



Preserve PHX <hello@preservephx.org>

Preserve PHX Mail - Please Find a Creative Solution for Mercy Hill Church

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## Please Find a Creative Solution for Mercy Hill Church

1 message

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**janettray@aol.com** <janettray@aol.com>  
Reply-To: janettray@aol.com  
To: "shane@trumontgroup.com" <shane@trumontgroup.com>  
Cc: "hello@preservephx.org" <hello@preservephx.org>

Tue, Oct 25, 2022 at 10:46 AM

Dear Mr. Essert,

I'm writing in support of preservation efforts for the Mercy Hill Church. The sanctuary is beautiful! It would wonderful if you can find a creative way to preserve it.

Preservation of our wonderful local architectural and cultural history greatly enhances our community. Please help protect this part of our cultural and architectural identity.

Janet Traylor  
[6502 N. Central Avenue](#), E401  
Phoenix, AZ 85012  
Cell: 602-432-7390



Preserve PHX &lt;hello@preservephx.org&gt;

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**Mercy Hill Church Preservation**

1 message

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**Lisa I** <femmedegaul@gmail.com>

Tue, Oct 25, 2022 at 7:06 PM

To: shane@trumontgroup.com

Cc: "hello@preservephx.org" &lt;hello@preservephx.org&gt;

Hello Mr. Essert,

I understand that your development company is in negotiations for the current Mercy Hill Church site with potential plans to demolish the building. I'm a native Phoenician who strongly favors maintaining Phoenix historic architecture, especially because we have lost so much already. While I'm aware that the building does not technically qualify for the historic register, it remains a historic and important building in the history of Phoenix growth. Perhaps it could be incorporated into a community building and utilized by future residents, I with a one-of-a-kind history that may increase livability and sales on the property. We have had so much of our history removed that Phoenix will no longer be unique in its own right. You can take the lead, promote health neighborhood relationships and become good stewards of our Phoenician legacy and commit to saving the Mercy Hill Church.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Lisa Irwin



Preserve PHX &lt;hello@preservephx.org&gt;

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**Mercy Hill Church**

1 message

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**Michele Chinichian** <micheleroya@gmail.com>

Tue, Oct 25, 2022 at 10:35 AM

To: shane@trumontgroup.com

Bcc: hello@preservephx.org

Hi Shane,

I am writing in support of preserving Mercy Hill Church, even a compromise of some kind of it's great historic features would be appreciated. Preservation is key, as Downtown Phoenix is turning from an architecturally rich, artistic community to a concrete wasteland of highrises and condos. Please preserve the charm and character of the city so it can remain an appealing and desirable place to live.

I appreciate your consideration.

Michele



**1114 Grand Avenue  
Phoenix, AZ 85007  
(602) 254-5599**

January 6, 2023

Anthony Grande  
Central City Village Planning Committee  
City of Phoenix  
Planning and Development Department  
200 W. Washington Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Phoenix, AZ 85003

RE: Z-61-22, SEC 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. & Fillmore St.  
Mercy Hill Church Redevelopment  
Hearing Date Jan. 9, 2023

Mr. Grande and Members of the Village Planning Committee:

The Grand Avenue Members Association (GAMA) represents the area within ¼ mile of Grand Avenue from Van Buren Street to McDowell Road. Our threefold purpose is to preserve the unique character of Lower Grand Avenue; to support elimination of blight and promote the revitalization of the neighborhood's core and surrounding areas; and to encourage social and economic development that promotes sustainable practices. The subject property lies within our area of representation.

We have been in communication since July, 2022 with Trumont Development regarding their plans for the redevelopment of the Mercy Hill Church site. We were encouraged that they reached out to us early in the design process. From the beginning of our discussions, we alerted them to various neighborhood concerns, **the most important of which was preservation of some portion of the history and character of the site as part of their new apartment design.** The concern was raised by stakeholders at a neighborhood meeting conducted by GAMA on September 20 and at open GAMA regular meetings in October and December. We provided formal comments to Trumont in a letter dated October 2, 2022.

