

TOM POITRAS

It was stated in the 03-17-16 Planning Commission meeting minutes that a citizen's comment had motivated up zoning 5th Ave. NE from 155th St. up to 158th St. on the Compact Community-Hybrid map. Liz and I have both written emails to you saying we very much oppose that and we still do. We have stated some modifications we would prefer in previous letters. However, I have tried to further analyze the probable reasons for your opinions. I'm focusing on the highlighted paragraph on page 6 of the minutes sent me. That is the yellow highlighted last paragraph of this letter. Also, I am addressing the staff report for the 04-07-16 Planning Commission meeting highlighted in green below. **The red paragraph deals with my Public Records Request.**

The following 4 paragraphs address the yellow paragraph from the 03-17-16 minutes:

The stated description of the extension of MUR-45 up 5th Ave. NE to 158th St. is "also incorporating some connection to the Ridgecrest Commercial District on the other side of 155th". Everything on 5th Ave. is connected to Ridgecrest Commercial District in this sense. This piece is not a connection to the Ridgecrest Commercial District any more than the MUR-35 one block north of 155th St. on 6th and 8th Avenues on the Hybrid Map are connections to the Ridgecrest Commercial District except the 5th Ave. one goes further north. This focusing on being connected to the Ridgecrest Commercial District makes it very unlikely in my mind that this suggestion was made by someone in this area between 155th St. and 158th St. It is more likely to have come from a citizen advocating for the Ridgecrest Commercial District.

This large protrusion of MUR-45 up to 158th St. on 5th Ave. is supposed to be a feature of the phased version of the Connecting Corridors Map, but on that Map the protrusion was MUR-35 and also in phase 2, which was not supposed to be rezoned until 2035. There is no phasing on the Compact Community-Hybrid Map so that area could start developing immediately. This protrusion was clearly not taken from the phased version, but is a new feature.

The description in the yellow paragraph talks about a transition to single family homes on the north side of 155th St., but on the Hybrid Map, on 5th Ave. NE, there is no buffer between MUR-45 and R6, and not even a road between them. That's not the traditional MUR-35 to R6 transition.

The homes on 5th Ave NE between 155th St. and 158th St. are all being used as homes currently and the character of the neighborhood has not changed from single-family residential as was suggested.

From the 04-07-16 Staff Report:

The committee also recommended MUR-45' zoning in the area on both sides of 5th Avenue because that intersection is located between the future light rail station and the commercial district at NE165th Street. They felt that extending the boundary north of NE 155th Street could provide additional opportunities for neighborhood serving businesses and a cohesive streetscape.

I don't think the first sentence above is a valid reason for rezoning anything. In the 2nd sentence, there will be MUR-45 all along the south side of 155th St. from the freeway to 8th Ave. Also, 5th Ave. could have businesses from 155th St south to the station, and also 6th and 8th avenues. How many businesses do they need? You can have a cohesive streetscape without going any further up 5th Ave.

than the imaginary 156th St. line. This is because you could also have a cohesive streetscape along 155th St. if there is a strip of MUR-45 all along the north side of 155th St. with a MUR-35 buffer behind it.

Since I don't see anything that is gained by this up-zone up 5th Ave NE except just rezoning more land, and since I believe there are plenty of more desirable locations for more density nearer to the station, and for the reasons stated above, Liz and I would prefer it not be up zoned any further north (which is roughly 156th St. if it existed) than what we have suggested in our previous letters about the 5th Ave. NE and 155th St. area.

Since I believe in transparency in government and I don't believe individuals or groups should be allowed to anonymously suggest policies that dramatically affect other people's lives to city officials or employees, if you haven't done it already, I would appreciate your sending the information requested in my Public Records Request PD-16-084. I think it's due 04-05-16. Obviously I am speculating on why it was suggested to insert this MUR-45 section above 155th St. Therefore I wish to know the actual reasons, details, and motivation for this citizen comment in order to analyze it. Thank you.

Tom Poitras

03-17-16 Planning Commission minutes excerpt:

Ms. Redinger provided a map that represents the current thinking of the Light Rail Subcommittee. The subcommittee's previous recommendation was based on the Connecting Corridors zoning scenario, but included some elements of the Compact Communities zoning scenario. The new proposed map is based on the Compact Community zoning scenario, with some features of the phased-version of the Connecting Corridor's zoning scenario. The Compact Community boundary is 155th Street, and the Subcommittee felt it would be appropriate to incorporate some of the Connecting Corridor Map so that the transition to existing single-family homes could happen on the north side of 155th Street. This would retain the area where the character of the neighborhood has already changed from single-family residential based on current uses that are allowed in single-family zoning, but also incorporating some connection to the Ridgecrest Commercial District on the other side of 155th. Also, the new map has MUR-70' zoning on the east side of 5th, then transitions to MUR-45' and MUR-35'. She emphasized that the height limits are one of the defining characteristics of the new zoning designations, and the MUR-35' zone is based on the existing 35-foot height limit for single-family residential zones. Therefore, MUR-35' is intended to be a transition zone.