

To: Members, Urban Design Commission
Madison Plan Commission

RE: 3900 Monona Dr. and 109 & 209 Cottage Grove Rd. (Proposal of Krupp Construction)

In October, 2017 the City adopted the Cottage Grove Road Activity Center Plan. The Plan was the product of one year of neighborhood meetings, informational sessions organized by Planning Department staff and a market analysis study. The Plan included numerous recommendations detailed by the staff of the Planning Department relative to future site development.

The Plan focused on the two corners intersecting at Cottage Grove Road and Atwood Ave (Monona Drive). The area where The Grove Apartments have now been constructed and the current space under consideration are discussed in detail in the report.

The following goals from the adopted Cottage Grove Rd. Plan are relevant to the primary recommendations of the Lake Edge Neighborhood Association which follow:.

I. Transportation Goals:

Encourage new developments to provide adequate parking underneath or behind the buildings to avoid spillover parking in the neighborhoods.

2. Identity and Placemaking

Encourage neighborhood associations to partner with property owners to create publicly accessible gathering spaces and help activate these spaces through programming and placemaking events.

Transform streets and parking lots into multidimensional attractive placemaking destinations through public amenities such as landscaping, seating, drinking fountains, bike parking, and public art.

3. Land Use and Urban Design:

Encourage mixed-use and multi-family residential development of 2 – 5 stories (Atwood), 2 – 4 stories (Acewood) where appropriate to anchor activity centers.

Buildings should front on the street with parking placed behind or to the side of buildings. Encourage streetscape amenities like benches, lighting, bike racks, and planters that promote and protect the pedestrian environment.

neighborhoods where required to maintain solar access to existing neighborhood.

- H. Create an **attractive public and private realm**, in terms of housing, businesses, and open space to make a statement that the neighborhood provides a high quality of life for residents.



Seating and awnings can give existing buildings character.

pedestrian/bike and vehicular connections to adjoining residential areas.



Example of a mixed-use building with ground floor retail.

Discussion:

On June 8th, approximately 60 members of the community, Krupp Co. staff and Planning Dept. staff participated in a virtual meeting for information and discussion of the proposed construction at the intersection of Monona Dr. and Cottage Grove Road.

Overall, there was a positive assessment of the project by those commenting. The primary reasons for their assessment was their appreciation of the need for more housing in the city and the decrepit state of the current property- an empty strip mall.

There were also many specific concerns about, and in some cases criticism, of the project.

Those comments and concerns were:

- The “walkability” of the area as a result of the building project.
- The lack of “affordable” units and/or high cost of rent.
- The lack of any visible green space.
- The limited availability of retail space (possibly two stores)
- Limited parking available for tenants that may lead to street parking.
- Effect of additional units and cars on traffic congestion at that intersection.
- Effect of building height on shadowing the buildings behind it on Davidson Ave.
- The overall size of the building and the other recent construction on Cottage Grove Rd.

Recommendations:

The reconstruction of CG Rd. from Monona Dr. to Highway 51 in 2018, created a street with bike lanes in both directions, pedestrian medians with shrubs and grasses, safer cross-walks and wider sidewalks in some areas and wider terraces to accommodate trees. As Cottage Grove Rd. develops, including this project, it has the potential to have all of the elements of outstanding boulevard.

The Royster Apts and Pinney Library on CG Rd. represent the best practice in enhancing the relationship between the walker and building. The extra-wide terrace and bike lane (as well as bump-in parking place) separate the walker from the busy street. Trees, once grown, will further separate the walker from the street and provide shade. The sidewalk is wide to allow multiple walkers, baby carriages, bike walkers, etc. Instead of the building front pulling up to the sidewalk, there are additional green strips, built patios and floor-to-ceiling windows to allow pedestrians to look into retail stores.

The new Grove Apts. have adopted some of the same structures including buildings that are pushed back away from the sidewalk to allow space between the building and pedestrian. The apartment houses on the east (Monona-side) of Monona Dr. vary in their approach to pedestrian space.

Specific Recommendations:

1. The building front on CG Rd. should be no less than eight feet from the sidewalk. This space can include common patios, optimally a greenspace, bike racks for the retail outlets, etc.
2. The city should extend the normal sidewalk to an eight foot width to encourage multiple pedestrian uses and child-bikers.
3. The city should maximize the size and use of the terrace for tree-planting (and not sign-planting), shrubs and grasses on the Monona Dr and CG Rd. size.
4. Owners of apartment buildings on Davidson St. that directly face the new structure, can request a high quality wood barrier to be built between the buildings.
5. Evaluate the adequacy of the apartment unit:internal parking space. If the expected ratio is greater than provided in the plan (i.e. more cars per unit), determine the impact on local parking and potentially require an increase in the number of parking spaces in the project.