Our request, in brief, was that **the most visible and significant parts of the existing church building be incorporated into the building design.** The portion in question included the main Sanctuary, the arcade extending along Fillmore, and the iconic, and unique, bell tower. **These features encumber about 7,000 square feet of a roughly 106,000 square foot site,** and thus we do not believe this to be an unreasonable request.



As examples, we pointed out to Trumont that successful projects that incorporate elements of earlier neighborhood character include “The Logan at Osborn” (3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. & Osborn) which incorporated a part of the Stewart Title Building, and “The Governor” in the Miracle Mile area which will incorporate parts of the old Safeway store. Other examples include “The Stewart” at Central & McKinley and the pending redevelopment of the City Center Hotel site.

We contend that retaining elements of earlier construction as part of a new development promotes creative placemaking and contributes to the sense of place and history of a neighborhood. The “scrape and rebuild” approach proposed by Trumont erases all trace of any history on the site and does not embed the design into the existing context.

Trumont justifies their plan by claiming the church is “not historic” and has gone to some pains to describe why they come to this conclusion. Please note two points. (1) The above argument does not hinge on whether or not the property is historic; it is about preserving “sense of place” using any positive and highly visible part of the built environment that is available. And (2) numerous credentialled historic preservation consultants, myself included, question the conclusion that the building is not historically eligible. This is not a settled question.

Rezoning the site to WU-T5:5 will be providing this developer with a radical increase in property entitlement and value. We believe such a windfall to the developer should come with the responsibility to give back to the community. That is, through the rezoning, the City is creating value, and that value should be shared by all, not just the property owner.

Therefore, we request that the Central City Village Planning Committee continue this zoning case and request that the developer modify their design, making a good-faith attempt to satisfying the neighborhood desire to incorporate significant elements of the church.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Graham', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Robert Graham, AIA  
President  
Grand Avenue Members Association

C: Yassamin Ansari, CD 7  
Aaron Kane, CD 7  
Shane Essert, Trumont Development  
Alan Beaudoin, Norris Design  
Mayor Kate Gallego  
Council Districts 1-6 +8

**From:** [Benjamin Hall](#)  
**To:** [Anthony M Grande](#)  
**Subject:** Zoning Case Z-61-22-7  
**Date:** Friday, January 6, 2023 12:36:21 PM

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Hi Anthony Grande,

As a resident of the neighborhood (806 N 9<sup>th</sup> Ave, Phoenix AZ 85007) here are my following thoughts in regards to Zoning Case Z-61-22-7

### 1. Zoning:

Why Would this WU Zoning be allowed to deviate from the original intended location along the light rail if the city has no plans to extend the light rail into this community? The city T5 allows for 5 stories along the light rail ONLY. In this specific case there is no light rail at all.....

Why would the development not request to rezone as R5 like the rest of the community? The same minimum setbacks would be established that would be aligned with what other single family and multifamily developments in the community.

Specifically, the required 20; front setback requirement along 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. (Current proposal has a 10' setback) Applying the same requirement would establish a cohesive landscape buffer from the height of the building overshadowing the sidewalk.

### 2. Density:

The property is approx. 101,700sq ft or 2.33 acres.

The surrounding community is zoned high density R5 at a ratio of 43.5 units per acre. The city rezoned the entire community with R5 to promote this level of density. If the proposed property aligned with the same standards as the surrounding developments in the community are required to design to, then the property would be allowed to develop maximum 101 units. Currently they are proposing to build 126. Which is 25 more units than what would normally be allowed.

That may seem like an insignificant number but there are still ripple effects non the less. Specifically, in regards to the parking.

### 3. History:

This property and its construction are of historic significance even if it is technically not on a preservation list. From a macro perspective, the City of Phoenix has long been criticized that we have such little history in our building stock. This is an opportunity, to change that narrative slightly as the community at whole has identified a reverence for the existing arch brick way and bell tower along Fillmore.

