



August 13, 2018

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

Re: Zoning Change for 1050 & 1125 W. Van Buren

Dear Alderman Solis,

On Monday, January 8, 2018, and again on Monday, May 14, representatives from Tandem Partners (owner/developer), Antunovich Associates (architect), and Thompson Coburn (attorney) presented a proposal for two residential high-rise buildings along Van Buren. The design of the two buildings is influenced by the Chicago School style, with masonry cladding and large windows.

A Planned Development, 1050 W. Van Buren would take up the entire property that is currently home to Guy & Sons Auto Rebuilders. At 250 ft, it would be the tallest structure (not along the highway) in the West Loop south of Randolph. The property would bring 201 apartment units (80 studio, 101 one-bedroom, 20 two-bedroom), with 15% of them as affordable units, per the ARO pilot. Seventy-three (73) parking spaces are provided on-site, with access provided from Gladys Avenue, an alley along the west side of the parcel. Located 662 ft from the Morgan L stop, the site qualifies as a transit-oriented design (TOD). The concept includes 3,400 sq ft of retail on the ground floor. Currently zoned as a DS-3 (3.0 FAR), the developer is seeking a DX-7 (9.75 FAR). A portion of the FAR would be obtained through the Neighborhood Opportunity Bonus, resulting in a payment of \$1.1M to the fund.

Located just south of Target, 1125 W. Van Buren would displace Chicago Auto Center and be situated between an empty lot (site of a proposed high-rise at 1061 W. Van Buren) and a two-story office building at 1035 W. Van Buren. Using air rights obtained from the adjacent office building, the developer proposing a 258 ft structure with 200 apartment units (126 studios, 36 one-bedroom, and 21 two-bedroom) and seven (7) parking spaces. Since it is outside of the ARO pilot area, only 10% affordable units are proposed. This building would include 1,800 sq ft of retail on the ground floor. Also zoned DS-3 with a 3.0 FAR, the developer is seeking a change to DX-7 (11.5 FAR with bonuses). The NOB payment for this site is \$1.65M. This property would also be a Planned Development.

Residents have voiced concerns about the **height** of the 1050 W. Van Buren building. We feel that it would be inconsistent with the *West Loop Design Guidelines* that call for gradual transitions between buildings. Furthermore, it would set an unwanted precedent for building height north of Van Buren.

Concerns were also voiced about the amount of **parking** (80 total for over 400 residential units, a 1:20 ratio). While the buildings are considered Transit Oriented Developments (TOD), which allows lower



parking provisions, the TOD term is applied in a misleading manner for these buildings. The remote CTA stations along the expressway are considered by many to be less safe than those in more active areas. The result will be less people that use transit and instead turn to personal vehicles, taxis, and transportation network companies (TNCs) like Uber, Lyft. This will increase congestion and drive up parking demand. We are encouraged by the developer's comments about securing parking spaces in the nearby Landmark building (which has a 1.1:1 parking ratio) and request that they document their commitment to secure parking spaces in this building (or make a similar arrangement) for the use of the proposed buildings at 1050 & 1125 W. Van Buren.

As it relates to **traffic flow issues**, the developer intends to provide a loading zone in front of each building on Van Buren for drop-offs and pick-ups. In addition, based on feedback provided from our committee, the developer incorporated an off-street access drive along the west side of the 1125 Van Buren building, which would then continue to Tilden Place that runs parallel to the expressway. We applaud these steps, but still foresee traffic conflicts on Van Buren as taxis and TNC drivers will inevitably overload the loading zones. Considering this, and the significant influx of residents coming from the new Landmark apartment building at 1035 W. Van Buren (300 units) and a planned 298-unit development at 1061 W. Van Buren, we request that CDOT conduct a traffic study to consider converting Van Buren to one-way westbound starting at Morgan Street. We feel this would alleviate traffic flow issues near the residential buildings, improve safety at nearby intersections like Aberdeen, and reduce existing traffic congestion that occurs at the nearby Van Buren & Racine intersection.

The development team also committed to providing a dog run in each building of sufficient size for the proposed number of residential units. We appreciate this measure, but the community feels that these projects lack publicly-accessible **green space**. We request that the developer provide this space on-site or mitigate the impacts on nearby parks introduced by increased demand through these projects.

We will reevaluate our position on these projects based on the developer's response to these concerns. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Matthew Letourneau  
Chairperson, Development Committee  
NEIGHBORS OF WEST LOOP

cc: Jeffrey Hreben, Tandem Partners  
Talar Berberian, Thompson Coburn  
Katriina McGuire, Thompson Coburn  
David Reifman, Chicago Department of Planning and Development  
Eleanor Gorski, Chicago Department of Planning and Development  
Neighbors of West Loop Development Committee