



September 15, 2017

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

Re: Zoning Change for 935 W. Washington

Dear Alderman Solís,

As you know, ZOM Mid-Atlantic & Verde Communities have proposed a three-building development on the block bounded by Madison & Washington, Morgan & Sangamon originally named “Union West”. This project would include a one (1) story building at 942 W. Madison Street and 196 ft tall, fifteen (15) story buildings at 22 N. Morgan Street and at 935 W. Washington Boulevard. To erect the proposed buildings, the developer is seeking a zoning change from DX-3 (3.0 FAR) to DX-5 Planned Development with a 6.5 FAR.

In our letter dated June 6 of this year about the proposed development, we conveyed a series of improvements that residents of the community have requested as part of this development:

- **All of the recommendations included in the developer’s traffic study should be implemented. In addition, a traffic signal should be installed at Madison and Sangamon Streets** to improve capacity and safety. The costs for these improvements should be borne by the developer.
- **Increase the parking ratio for this project from 0.54 to (at least) 0.75** (which could be accomplished through a reduction in the number of proposed units).
- Gain a commitment from the CTA for **five more eastbound #20 bus trips each hour during the morning (7-9 am) and evening (4-6 pm) peak periods.**

Additionally, we have stated that the developer has not demonstrated to our committee or to the community why upzoning the property to the extent proposed is warranted. As a result, **our committee would only support upzoning this property to allow building heights that are commensurate with surrounding buildings**, approximately 120 ft in height along Morgan and Washington and 75 ft in height on Madison. We would like to note that this recommendation is consistent with the draft West Loop Design Guidelines recently developed by the Chicago Department of Planning & Development, which direct designers to “avoid abrupt changes in height” between adjacent buildings.

As noted in our prior letter, our committee appreciates the developer’s willingness to meet with the group of local condominium associations to discuss the project and demonstrate that issues like Chicago



Fire Department approval have been addressed. Through these meetings, the developer has made commitments that should be honored:

- Create a setback on the south elevation at 14 N. Sangamon, installing a 15 ft wall
- Provide additional setback on the parking level
- Use steel on the first floor elevation/façade to separate the glass windows and use more brickwork from the second floor to the top of each structure
- Designate the alleyway providing access from Sangamon for maintenance access only, i.e., not as an access point to the parking structures

We would also like to see the required affordable housing (now increased to 15% of units, per the recent pilot program announced by the mayor) provided on-site, as well as affordable retail space in the ground floor of one or more of the proposed buildings.

As stated previously, we welcome the developer's donation and your commitment to apply the Neighborhood Opportunity Bonus funds resulting from this project towards a new STEM lab Skinner West Elementary. While funding for local schools is welcome, it does not override the need to address the many concerns and targeted recommendations listed above.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Matthew Letourneau  
Chairperson, Development Committee  
NEIGHBORS OF WEST LOOP

cc: Andrew Cretal, ZOM ([ajc@zomusa.com](mailto:ajc@zomusa.com))  
Jesse Levine, Verde Communities ([jesse@myparkeasy.com](mailto:jesse@myparkeasy.com))  
Tom Kerwin, bKL Architecture ([tkerwin@bklarch.com](mailto:tkerwin@bklarch.com))  
Mark Marshall, MMCA ([dabears999@yahoo.com](mailto:dabears999@yahoo.com))  
Jim Boniecki, Arthouse Lofts ([jamesbo@ameritech.net](mailto:jamesbo@ameritech.net))