In response to the community's outreach the developer has added "brick arcade frontage" and "tower" to the drawing. We are pleased to see that, BUT we would like it to read "preserve original brick frontage and bell tower". To avoid the sinful practice of making a faux brick facade deviation during construction.

### 4. Use:

In the event that WU zoning is permitted. We would like to see its original intent applied to this project. Specifically intergraded office and retail street facing spaces for the community to utilize and participate in (via rental spaces).

Currently the project has these programed spaces insulated for the use of the community and designated for the new residence only at the NW and SW corners of the complex. We would like to

see this building become an incubator for the community along the entire ground floor street facades as both office and retail rental spaces that the surrounding art community can occupy as well.

\* My personal opinion is that the existing brick archways along Fillmore would make an ideal entry into street facing business.

Much appreciated

-Benjamin

benjamin hall **design**

p. 602.529.2954

e. benjamin@benjaminhalldesign.com

w. [www.benjaminhalldesign.com](http://www.benjaminhalldesign.com) [[benjaminhalldesign.com](http://benjaminhalldesign.com)]



January 7, 2023

Anthony Grande  
Planner, Central City Village Planning Committee  
Phoenix City Hall  
200 West Washington St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Dear Anthony and Members of the Central City Village Planning Committee:

Regarding Item Z-61-22-7 for the upcoming meeting of the Central City Village Planning Committee, the Arizona Preservation Foundation supports neighborhood and local preservation group advocacy to preserve the historic elements of the Mercy Hill Church property and strengthen community engagement in the design of the property's future development.

For years, before the COVID-19 pandemic, APF volunteers organized walking tours of historic Grand Avenue during the Grand Avenue Festival. The offices of several preservation related organizations, including APF, are housed in the neighborhood. The stock of vintage and historic buildings along and adjacent to Grand Avenue is impressive and an important social and economic asset to our capital city. Any unnecessary chipping away of this unique neighborhood's character would be a detriment.

Thank you for considering the future of this historic property and its neighborhood.

Sincerely yours,

Jim McPherson  
President, Board of Directors  
Arizona Preservation Foundation

cc: Board Members, Arizona Preservation Foundation  
Ashley Harder, Preserve Phoenix  
Beatrice Moore, Grand Avenue Arts & Preservation  
Bob Graham, Grand Avenue Members Association  
G.G. George, Phoenix Historic Neighborhoods Coalition

**Dennis Michael Burke**  
1126 W. Edgemont Avenue  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

January 6, 2023

Anthony Grande  
Central City Village Planning Committee City of Phoenix  
Planning and Development Department 200 W. Washington Street, 2nd Floor Phoenix, AZ 85003  
RE: Z-61-22, SEC 9th Ave. & Fillmore St. Mercy Hill Church Redevelopment Hearing Date Jan. 9, 2023

Dear Mr. Grande and Members of the Village Planning Committee:

The Mercy Hill Church is a gem of a building. It is impossible not to see it as a future gallery or restaurant space for a dynamic neighborhood and arts district. If the developer cannot see that, then the wrong developer is engaged. Central city developers need to think differently than far-suburban developers who are used to demolishing strip malls and fast-food restaurants. This is not that.

The people who laid those red bricks one by one are probably all gone now, but they made a contribution to our town that should not be tossed aside. By remembering their artistic work and by enjoying the shade of the long arcade they provided us, we deepen the value of our community.

Please deny this application for short-sighted development and insist on something much better, or simply allow more time to pass for the right development to come along, as it will.

Sincerely,



Dennis M. Burke  
Encanto Manor Neighborhood  
(602) 908-4067

January 6, 2023

Mr. Anthony Grande  
City of Phoenix Planning and Development Department  
Zoning Section  
200 W. Washington Street  
Phoenix, AZ. 855003

RE: SEC 9<sup>th</sup> & Fillmore Rezoning Neighborhood Meeting

Dear Mr. Grande,

I am the managing partner of Savana, the owner of the property on the northwest corner of 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Fillmore – directly across from Mercy Hill Church. We have owned the property for 15+ years and have planned a neighborhood-friendly residential project on the currently vacant lot. When planning our project, we very much appreciated the historic relevance of the nearby buildings as well as the neighborhood feel of the surrounding area. As a result, we planned a modest two-level set of buildings, despite the zoning allowance to go much higher.

