From: [redacted]
To: McGarrity, Patrick
Cc: Le, Thai-Chau
Subject: Opposition to 2740 Ruby Temple Project: Re-zoning
Date: Tuesday, June 22, 2021 3:04:23 PM

[External Email]

My husband and I have lived on Little Boy Lane off Norwood for nearly 50 years and we oppose the re-zoning and approval of the project referenced above.

First, I would like to rebut the comments voiced at the 6/2/21 meeting alleging opposition to this project is based on bias. This has been, and continues to be, a very diverse neighborhood. During our time here our neighbors have included African-Americans, Mexicans, East Indians, Philipinos, Chinese, and even an Obeah practitioner. Blaming opposition to this project on bias is an excuse for looking past all the negative effects it will have on an extended neighborhood.

This project is completely unsuitable for this parcel of land.If you step back from the specific objections and simply look at the appearance of the temple as it would present itself in this property it is immediately clear that it is wildly out of character with surrounding homes. That is true for the footprint (15000 sq ft vs 2500 sq ft), height (4 stories vs 2), and even the shape of a very visible facade.Compare this proposal to the mosques on Quimby and Ruby, the church on Norwood. All are located on sites that are larger and do not look like they were shoe-horned in as this one would.

Among the more specific concerns are traffic and parking.Norwood is a two lane road without even room for a bike lane. Likewise, Ruby is two lane. Both roads are busy and their intersection is the site of too many accidents and close calls (I had one last week when a rude driver decided to go out of turn). These streets are also a place where people walking and running, walking dogs, and children going to and from school are a common sight. Additional traffic would pose an increased danger to them.
With respect to parking: The number of parking spots is inconsistent with the size of the membership and the number of expected visitors, While it's fine to say parking is limited and that visitors will be shuttled in, I question how long, if at all, those limits will be observed. How will it be enforced? By whom? I expect after a short period of time these restrictions will be forgotten and the cars of many visitors will be parked in adjacent neighborhoods likely causing a shortage of residents' parking there.It is naive to assume otherwise.In addition, the proximity of the vehicle entrance is dangerous and could lead to traffic stacking up at the stop signs.

Another serious concern is noise.The temple is designed to host a great number of people. If daily activities are from 9 am to 10 pm and some activities last for 2 to 15 days, the quiet nature of this residential neighborhood would be destroyed, not only by visitors talking, singing etc but by traffic arriving and leaving.For an example of this, view the Youtube video of the temple's New Year 2019 celebration. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E8kJDJ1OjGk&t=2403s) It should be acknowledged that promises to limit the number of

vehicles, the level of noise, and the number of attendees are only promises, non-binding and unenforceable particularly as the membership inevitably grows.

Last year, residents a short distance up Norwood (near Norcross) were under a one hour evacuation warning due to wild fire. Many residents up Norwood have no good evacuation route other than Norwood. How will evacuation be possible with so many more vehicles clogging these narrow roads? It cannot be assumed that such a situation would occur when only a few visitors are at the temple. This also works in reverse with emergency vehicles going up Norwood.

At the 6/2/21 meeting the members of the temple voiced their hopes for a place to meditate, a place of religious contemplation, a place of harmony. These are commendable. However, the traffic parking problems, the noise, and incompatible appearance will inevitably result in friction and possibly hostility with the neighbors.Hardly the harmonious environment desired.

We are sympathetic with the desire of this community to find a place to practice their religion. However, looked at objectively, this site should not be re-zoned to accommodate this project and this project should not be built at this location. It is an inappropriate use of this property.

Thank you for your consideration.

Halle and Barry Weingarten
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