

**From:** [City Council](#)  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Subject:** Form submission from: Write a Letter to Council  
**Date:** Monday, December 17, 2018 4:59:26 PM

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Submitted on Monday, December 17, 2018 - 16:59

Submitted by anonymous user: 108.60.168.207

Submitted values are:

Date: Monday, December 17, 2018

To: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name: Jonathan

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City: Saskatoon

Province: Saskatchewan

Postal Code: [REDACTED]

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable): Varsity View-Grosvenor Community Association

Subject: Proposed Official Community Plan Amendment and Rezoning by Agreement – 1006 College Drive and 421 Clarence Avenue North

Meeting (if known): Municipal PLanning Commission

Comments: I wish to speak at the meeting. I will try to rearrange my schedule to accommodate this but was only informed of this meeting today.

Attachments:

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

<https://www.saskatoon.ca/node/398/submission/271524>

Re: The High Rise at College and Clarence (Rezoning 1006 College)

The Varsity View-Grosvenor Community Association, together with our residents, has spent hundreds of hours developing our position.

Based on the vote at the meeting, considerable further correspondence with residents and with the City planning department the Community Association is against this non-conforming development for these reasons:

- Inadequate consultation. The information presented at the public consultation meeting on September 13<sup>th</sup> was incomplete.
  - The reduced setback was not highlighted, and, in consequence, its implications were not discussed.
  - Other aspects of the meeting were disingenuous. Residents had concerns regarding traffic flow and its affect on travel time. The expert opinion on the affects of this building on traffic flow did not address travel time.
  - A final problem is that while many experts were on hand at the meeting, there was insufficient time to answer all concerns and no opportunity to view the experts reports after the meeting.
  - Finally, Brent McAdam stated at the September 13th meeting that residents would be kept informed of future public meetings regarding this rezoning. Names and emails were collected. However, Brent did not inform either the Community Association or the individual attendees of the date of the Municipal Planning Commission meeting. I only found out the day before because I specifically emailed asking for the date.
- Potential adverse affects on parking. The current zoning requirements for visitor parking seem low. Residents around other high rises report increased parking problems because visitors cannot gain access to the spots reserved for them.
- The reduced setback limits future road improvements to College. The road immediately in front of the proposed high-rise is one of the few parts of College that will be reduced to two lanes by the new BRT routes.
- Residents report increased flooding in our neighborhood following storms. The City informs us that this will not be a problem because storm water from the roof, driveways, and paved surfaces will be collected and slowly run into the storm drains. As we are not aware of other developments in Varsity View where water from driveways is collected, we doubt that the developer will agree to this requirement.
- The ability of City water supply, sewer services, parks, and schools to absorb the additional demands of this building and the demands of conforming development that is already approved are unknown. Brunskill School is at capacity. It is unclear how the City/School Board will address the additional needs that densification brings.
- The high rise sits at the gateway to our community. It will have a negative affect on the single-family homes in the immediate vicinity. Some owners have invested

hundreds of thousands, or maybe millions, in these properties. They anchor our neighborhood.

- The building is not consistent with Saskatoons Official Community Plan (Bylaw No. 8769).
  - Item 2.1.b: Environmental Stewardship. Twelve storey high rises (the proposal) are poor environmental stewardship. They are less efficient than low rise multi-unit dwellings (current zoning). The principal reason is that low rises are built of wood. Wood traps carbon. Wood is a poor conductor of heat. The proposal calls for a steel frame building. Steel and concrete production generate carbon dioxide. Steel efficiently conducts heat from the core of the building to the outside and so have higher heating costs. A BC study showed that high rises (>6 storeys, non-combustible construction) use 213 KWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year while low rises use 171 Kwh/m<sup>2</sup>/year (RDH Building Science)
  - Item 3.1: Safe Growth. A 12-storey high rise is not conducive to safe growth
    - High rises have poor natural surveillance. As one architect said “Above 5 storeys it is impossible for residents to make out what is happening at street level.”
    - High rise buildings are crime generators, particularly when combined with low income residents, something that tends to happen towards the end of their useful life (Kondo MC)
    - Cohesion. High rises residents have poor cohesion with the surrounding neighbours. Many will drive from their basement garage to work without setting foot on the streets. It is difficult to gain entry into high rises so community associations and other community groups cannot easily appraise and involve residents in community issues. The lack of an open, public, common space means there are no opportunities to mix with neighbours and become involved in the community.
  - Item 3.2.2.k. Lack of gradual transition. According to the bylaw “Corridor growth should gradually transition to the lower density and intensity of surrounding residential neighborhood”. The proposed building will abruptly transition from its 12 storey to the 3 storey zoning (2 storey actual) of adjacent buildings on College, the 3 storeys of the Ronald McDonald house to the South and the 2 storey residential at the South east corner.
- The rezoning is not consistent with the Varsity View local area plan. This development does not promote urban connectivity. There is no sensitive transition to adjacent buildings. The redevelopment does not enhance neighbourhood amenities.
- The likely development levy for this building is \$87,554.65 (Brent McAdam). This is a pittance when you consider that one lot for a single family dwelling in a

new subdivision is purchased by the City for a few hundred dollars and then resold for close to \$200,000. The development levy will not cover the cost of needed infrastructure (larger sewage treatment plant, bigger pumping stations, larger police force and associated buildings, schools, improved park facilities, more paved sidewalks). Furthermore, these levies are rarely spent to directly support our Community.

- The relationship between the BRT and Corridor Growth depends on which City Official you speak to, and when you speak to them. According to Liz Hoffman, Special Projects, City of Saskatoon “I would like to also acknowledge that acceptance of BRT on College Drive, does not inherently require the densification along all of College Drive.” At the public input meeting at Albert Community Center, Chris Schultz, City Planner, said that the BRT does not require densification along the corridors to succeed.
- Although everyone denies this, approving a non-conforming high rise will set a precedent for our entire neighborhood. Prior to this proposal 2 to 4 storey buildings were planned for College. If a high rise gets approved our entire neighborhood could get similar additions. Another high rise is proposed for Cumberland and 8<sup>th</sup>. It is impossible to believe assurances about future development if Council does not respect its own zoning policies.

Varsity View has supported and integrated considerable densification in past years. This has largely occurred through replacement of single-family dwellings on 50 foot lots with two new dwellings. In addition, we support the development of garage suites. This type of development does not detract from, or destroy, our neighborhood. In 2016 Varsity View had 15.4 dwellings/hectare, well above the City wide average of 11 dwellings/hectare.

I am going to finish with a quote from the Hemson report, the bible for Saskatoon’s developers. Regarding infill: “where existing infrastructure capacity is insufficient, the cost of new infrastructure can be very high”. Unfortunately, the considerable densification that has already happened in Varsity View occurred in parallel with ever increasing taxes and the proposal is likely to add further to policing costs. Also, it is not the most energy efficient form of construction.

## Bibliography

Kondo MC, Andreyeva E, South EC, MacDonald JM, Branas CC. "Neighborhood Interventions to Reduce Violence." *Annu Rev Public Health*. 39 (2018): 253-271.

RDH Building Science. "Energy Consumption in Low-Rise Multi-Family Residential Buildings in British Columbia." 2017. <https://www.hscorp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/BC-Report-energy-low-rise.pdf>. 17 December 2018.