With respect to the above-mentioned zoning request, I have two concerns:

- The developers have attempted to incorporate a small portion of the historic beauty of Mercy Hill Church through the addition of the brick arcade to the north side. However, this strikes me as a minor concession given the beauty and historic value of the property. I would like to see more of the historic building preserved and incorporated into the project design.
- The setbacks for the project seem small given the scale of the building they are proposing. There are no buildings of this scope in the immediate neighborhood and to consume such a large footprint with a 50 ft high structure is imposing, and not in line with the neighborhood. I realize they have the zoning to go to this height, but I would recommend preserving or expanding the setback from the street and sidewalk to better align with the building height.

Many thanks for considering our concern for the aesthetics of this project as it impacts the neighborhood.

My best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nora Hannah".

Nora Hannah  
Managing Member, Savana, LLC

January 9, 2023

Anthony Grande  
Central City Village Planning Committee, City of Phoenix  
Planning and Development Department  
200 W. Washington Street, 2nd Floor, Phoenix, AZ 85003

RE: Z-61-22, SEC 9th Ave. & Fillmore St.  
Mercy Hill Church Redevelopment  
Hearing Date Jan. 9, 2023



**SNOODMEN**

Mr. Grande and Members of the Village Planning Committee:

I am a business owner, artist, and community member who has been on Grand Avenue since 2013. My first introduction to Grand Avenue was working for a creative company that moved to Grand Avenue because they were priced out of Roosevelt Row.

I am submitting a formal "NO" on Agenda Item #8 for Zoning Case Z-61-22-7.

Many of the residents and business owners support a higher density living development that would bring new business to the area, but this development still has much work to do to integrate in a meaningful way with the community.

Their designs do not show research or connection to the vibrancy of the surrounding community, and look like every other development going up left and right in this city. Preservation of the visual sense of place of Grand Avenue is paramount, and the Mercy Hill Church has a stylized architecture that is classically recognizable to the area. The elements of the main Sanctuary, Arcade extending along Fillmore, and the iconic bell tower must be preserved. If not, this development will continue the trajectory of Phoenix into architectural mediocrity.

The parking plan also needs attention. The Triangle Neighborhood is already tight to maneuver in high density areas and there must be more thought into the mobility and ability for vehicular traffic as the street parking should remain free and ample for visitors to the district. This is another major lesson to learn from other cities, and even present existing developments.

It is imperative these matters be thought through past economic gain. There are many other types of value that exist in the world, and that is a big part as to why Grand Avenue is what it is today.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Michelle Meyer in black ink.

Michelle Meyer  
CEO, Snoodmen, LLC  
snoodmen@gmail.com

**From:** [Ben Overbaugh](#)  
**To:** [Anthony M. Grande](#)  
**Subject:** Rezoning Case Z-61-22-7  
**Date:** Sunday, January 8, 2023 10:10:29 AM

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Hello Anthony,

Frankly put, this development should not be approved with a reduced amount of required parking inside the development.

I am a resident and a home-owner on 10th ave and Fillmore St. I drive down Fillmore multiple times per day. It's a great street that is rarely crowded. I am concerned that a consideration is being made to reduce the number of required parking spaces for this project.

I have lived in a gated apartment complex in a nice area of Phoenix that did not have enough parking for all of their residents. This required unlucky residents to park out on the street, away from their residences. On one such occasion, my catalytic converter was stolen.

Forcing residents in this proposed apartment complex to park on the street will have many adverse effects. I believe crime will increase, as people will learn that cars are parked where the owners can not see or hear them. Traffic will drastically increase at the same time that the effective driving space on Fillmore Street and 9th Ave will decrease due to cars parked on both sides of the road. This will increase danger for pedestrians, bicyclists, and for children and animals who live and play in the neighborhood. This will also increase hit and run accidents as vehicles are forced to squeeze down narrow crowded streets.

