

Honorable Frank Commisso, Jr.  
67 Wellington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12203

August 13, 2016

Honorable Frank Commisso, Jr.:

*Let's hope these  
were mailed to  
Frank Commisso  
Albany*

None of the eleven Loughlin Street homes should be demolished. They should be resold as individual single family residences and the zoning should remain as it is.

The eleven homes on Loughlin Street are in fine shape. They are "average" homes and had been, until recently, occupied by families who took good care of them. It was a neighborhood, much like any other residential neighborhood, providing a middle class life style for eleven families. This street even has historical significance and an honorable history. The proof of this is the fact that it was just renamed Sandidge Way. This fine little neighborhood happens to be connected to McKownville and because of its isolation from the rest of the city of Albany those of us in McKownville, its neighbors, feel it is our duty to embrace and preserve it.

It is hard to imagine any neighborhood failing to fight a proposal to demolish eleven nice homes in one block of their neighborhood. It makes no difference who is proposing the demolition, the results are the same. Imagine on your street someone proposing to trash eleven perfectly respectable homes. Then, imagine the anger that would come forth when it was announced that these eleven homes would be replaced by 173 apartments. This is exactly what the Loughlin Street proposal plans to do.

The Dawn Homes Loughlin Street rezoning application, to allow for 173 apartments to be built, was not the original intended use for the Loughlin Street land. The first choice, made by Columbia and SUNY Poly, was to use Loughlin Street to expand the campus of the college. The reason the first choice was abandoned is well known. It is thoroughly described in news articles in the Albany Times Union.

The Dawn Homes proposal is a poorly conceived and poorly researched idea. It is merely a way to attempt to rescue an investment that went wrong. The original investors had a plan that failed and now they want to not only destroy a neighborhood of eleven homes but also negatively influence the surrounding area with 173 apartments, just to save their investment.

It has been noted that the destruction of eleven homes and construction of 173 apartments would create many problems for the rest of the community. Here are some of them.

#### Traffic Concerns

Both left and right turns in and out of Loughlin are treacherous now; adding an additional 303 cars making turns is unthinkable.

There is no easy way to create a holding lane north of Loughlin or a safe lane for bikers. A turning lane does not exist for traffic exiting Loughlin traveling north. The stripped area there is but 9 feet at Loughlin (a turning lane is usually about 12 feet), narrowing to 6 feet further north

as it nears the traffic circle. The bike lane (on but one side of Fuller at Loughlin) disappears as you approach the traffic circle.

The developer claims that auto traffic is not a problem as many "new residents" will be walking or taking a bus. However, the nearest pedestrian walk light is at Stuyvesant Plaza and Executive Drive. Adding dozens of people trying to cross Fuller to catch a bus is ridiculous and unsafe in this highly congested area.

It is unimaginable that 173 apartments will not bring with it school age children. School buses will be another addition to the traffic problem. They will impose longer wait times for traffic on Fuller Road and add to congestion on Loughlin Street.

Loughlin Street's paved roadway width is only 20 feet. Cars could not park on both sides unless they pull onto the sidewalk or onto the verge near the sidewalk. There is very little sidewalk curb, only a very short piece near Fuller. Dawn Homes said it has no intention of widening or repaving Loughlin Street. In addition, the Loughlin sidewalks do not have "handicapped access grades" at the Loughlin Street and Fuller Road corners.

The three cemeteries that either border or are across Fuller Road from Loughlin Street find that more traffic on Fuller makes cemetery use more difficult. The guardians of the cemeteries have reported on their ongoing problems from both traffic and construction.

#### Water Concerns

A high water table is a problem in the neighborhood in general which in turn makes the storm water drainage problem more severe. The construction of 173 apartments and 303 parking spaces will cover more surface area and worsen the high water table/storm water problem.

Storm water flooding in the area is a problem as the recent closures of Western Avenue at the end of Fuller Road confirms. The traffic tie-ups on Fuller and Western during flooding episodes will become worse with the development of 173 apartments.

#### Zoning and Quality of Life Concerns

This re-zoning proposal appears to be "spot zoning" as defined as, "carving out a piece of land for rezoning when none of the neighboring land uses are similarly zoned".

The six high-rise apartment buildings being proposed would be out of place. None of the 900 homes in McKownville is more than two floors.

The two homes near Loughlin that are in the City, each of which has two floors, would be isolated and lessened in value by the construction of the 173 nearby apartments.

This proposal definitely qualifies as over-building on this 5.6 acres site. It will leave children living there no place to play. The closest City owned park, the city owned reservoir-park, would be unsafe for children to access as it involves traveling through some very busy traffic circles.

The developers claim that people working at the nearby educational institutions will occupy some of the 173 apartments and will walk to work. This overlooks the availability of numerous homes among the 900 modestly priced homes in McKownville. State employees own many of these homes. However, the expansion of SUNY Poly has brought no influx of SUNY Poly employees to McKownville.

Large trees on Loughlin would be destroyed with demolition of the eleven homes on this acreage.

#### Tax Revenue

The increase in property tax receipts from this proposed \$30 million project could be attractive for the City, but those occupying the 173 apartments will demand services and the cost of more services might more than offset the gains in property tax revenues.

The promise by Dawn Homes to ask for a PILOT will increase the likelihood that the added cost of services will be greater than the added revenue.

The expansion of SUNY Poly and SUNY Albany is outside local government control but the consequences of development will be borne by the localities. Further widening of Fuller will be horribly expensive. Appeals for construction grants might be more forthcoming if it could be shown that the increased traffic on Fuller was not caused by local government re-zoning.

In summary, no neighborhood would welcome the demolition of eleven good homes and their replacement by 173 apartments.

The McKownville neighborhood does not welcome the destruction of the eleven Loughlin homes and their replacement with 173 apartments.

I ask you, as a citizen concerned about neighborhoods, please do not rezone Loughlin Street.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Don Reeb  
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