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November 19, 2014

Mayor Gene Winstead
9632 Xerxes Road
Bloomington, MN 55431

Council Member Cynthia Bemis Abrams
8400 West 109th Street
Bloomington, MN 55438

Council Member Tim Busse
2909 West 97th Street
Bloomington, MN 55431

Council Member Dwayne Lowman
2400 W. 102nd Street, Apt. #212
Bloomington, MN 55431

Council Member Andrew Carlson
4642 Heritage Hills Drive
Bloomington, MN 55431

Council Member Jack Baloga
7123 Oak Pointe Curve
Bloomington, MN 55431

Council Member Jon Oleson
8725 2nd Avenue South
Bloomington, MN 55420

Re: Proposed rezoning of Southtown

Dear Mayor and City Council Members:

I am a commercial real estate broker in Minneapolis in my 40th year in the business; a member of the MN-Dakotas Chapter of the CCIM Institute, ICSC (International Council of Shopping Center, MSCA (Minnesota Shopping Center Association) and an owner of commercial property. I write to express my opposition to the proposed rezoning of Southtown. The concept plan proposed by the planning staff which was recently overturned by the planning commission is a futuristic concept that works when the population growth reaches the point that commands densities that exist in ultra-urban areas such as the Lincoln Park neighborhood of Chicago. Time and the marketplace will eventually give rise to this type of development. There is nothing wrong with believing that someday this will evolve. However, to prematurely zone Kraus-Anderson's property in this manner is nearly the same as condemnation. Bloomington is a thriving suburban community with suburban life styles and suburban shopping habits. The evidence of this being the case is the vibrancy of Southtown Center. If this center was not fulfilling the needs of the community, it would have significant vacancy and would not have national tenants of the quality that are currently present. This rezoning proposal is prescribing a type of development that the people of Bloomington do not embrace now and most likely not for some time.

It is my opinion that the existing Penn American project is very marginally successful and had it not been for significant subsidies, would be bankrupt, had it gone forward without them. The retail portion of the center is still largely vacant. This is evidence that the community is not ready for the urban mixed use model.

I do not work for Kraus-Anderson, nor am I directly affected by this pending action, but I fear that this trend of trying to force trends as opposed to allowing the market to dictate trends is a dangerous trend that should not be seen as what city planners should be doing and more often than not, does not yield good results. Show courage and do what is clearly common sense and adopt the Planning Commission recommendation for denying the rezoning. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Barry C. Brottlund CCIM
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Minneapolis, MN 55418