I am all for community development, but it needs to be done in a manner that maintains or increases the quality of life for the current residents in the community.

I will repeat my statement that this development should not be approved with a reduced amount of required parking inside the development.

Thank you for your time.

-Ben Overbaugh



January 7, 2023

Anthony Grande, Central City Planner  
Central City Village Planning Committee  
Re: Z-61-22-7

Attention Central City Village Planning Committee Members:

As the co-owner of a business that has worked on restoration of several notable commercial buildings along Historic Grand Avenue over the last 30 years, (Bragg's Pie Factory; La Melgosa; Bikini Lounge; Citywide Studios; Weird Garden; the APCO building, etc.). I have concerns about the impact of a 4-story building in close proximity to our historic commercial and residential district. And further, how it will impact our preservation focused business model.

Most of the Oakland-University Park neighborhood (7th Avenue west to 19th Avenue, and Roosevelt south to Van Buren) is made up of older single-story structures (both residential and commercial). A handful of 3-story residential structures were built over the last 10 years on R-5 zoned parcels. The only 4-story building in the entire district is a Holiday Inn Express motel that replaced a 1950's motel at Van Buren, a major thoroughfare.

Three of our commercial properties are located within a block of MercyHill development. Increased height leads to property value escalation, land speculation, parcel accumulation, tear-downs, and the subsequent domino affect. This is happening all over the downtown area in real time, with a sea of condo and loft projects overwhelming the landscape. Urban Renewal policies of the 1950's and 60's, in retrospect cited as discriminatory and socially damaging, have returned on steroids under another name. Single family homes, SRO's, weekly motels, trailer parks, and other affordable housing is rapidly disappearing to create more overpriced parcels and unattainable housing.

I am against approval of this rezoning request and ask that item #8 be continued to allow further discussion with Trumont Group, City of Phoenix Planning Department, and District 7 on the points below.

Thank you.

We would like to see:

- 1) 3 stories with a 2-story step down where apartments meet the neighborhood to the west;
- 2) Preservation and integration of the church sanctuary, colonnades and bell tower (a mere 7,000 sq. ft. of the total 106,000 sq. ft. site);
- 3) Lower level business space (office, co-working, art studio, beauty salon, live/work, non-profit, counselor/therapist, food/drink, etc.);
- 4) More exterior green space (preservation of the sanctuary, colonnades and bell tower, see corner of Fillmore/9th Avenue, could help achieve this goal);
- 5) Traffic remediation including 7th Avenue/Fillmore traffic light as well as a Hawkligh at Polk/Grand; lower Grand Avenue speed limit to 25mph;
- 6) Visually stimulating and welcoming features along the project perimeter (gardens, tile, art, outdoor seating, open entryways);
- 7) Variations in the facade to soften the fortress feel;

What the MercyHill plan brings?

- 1) Increased traffic to 7th Avenue and Grand, jamming up already difficult traffic routes and endangering pedestrians;
- 2) Market rate lofts that will have no affordable units;
- 3) Fortress-like scale/footprint with lack of integration with the existing neighborhood character;
- 4) Precedent setting 4-story height will lead to tear-downs in an area that is ethnically, socially, and economically diverse;
- 5) 80 years of church history and the Lescher and Mahoney design will be lost;
- 6) Little to no ground level commercial activity.
- 7) The red brick element added to the facade is an improvement, but will be rendered meaningless if no red brick church components remain.

