

**From:** Dadojunior551@aol.com [mailto:Dadojunior551@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 08, 2015 11:19 PM  
**To:** Jeff Cox  
**Subject:** Proposed Rezoning of Former Morgan Park School site

Dear Mr. Cox -

I hereby submit this letter outlining my position as a resident of Morgan Park relative to the 10-12-15 agenda item (15-079-0), as respectfully request it be added to Monday's meeting for consideration by the Council.

Duluth City Councilors :

By copy of this letter, I wish to formally declare my opposition to the proposed rezoning of the Morgan Park School site to accommodate the redevelopment plan proposed by Aaron Schweiger and the group he represents.

My family moved to Morgan Park in 1957, constructed two new homes in the period from 1957 to 1965, and has a long history of community involvement. I have owned the newer of the two homes since 1991, and currently reside in it. Having grown up in Morgan Park, I am well aware of the history and the changes the decades have brought.

First, I am troubled by the one-sided spin proponents of the rezoning/redevelopment plan have projected regarding the sentiment of residents of the community. There is a strong and vocal opposition to the plan, but it has been minimized as insignificant in the media and local opinion forums. The informational meeting sponsored by the Community Club some weeks ago was met with a large and interested audience of residents who were forced to take in a presentation by the developer which was inadequate, unprofessional, not at all representative of what - if anything - would be built on the site, and devoid of any representative graphics showing the final configuration.

I find it insulting that individuals who have little or no historical reference or loyalty to the community, or acknowledgment of the fact a large number of its residents have decades - long "ownership" there, can be so arrogant as to lecture the residents on what "they" think is in the community's best interests. Statements have been made suggesting the exodus from the neighborhood is the result of the lack of suitable housing, when in fact, the loss of the U.S. Steel Duluth Works and Universal Atlas Cement Plant as primary employers initiated the migration out. Since that time, the City has done little or nothing to attract new industries or businesses which would employ a substantial work force to fill the voids left by the closing of the U.S. Steel operations. Some proponents believe elderly residents would leave the homes which are now too large to manage to move into "market rate" apartments. I suggest when they make the decision to leave their family homes, they also have made the decision to relocate in a warmer geographical area and/or to be near family

members who have found employment in other localities. We have been told there is a sudden influx of new and high-paying jobs in Duluth which will rather coincidentally create a market for the proposed housing units. What are these jobs, and who are these employers? The idea of an elderly person shouldering a \$1200 - \$1400 monthly rent obligation on fixed income makes little or no practical sense.

The project is being heralded as a boon to retail business resulting from the twenty or so construction jobs predicted, and the new residents of the project. These jobs, like the transitory residency of rental tenants, are temporary in nature, and certainly do not promote long-term investment in the community.

I view the proposed rezoning/redevelopment plan as a classic example of "wishing well logic" whereby an impractical plan is forced into place with only the hope it will be a success. It is sad to learn that many established residents of Morgan Park are either contemplating or have already put their homes on the market to avoid what they fear is the coming decline in property values, and general negative effect this project may have on the community as a whole.

I respectfully request the Council take a long and deliberative look at all of the aspects of this proposed project, separate "wishing well logic" from practical common sense, and reject the rezoning plan until such time another project and use for the property which has a clear and demographic-sensitive orientation surfaces, and that said, formally declare my strong opposition to the plan presented by Mr. Schweiger and the group he represents.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Respectfully submitted,

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