

**From:** [Alexander East](#)  
**To:** [MayorQ](#); [Bunch, Eric](#); [Barnes, Lee](#); [Bough, Andrea](#); [Ellington, Brandon](#); [Fowler, Dan](#); [Justis, Amy](#); [Loar, Teresa](#)  
**Cc:** [Public Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Subject: 27th/Grand Ch 100 Plan Incentive Feedback - Ordinance No. 211016  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 30, 2021 3:56:32 PM

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The parcel at 27th and Grand is a strategic location and a unique opportunity for the city and the Union Hill neighborhood. Area residents have supported and voted to tax themselves to help build the streetcar, which bring many potential development opportunities the site and adjacent sites, and the residents have looked forward to and expected development on this parcel for a long time.

However, at this point, as a resident of Union Hill and Union Hill Neighborhood Association (UHNA) board member, I have many questions about this project.

**Primary objection:**

- The structure appears to have been designed primarily and for all practical purposes a single-use suburban style “trophy tower” for the client, a private business. There is very little public benefit in the current plan.
- While recognizing that adjustments have been made to conform minimally to requirements of the “MidtownKC Now” overlay, they nevertheless appear to be an afterthought and I question whether these additions may not in reality function as truly intended by the Main Street Overlay Plan.

**Walkability issues:**

- Along with the interest in the streetcar, there has been significant desire to improve pedestrian connections out of the neighborhood to adjacent areas. Efforts are currently being discussed by the UHNA to improve the “edges” of the neighborhood with traffic calming, better crossing opportunities and encouraging development that is sensitive to pedestrian priorities. I do not believe they have truly envisioned what the experiences will be for pedestrians “on the ground” and we were never asked what amenities are most desired and needed in this location.
- The developers made clear that they had not considered at all how residents of the UH neighborhood would approach the new streetcar stop on foot as they exited the neighborhood along Warwick and Grand. The first thing they would see is the wall of a tall parking garage and suburban style circle drive/drop-off, both for the convenience of those arriving by private automobile.
- Excessive parking in a structured garage basically guarantees a “drive-in/out” for

workers in the new building. Of all the sites along the streetcar line, this location has an overabundance of parking with thousands of spaces nearby (and absolutely zero need for additional “after-hours” parking.) Shared parking at an adjacent site would be an extremely reasonable expectation for tenants of this office building. If Crown Center is selling the lot for millions of dollars, shouldn’t they be amenable to a shared parking solution?

### **Architecture/functionality issues:**

- For a site with such potential, there does not appear to be much rentable ground floor space for neighborhood businesses and services.
- Local examples by this admittedly prestigious architectural firm such as the Federal Reserve Bank and 2600 Main have not been admired for their ability to enhance and encourage walkability and increase street-level activity. Neighbors are understandably cynical that different results will be achieved this time around.

### **Is the developer/tenant a considerate neighbor?**

- There is clearly real value to the views in this location, as there appears to be a strong desire by the developers and their client to maximize the height of the building. The plan calls for a large empty undeveloped space on the north side of the parcel adjacent to the future streetcar stop. (Have they designed this way simply to protect their own view? The question should be asked.) This choice fails to take advantage of potentially active and usable space at a strategic intersection, and begs the question whether the entire development could be reorganized in a different form that might be better appreciated by neighbors.

### **Conclusion:**

Is this truly a “transit-oriented” development as requested by residents of the streetcar district and especially the special assessment zone (which includes all of the Union Hill neighborhood)?

It appears this current proposal is not in the spirit of a truly active mixed use development as envisioned by the overarching goal of creating an active transit node at 27th and Main.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my concerns,

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