Sincerely,



Anthony Zahn, Managing Member  
La Melgosa, LLC  
1023 Grand Avenue  
Phoenix, AZ 85007  
480.617.5616

**From:** [Courtney Davis](#)  
**To:** [Anthony M Grande](#)  
**Subject:** SEC 9th Ave & Fillmore Rezoning  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 5:07:29 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Mr. Grande,

Know this is a late correspondence given the virtual hearing on this matter is scheduled to commence an hour from now. As the owner of the block between 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> Avenues on the north side of Grand Avenue, I wanted to express my only concern regarding the proposed apartment complex where Mercy Hill Church currently occupies the land. That concern is the amount of street parking that is built into the developer's plan (in addition to the expected increase that will occur naturally). Specifically, I've noticed a discrepancy in the developer's conceptual site plan drawing which shows street parking that is "tucked in" to the site's property along Fillmore Street. Their conceptual building perspective – a simulated overhead look of Fillmore Street – shows that the parking is **not** tucked in to the property, but shown as extended out into the street.

After seeing Taylor Street turn into a dangerous one lane gauntlet because of insufficient on-site parking for the existing apartments just west of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue; I would hate to see the same thing happen to Fillmore and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue. I'm hoping the final approval requires the developer of the proposed apartment complex to create parking along the street that will not "shrink" Fillmore down to effectively a one lane road.

Regards.

Courtney C. Davis  
President  
Sterling Food Service  
920 Grand Avenue  
Phoenix, AZ 85007  
(602) 252-9608



JAN 23 2023

Planning & Development  
Department

Mercy Hill Church Development Case Z-61-22-7.

To: anthony.grande@phoenix.gov

Dear City of Phoenix,

I would like to request that this case be continued at the Planning Commission meeting on February 2nd for additional time to work out a compromise.

With a new look at the project it seems that the red brick colonnade, bell tower and sanctuary are architecturally significant character buildings that contribute to the rich history of the Historic Grand Avenue district and would enhance the project while creating a memorial to the 80 years of church history at the site.

The 4-story project should step down to the adjoining single story neighborhood.

The traffic congestion at 7th Avenue; onto Taylor Street; and onto Grand Avenue needs mitigation as ingress and egress at all these points will be difficult especially at rush hour.

\$1,400 for a studio apartment and \$ 2,000 for a 2 bedroom apartment is not affordable. There need to be some designated affordable units. What young person such as students could afford this.

Bob Graham, President of the Grand Avenue Members Assoc. has re-worked the Norris site plan, showing how the sanctuary, bell tower and colonnades can be preserved while not taking away any parking, or rentable sq. footage from the site. It actually adds sq. footage via rentable sanctuary space, and makes the footprint of the structure integrated into the surrounding small scale neighborhood better.

A variety in the footprint is need so it does not create a sheer wall on all sides and offers more green space.

Lower level small commercial spaces (including **art studio space**) to create more vibrancy and welcoming exterior is needed. Along with creative design features that will tie into the adjoining neighborhood character.

Sincerely,

**From:** [Steve Weiss](#)  
**To:** [Anthony M Grande](#)  
**Subject:** Please continue case Z-61-22-7 at Planning Commission  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 24, 2023 1:38:53 PM

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To whom it may concern,

There is a tendency to replace an originally well-built structure with a less well-built structure in order to generate profit. The trouble is, when the really well-built vintage building stock is replaced by buildings that think more about profitability than legacy and community, a neighborhood ends up with mediocrity and a lack of historical significance. Our world becomes lesser for the sake of profit.

The red brick colonnade, bell tower and sanctuary are architecturally significant character buildings that contribute to the rich history of the Historic Grand Avenue district and would enhance the project while creating a memorial to the 80 years of church history at the site. Building a 4-story typical apartment complex with no recognition of what's replaced is an insult to Phoenix residents and is an overwhelming addition to the character of an existing neighborhood.

I urge the Planning Commission to continue this request for approval, and consider a better compromise approach for the community and ultimately, the respect of the developer for LISTENING.

