill in communicating the arguments to the public. His 3D diagrams were especially helpful for those of us who don't think about zoning on a daily basis.

Most of the proposals are useful, sensible additions to our neighborhood, and help us to adapt to the changes that are occurring along Madison. The recommendation for Area 9 (to allow residential small lot development) is particularly appealing: it will enable some of the older residents of the neighborhood to stay in their familiar homes, while at the same time realizing some of the equity in their property, and hence avoid being "gentrified" out of the neighborhood. There are, however, two proposals from the September 11th DCLU Director's Report which, I believe, need modification.

Area 3: Proposed L3 to L4 rezone too large: use the July 3rd (area 3a) proposal instead.

We have long had concerns about the very steep transition, as one moves away from Madison, from the 65' (or 85') Neighborhood Commercial (NC-3) zone to the immediately adjacent 30' Multifamily low-rise zone (L-3). In the July 2nd proposals [Appendix 1, attached], a small L-4 (38' height limit) rezone was inserted between the NC-3 and L-3 zones, to provide a stepped height transition. This seemed a simple, elegant solution to the problem.

However, in the September 11th Director's Report (page 9) the proposed L-4 zone has grown considerably and now includes most of the L-3 zone north of Madison. This larger rezone does nothing to further buffer the height transition (and brings L4 very close to SF5000 and L-1 zones), and merely serves to further increase housing density in our neighborhood.

Note that our neighborhood does not need the larger rezone to achieve its growth targets. A Sept. 2000 document from the Strategic Planning Office [Appendix 2, attached] gives our 20 year planning estimate as 400 households, and our growth since the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan as 196 units. You will note that pages 6 & 7 of the Sept. 11th Director's Report detail 602 additional housing units in our neighborhood. We thus support the smaller L4 rezone proposed in the July 2nd proposal (Item 3a, Appendix 1) but not the larger rezone proposed in the Sept. 11th version.

Area 4a: NC2-R40 is a less intrusive, equally viable alternative.

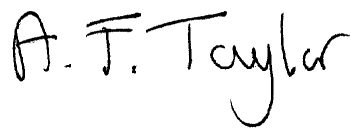
This proposal has been much discussed at previous meetings. The present suggestion is to rezone to NC2/R--65'. An alternative proposal, to rezone to NC2/R-40', is offered here as an alternative, was the preferred alternative in the July 2nd draft, and is essentially the proposal suggested by the neighborhood association during the neighborhood planning process.

We continue to support the NC2/R-40' proposal for Area 4a:

- The larger height limit would put a 65' building across the street from two recently built 35' (30' + 5' bonus for sloped roof) apartment buildings and the recently renovated CHHIP building (100 -20th Ave E.). Neither building is liable to be replaced by taller L4 buildings for many years. The looming presence of the tall buildings, as illustrated by the shadow effect on the adjacent buildings at midwinter, is very oppressive with the 65' limit, but much less so with the 40' limit [Sept. 11 Director's Report, copy attached as Appendix 3].
- **(Flawed)** Argument in favor of the 65' limit [Sept. 11 Director's Report, page 14]: "The 65' height limit would provide a reasonable transition between the 65' areas and the residential areas to the north". I regret that I do not understand how a 65' building can provide a transition between a 65' building and a 43' (38' + 5' peaked roof) or 35' (30' + 5') building.
- **(Flawed)** Argument in favor of the 65' limit [Sept. 11 Director's Report, page 14]: "Additionally the City's Design Review Program could help mitigate the impact of a new 65' building in this area". Design Review Boards can suggest compromises, but are obliged to permit any building that satisfies the building code. Their power to mitigate the effects of a 65' building on adjacent smaller buildings is thus very limited.
- **Development of mixed NC3-65 and NC2-40 properties are very feasible in this neighborhood.** The Hearing, Speech and Deafness Center's project, now under construction at 19th & Madison, is mostly NC3-65, but contains ~ 31% NC2-40. Mr. Falls' property would be ~ 27% NC2/R-40 if the L-3 portion was rezoned to NC2/R-40. The large commercial development being planned for 23rd & Madison is mostly NC3-65, but does successfully incorporate a small slice of NC2-40 at its southern end.

Thank you again for all your hard work, and for your help in the continued redevelopment of our neighborhood.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Taylor
Chair, Miller Park Neighborhood Association