



March 11, 2019

Baye M. Muhammad, Commissioner, Neighborhood and Business Development
City Hall, Room 223B
30 Church St.
Rochester, NY 14614

Michael A. Patterson, Northeast District, City Council and Chair, Neighborhood and Business
Development Committee for City Council
City Hall, Room 301A
30 Church Street
Rochester, New York 14614-1265

Subject: Highland Hospital Planned Development District

Dear Sirs:

The Highland Park Neighborhood Association (HPNA) is opposed to the inclusion, into the city zoning codes, of PD #17 Highland Hospital (M-03-18-19, T-02-18-19). This is a modification of our position presented in our February 1, 2019 letter to the City Planning Council (attached). That letter was written and sent prior to the final version of this PDD being released to the public for review just five business days before the Planning Commission's public hearing on the matter.

We brought this late delivery to the attention of the Planning Commission and opposed recommendation of the PDD at the public hearing in February so that we would have time to consider all aspects of the final PDD. The City Planning Commission advised us that we would have the opportunity to send any concerns we have to City Council.

Now that we've reviewed the final version of the Highland Hospital PDD, we are expressing our concern regarding Section D.(2).a.(i) and Section D.(2).b.(ii), the sections describing building heights and setbacks.

a. Mt. Vernon Avenue and Belleview Drive

- (i) 0' – 30' Setback: 5 stories up to 94 feet maximum building height: except that any stair tower, elevator tower, or elevator lobby may be 7 stories up to 120 feet maximum building height.

b. Rockingham Street

- (ii) 20' – 50' Setback: 5 stories up to 94 feet maximum building height.



Having the possibility of 5 story, 94 feet buildings (or up to 7 stories and 120 feet sections) near or at the sidewalk on these two residential streets is extremely troubling and does not reflect the character of this historic neighborhood. Even the 30' or the 50' setback with buildings of this height would be difficult for us to support. We would like to see these sections changed to reflect a maximum of 3 story buildings of about 60 feet in height.

This is a critical concern to us and many of our neighbors within the Highland Park Neighborhood. We have been under the impression, as we've worked with Highland Hospital, that buildings that are this tall would be found more toward the middle of the hospital's campus as it is built out.

Our position on the tower and other building heights, remains the same as our previous letter.

HPNA values our ongoing relationship with Highland Hospital and we are grateful to have this world class, urban hospital within our neighborhood serving the city's health needs and providing jobs to residents. We hope the positive interactions between our two organizations will continue.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this letter. HPNA respectfully asks City Council to reject the Highland Hospital PD #17 until the modifications requested above can be made.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roxanne Townsend". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Roxanne Townsend
Chair, Highland Park Neighborhood Association

Attachment



February 1, 2019

David L. Watson, Chair, City Planning Commission
c/o Jill Wiedrick, Sr. City Planner
Division of Zoning
City Hall – Room 125B
30 Church Street
Rochester, NY 14614

Subject: Highland Hospital Planned Development District

Dear Mr. Watson and Planning Commission Members:

The Highland Park Neighborhood Association (HPNA) is enthusiastic regarding the creation of PD #17 Highland Hospital (M-03-18-19, T-02-18-19). We are pleased with the modifications Highland Hospital made to the original PD application to address the majority of concerns from our neighborhood. Most of our requested changes have been reflected in the current PD under consideration at the February 11, 2019 City Planning Commission meeting and we thank Highland Hospital for the changes.

Although we are disappointed by the decision to place a building towering over Bellevue Drive, we understand that residential-institutional interaction is a challenge in the built-up environment and feel that Highland Hospital made sacrifices by moving the building away from neighbors.

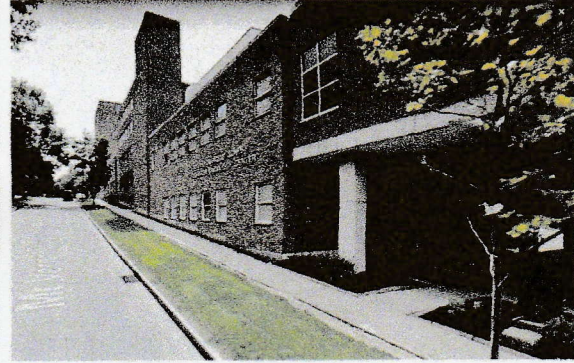
HPNA continues to be concerned about the screening along Rockingham Street as laid out in the final text. We are not sure that an adequate solution can be codified, and in fact could end up with something we regret. Instead, we will seek vigorous enforcement of this screening code through the code enforcement process and expect that Highland Hospital will continue to work with HPNA in good faith to address neighborhood concerns regarding the screening of views into the property from Rockingham Street.

The only additional concern we would like addressed is the revised text regarding transparency. The revised text submitted for Planning Commission recommendation adds a requirement for 20% transparency throughout the site from 2-8 feet high. We are concerned that as written, it conceivably allows for 20-feet of windows (such as an open lobby) followed by 80-feet of blank wall. Also, due to slope of South and Mt Vernon Avenues, measuring 2-8 feet from the ground may not be the best way to look at this particular site. As the pictures below show, the line of windows creates pleasant sight lines that help give Mt. Vernon an urban pedestrian feel. This is despite portions of solid wall between 2-8 feet where the slope of the hill comes into play. It also softens the institutional facade and gives it a more residential/apartment look and feel when facing the R-1 zoned single-family houses.

Attachment



Mt Vernon Av looking North (Downhill)



Mt. Vernon Av looking South (Uphill)

Based on the above, we request that zoning code be revised to make the existing window lines on Mt. Vernon Ave become a requirement of future development. We also ask that this requirement be extended to any building on Rockingham St. Our suggestion is to consider language similar to that found in existing CCD code:

- §120-70.F.(2)(a)[1]: Buildings shall maintain the alignment of horizontal elements of adjacent existing buildings
- §120-70.F.(2)(a)[3]: The facade shall be composed to exhibit a vertically aligned fenestration pattern
- §120-70.F.(2)(a)[8]: Facade lighting shall conform to Illumination Engineers Society of North America (IESNA) guidelines. No floodlighting is permitted [this is to avoid light pollution on the street]

20% transparency (10% with screening) requirement is adequate for South Ave and Bellevue frontages, however we request an additional requirement that transparency be well-distributed along the building.

HPNA and Highland Hospital meet monthly and continue to have a productive dialogue that openly addresses the needs of our neighborhood and the needs for progressive development of the hospital so that Highland Hospital can continue to successfully serve the City of Rochester now and into the future. HPNA appreciates this dialogue and looks forward to continued good relations between our two organizations.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this letter. HPNA respectfully asks the City Planning Commission to consider our above comments when making the recommendation of PD #17 Highland Hospital to City Council.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roxanne Townsend".

Roxanne Townsend
Chair, Highland Park Neighborhood Association