



**DOWNTOWN  
MINNEAPOLIS  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
ASSOCIATION**

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April 20, 2016

The Honorable Jacob Frey  
Member, Minneapolis City Council  
350 S. 5th St., Room 307  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

RE: DMNA's position with respect to the Request for Proposal (RFP) for 205 Park Ave. property.

Dear Council Member Frey:

The Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association Board (Board) discussed the city's RFP for 205 Park Ave. in an open public meeting on April 18th and decided that we must communicate our objections to the RFP to you, the city council, and the Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) agency as soon as practicable.

We truly appreciate all of the work that you and the council have done in trying to better the economic and social environment in downtown Minneapolis, and the dedication that you have to the DMNA's neighborhood. We also appreciate your commitment to affordable housing in the downtown area. The Board, however, objects to several issues concerning the RFP.

First, the RFP seems to disregard the results of the DMNA's 205 Park Ave. survey. The DMNA invested a considerable amount of time and resources in developing and executing the survey from December 18, 2015 to January 7, 2016. Over 300 residents (primarily in the downtown east area) participated in the survey. The community's position on the development of 205 Park Ave. were clearly apparent in the survey's results, i.e., the community supports an owner occupied building that is no higher than 6 stories. We submitted the survey and its results to you and Ms. Emily Stern at CPED in mid-January. The RFP, however, conflicts with the community's position.

The survey overwhelmingly supports an owner occupied building of less than 6 stories. 93% of the respondents voted for an owner occupied building. Specifically, the results showed that 273 individuals voted on the issue concerning whether the building should be rental apartments or owner occupied and 255 supported owner occupied. That result shows amazing support for an owner occupied building; normally it is difficult to get even a bare majority of neighbors to agree on any issue, let alone 93% of them. The survey also shows a majority support for a building of less than 6 stories. 51% of the respondents voted for a building of 6 stories or less in height. Specifically, the results show that 285 individuals voted on the height issue and 145 supported a height of 6 stories or less.

Second, the RFP does not consider the amount of affordable rental units that exists and will soon exist in the downtown east neighborhood. The St. Anthony Mills Apartments (the Kindee restaurant building), which are



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adjacent to the 205 Park Ave site, contain 93 units of affordable housing including 17 Section 8 units. Additionally, the Mill City Quarter building on the corner of South Second St. and 3rd Ave. will have 150 units of affordable housing when it opens in September. By the fall of this year, therefore, we will have 243 affordable rental units within a 4 block radius of 205 Park Ave. That is a significant amount of affordable housing in one area of downtown.

Lastly, Ms. Stern was kind enough to attend the DMNA's Land Use Committee meeting on April 13th and explain the RFP process to the committee and over 50 residents in attendance. We were impressed with her presentation and concluded that our community's position on 205 Park Ave. as expressed in our survey would be given some deference. Unfortunately, the RFP, which was released two days later, did not support our community's position

The DMNA would like to use our next regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, May 16th to convene an open forum where area residents and home owner associations can learn more about the criteria used in the RFP and how we can be involved in influencing the final selection of a specific development. We would greatly appreciate your attendance and that of a senior staff member from CPED at the meeting to present the city's thinking and to answer any questions from the local residents. Kevin Frazell from our board and Joan Bennett of our staff will contact your office to talk about designing the forum in a way that works well for everyone.

Sincerely,

Joe Tamburino (Vice Chair) and the DMNA Board

cc: Minneapolis City Council  
Emily Stern (CPED)