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La Vid Urban Homes
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November 17, 2008

- Mayor Will Wynn
- Mayor Pro Tem Brewster McCracken
- Council Member Lee Leffingwell
- Council Member Mike Martinez
- Council Member Randi Shade
- Council Member Laura Morrison
- Council Member Sheryl Cole

City Hall- Austin Texas
P. O. Box 1088
Austin, Texas 78767

Re: Watters Zoning Request on 6800 Manchaca – case # C14-2008-0142

Dear Mayor and City Council Members:

Thank you for allowing the opportunity for the applicant and myself to meet by postponing the date of the zoning hearing to November 20th. We were able to meet and I am in favor of the zoning request subject to the conditions referenced in ZAP's actions and the following:

1. A twenty-five (25') foot building setback placed along the property line that is our south and the applicants north in the area that would be zoned GR.
2. A vegetated buffer that would remain undisturbed within the required five-foot (5') foot building setback area along the property line that is our south and the applicants north in the area that would be zoned LO.

As you may recall, I represent a project currently under construction with the first phase completed at 6708 Manchaca. This project will have 37 individually owned townhomes with the majority of units having backyards that share the same property line as the applicants' property, an area approximately 1086 feet long. Our residential structures are located 25 feet off the shared property line.

Our zoning is MF-1, however we did not maximize the allowed coverage or density and decided to build a more owner-occupied, less dense townhome community of individual property owners. I have been concerned about the impact the development of a GR and LO zoning would have on the shared boundary line. One of the goals of this project was to provide affordable housing within the city of Austin and therefore home ownership,

community pride, and some sense of privacy within a more dense development. This was the selection made instead of building a more dense, apartment-looking condo project, that would maximize the allowed development on the site. Some might argue that if I wanted to build single family homes on the site we should have platted the property into single family lots. But, even without re-zoning the property (which would not have been required if it was developed into single family lots) the trigger application of compatibility standards would not have been required. In addition, if the property had been developed into single family lots pricing of land in infill areas in the city and the development requirements do not support this financially especially when developers are required to construct off-site utilities such as ours did under Service Extension Request 2458.

The City has made a big push to create higher density residential communities within the City where infill areas exist, along mass transit routes, access to bicycle routes, and closer to the downtown area. In order for these projects to be successful and maintain an appeal, we need to protect the integrity of new higher density residential projects when they meet up with general retail and limited office uses. The web site of our project is at www.lavidhomes.com.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rick Hardy

cc:

Wendy Rhoades
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