



July 12, 2015

The Honorable Danny Solis
25th Ward Alderman
1800 S. Blue Island Ave.
Chicago, IL 60608

Re: Proposed development at 1050/1060 W. Monroe (former Carmichael's site)

Dear Alderman Solis,

The proposed developers of the subject property, Michigan Avenue Real Estate Group (Michigan Ave.), are seeking a zoning change from DS-3 to DX-3 to optimize the number of units that they can construct on the property. In order to gain the support of Neighbors of West Loop, Paul DeWoskin and others from Michigan Ave. met with our Development Committee, as well as local residents most impacted by the development, on June 22, 2015 to provide an update on their design.

Though the subject property and its associated zoning change have been evaluated and recommended for approval by both the West Loop Community Organization and the West Central Association, the residents present at our meeting have led us to call for further design improvements to reduce adverse impacts to the neighborhood and provide maximum benefit to nearby residents. We have compiled this letter to document our Committee's recommendations for the proposed development.

To-date, Michigan Ave. has been somewhat inconsistent in their communications with the community. For example, they led residents to believe that they did not have a demolition permit for the existing courtyard, yet they began to remove trees and green space soon thereafter. However, Michigan Ave. has also demonstrated a willingness to work with the community to alter their design to accommodate requests. This includes reducing the number of units from 164 to 120 and increasing the size of the units, significantly increasing the size of the proposed green space (from 2,500 sq ft to nearly 13,000 sq ft) and making much of this area public, and increasing setback from Monroe and Carmichael Place to the east. In response to specific issues raised at our meeting with Michigan Ave., they have since made additional commitments:

- Removal of one point of egress on Rundell Place, a heavily congested alley-like road on the northern property line
- Provision of a covenant requiring the owner of the proposed property to maintain the public green space at the corner of Monroe & Aberdeen
- Agreement to provide snow removal services on Rundell Place

Michigan Ave. considered but has stated that they are unable to provide additional items that were requested at our meeting, specifically to provide additional setback on Rundell Place or to eliminate all points of egress on Rundell Place.

During and subsequent to the meeting, local residents voiced appreciation for the steps that Michigan Ave. has taken to address their concerns. They also reiterated their desire to see condominiums in the property, as opposed to rental units, and for the setback on the eastern edge of the property to be maximized. One other critical request they put forth is the provision of a pedestrian access gate on Monroe for use by residents of Carmichael Place. This access point should also allow fire hose access for the northwest part of the Carmichael Place property.

From the perspective of NOWL, combined with the commitments that Michigan Ave. has made to-date (including those listed above), we agree with nearby residents that the developer should 1) **strongly consider changing their concept from rental units to condominiums** to address the enormous demand for condos in the West Loop; 2) **maximize the eastern property setback to 17 ft or more**; and 3) **provide a pedestrian/fire response access point from Monroe**. We will also want to review the proposed covenant wording related to the ongoing maintenance of the proposed public green space at Monroe & Aberdeen before submitting a formal stance on the proposed zoning change.

We have conveyed these points to Mr. DeWoskin of Michigan Ave. We reaffirmed our mutually stated desires to keep communications open and to work toward an ultimate proposal that our residents will support and embrace. We will likewise keep you apprised of our anticipated progress.

Sincerely,

Neighbors of West Loop
25th Ward Development Committee