Thank you,

Steve Weiss  
2938 North 15th Drive  
Phoenix AZ

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Steve Weiss  
Executive Director  
No Festival Required  
Independent Cinema  
steve@nofestivalrequired.com  
cell-602-432-0641

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<https://www.linkedin.com/in/nofestivalrequired> [linkedin.com]

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**From:** [Snoodmen -](#)  
**To:** [Anthony M Grande](#)  
**Cc:** [Council District 7 PCC; PDD Long Range Planning](#)  
**Subject:** MercyHill Church Development #Z-61-22-7  
**Date:** Monday, January 30, 2023 3:51:46 PM  
**Attachments:** [Secondary Snoodmen Letter Z-61-22 Mercy Hill Aparment Redevelopment.pdf](#)  
[Snoodmen Package regarding Z-61-22 Mercy Hill Aparment Redevelopment 2023-01-30 at 3.39.53 PM.pdf](#)

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Hi there ~

Please see the attached with my formal "NO" stance regarding the Zoning Case #Z-61-22-7. I have included both my letter individually as well as a PDF that includes elements referenced in the letter.

Thank you ~

**Michelle Meyer**

**CEO + H.S.I.C.**  
SNOODMEN, LLC  
847-363-2807

[www.snoodcity.com](http://www.snoodcity.com) [snoodcity.com]

January 27, 2023

Central City Village Planning Committee, City of Phoenix

RE: Z-61-22-7, SEC 9th Ave. & Fillmore St.  
Mercy Hill Church Redevelopment



**SNOODMEN**

Dear Phoenix Planning Commissioners,

Greetings, I am writing again with a stance of a “NO”, or a continuance for Zoning Case Z-61-22-7, known as the Mercy Hill Church Development.

The reason for my letter is 3-fold. One is to support the community that I have been part of since 2013, two is to speak to high priority adjustments the project should consider, and last to address the letter sent to this committee by Mr. Paul Johnson.

I know that often you do not receive many case letters, but it does not mean they do not care. Not everyone has the time or ability to craft a response, even when it is so important. Many have a combination of work, families, and businesses to run. Statement requests often come on short notice, so I hope you highly consider the weight of the people who have taken the time to write letters, the place they hold in the community, and how many people their voices represent. I am the founder of Snood City: an art collective and the business owner. I alone directly represent the voices of 15 people who work with me and are based on Grand Ave, with 500+ in my local network. It is the developers sole job, which has full dedication of time, money, and resources to make sure their projects go through as they want. This is an advantage for them to the fact that people are busy working to get by and oftentimes don't even know when a decision like this is on the docket.

Many agreeable compromises have been set forth by community members. Highly notable is the rework of the site plan by architect Bob Graham (President of the Grand Ave Members Assoc.) to preserve the sanctuary, bell tower and colonnades which does not take away (it in fact adds) rentable sq. footage space. Also important to consider is the footprint of the structure. It should be dynamic and integrate into the surrounding neighborhood better. The building should not simply be a large box with towering walls that dwarfs existing homes. There is a unique opportunity here for the type of rentable space offered, and the project should seriously consider small commercial spaces at the ground level. There is a high demand for downtown studio spaces, especially for artists, which would further support the draw of Grand Avenue. Incorporating spaces of this nature will be a big win for the neighborhood. Overall, this development needs a serious creative design rework. Take a trip to Grand Ave and look at the personality. We do not want something that looks like every other development in every other city, including this one. There is no originality with what has been presented by the developers and we demand better.

Finally to address the letter by Mr. Paul Johnson:

The stance of Mr. Johnson's letter to this board, submitted on Jan 5, 2023 is aggravating. To call a studio apartment rented at \$1,200 "affordable" is laughable. It is common sentiment that the local housing market is almost criminal. The standard is that when applying to a rental you must have 3x rent for income. That means, someone has to be making \$50k per year to cover their expenses just to live in a studio apartment. How is that affordable housing? Additionally, his comment with intention to "[...extend the benefits that have come from downtown development, mostly to the East of 7th ave to West of 7th Ave"] What are those benefits? Terrible parking and street maneuverability? Bland architecture? Unused 400 sq ft. gym amenities? The notion that the Grand Ave community wants anything like what has happened on Roosevelt Row is absurd. It puts on full display the gap in understanding of the local ideology and what is desired. The reason Grand Ave exists is despite these kinds of developers. Business owners support high density projects that will bring more people to the area, but not at the cost of the soul of the community. That is why Grand Ave is even attractive in the first place. It is interesting and unique. When I look at Roosevelt Row, I don't see "high quality" projects, I see cookie cutter, so-called luxury highrises. Grand Ave has its own sense of place, and we want to keep it that way.

