

From: [David Combs](#)
To: [Public Testimony](#)
Subject: City Harvest Development - Concern on the Development's Aesthetic Compatibility with Historic District
Date: Thursday, March 9, 2023 8:21:41 AM

Dear Chairman Barnes and Neighborhood Planning & Development Committee,

Yesterday, 8 March, I attended the NP&D Committee meeting to only observe the City Harvest development presentation but found myself commenting along with a number of businesses and residents of the River Market. I noticed you both participating in the meeting and hope you saw the level of concern many people (at least those who live and/or work in the River Market) have with the proposed development. I heard many voices who are not necessarily against development in the Market area but concerned about the loss of parking spaces the City Harvest development would cause. That loss not only impacts the many small businesses but as a couple of residents tried to point out that loss of parking also impacts residents.

Somewhat lost in the comments in the meeting, due to a focus on parking issues, were concerns regarding the height of the building and a facade that is not compatible with the historic character of the River Market. The 14 stories proposed for City Harvest building significantly towers over buildings to the west on Delaware and dwarfs the City Market structures to the east. The height of this high rise diminishes the historic character of the Market; it also sets precedent for other development proposed for other parking lots in the area. This potential change of character ruins the aesthetics of the historic nature of the area. In addition, the building materials and the facade proposed are more modern and are not compatible with the historic brick and mortar structures of historic buildings surrounding the City Market. At least recent development in the area such as apartments on Grand and apartments on 2nd street have attempted to blend building facades with the historic character of the Market. This proposed development should consider a more compatible facade than the glass and metal tower proposed. The development also changes the character of the area with the loss of large trees providing shade to the City Market Park and making the pedestrian walk that is Main Street between 3rd and 5th Street into a through fare. These are all of concern to many people of the area, more than could attend the daytime meeting of the committee. All these proposed development changes significantly change the character of the Market area. If your committee has any concerns regarding maintaining the history within and of the area, please help ensure revisions in building height and facade materials meet and match the historic flavor of the area that attracts people to live and shop.

Lastly, it became transparent to many in attendance that the proposal being presented was different from a previous proposal that had a parking space level set as part of the initial RFP. Changes in the requirements without public or apparently even council member knowledge or input should be a more significant concern to city planners and council members. As such, there should be a new round of and more robust efforts by city planning and developers to reach out for public input and discussion. Despite what was expressed by the development team today, many (most) HOAs and apparently Market businesses were not notified about opportunities to meet and provide input.

As a former public servant with the US Army Corps of Engineers I know the importance of informing public on planning meetings, ensuring there are times and venues appropriate for the public to be educated on projects, and the importance of receiving that public input for

project consideration and modification prior to decision making. I am not convinced that these robust efforts and opportunities occurred on this development proposal.

Please consider development in the Market area that provides a continuity of historic character of our community as others express and address the issues of parking within the community. I hope this note and my previous letter of comment to the NP&D Committee makes it to Committee eyes as I felt it important to express my concerns of changing the character of an area that I have lived in and loved since 2006. Please join the community in opposition to the current proposed development and support a more compatible development that meets both the physical needs and aesthetic character of the Market.

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