I challenge this Board and the Mercy Hill developers to really question what their driving factor is for this project. Meaningful communication and readjustment of what a "true urban project" means for the Grand Avenue community is essential, and has not yet been achieved.

Thank you for your time,

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

Michelle Meyer  
CEO, Snoodmen, LLC  
snoodmen@gmail.com



January 27, 2023

Central City Village Planning Committee, City of Phoenix

RE: Z-61-22-7, SEC 9th Ave. & Fillmore St.  
Mercy Hill Church Redevelopment



**SNOODMEN**

Dear Phoenix Planning Commissioners,

Greetings, I am writing again with a stance of a “NO”, or a continuance for Zoning Case Z-61-22-7, known as the Mercy Hill Church Development.

The reason for my letter is 3-fold. One is to support the community that I have been part of since 2013, two is to speak to high priority adjustments the project should consider, and last to address the letter sent to this committee by Mr. Paul Johnson.

I know that often you do not receive many case letters, but it does not mean they do not care. Not everyone has the time or ability to craft a response, even when it is so important. Many have a combination of work, families, and businesses to run. Statement requests often come on short notice, so I hope you highly consider the weight of the people who have taken the time to write letters, the place they hold in the community, and how many people their voices represent. I am the founder of Snood City: an art collective and the business owner. I alone directly represent the voices of 15 people who work with me and are based on Grand Ave, with 500+ in my local network. It is the developers sole job, which has full dedication of time, money, and resources to make sure their projects go through as they want. This is an advantage for them to the fact that people are busy working to get by and oftentimes don't even know when a decision like this is on the docket.

Many agreeable compromises have been set forth by community members. Highly notable is the rework of the site plan by architect Bob Graham (President of the Grand Ave Members Assoc.) to preserve the sanctuary, bell tower and colonnades which does not take away (it in fact adds) rentable sq. footage space. Also important to consider is the footprint of the structure. It should be dynamic and integrate into the surrounding neighborhood better. The building should not simply be a large box with towering walls that dwarfs existing homes. There is a unique opportunity here for the type of rentable space offered, and the project should seriously consider small commercial spaces at the ground level. There is a high demand for downtown studio spaces, especially for artists, which would further support the draw of Grand Avenue. Incorporating spaces of this nature will be a big win for the neighborhood. Overall, this development needs a serious creative design rework. Take a trip to Grand Ave and look at the personality. We do not want something that looks like every other development in every other city, including this one. There is no originality with what has been presented by the developers and we demand better.

Finally to address the letter by Mr. Paul Johnson:

The stance of Mr. Johnson's letter to this board, submitted on Jan 5, 2023 is aggravating. To call a studio apartment rented at \$1,200 "affordable" is laughable. It is common sentiment that the local housing market is almost criminal. The standard is that when applying to a rental you must have 3x rent for income. That means, someone has to be making \$50k per year to cover their expenses just to live in a studio apartment. How is that affordable housing? Additionally, his comment with intention to "[...extend the benefits that have come from downtown development, mostly to the East of 7th ave to West of 7th Ave"] What are those benefits? Terrible parking and street maneuverability? Bland architecture? Unused 400 sq ft. gym amenities? The notion that the Grand Ave community wants anything like what has happened on Roosevelt Row is absurd. It puts on full display the gap in understanding of the local ideology and what is desired. The reason Grand Ave exists is despite these kinds of developers. Business owners support high density projects that will bring more people to the area, but not at the cost of the soul of the community. That is why Grand Ave is even attractive in the first place. It is interesting and unique. When I look at Roosevelt Row, I don't see "high quality" projects, I see cookie cutter, so-called luxury highrises. Grand Ave has its own sense of place, and we want to keep it that way.

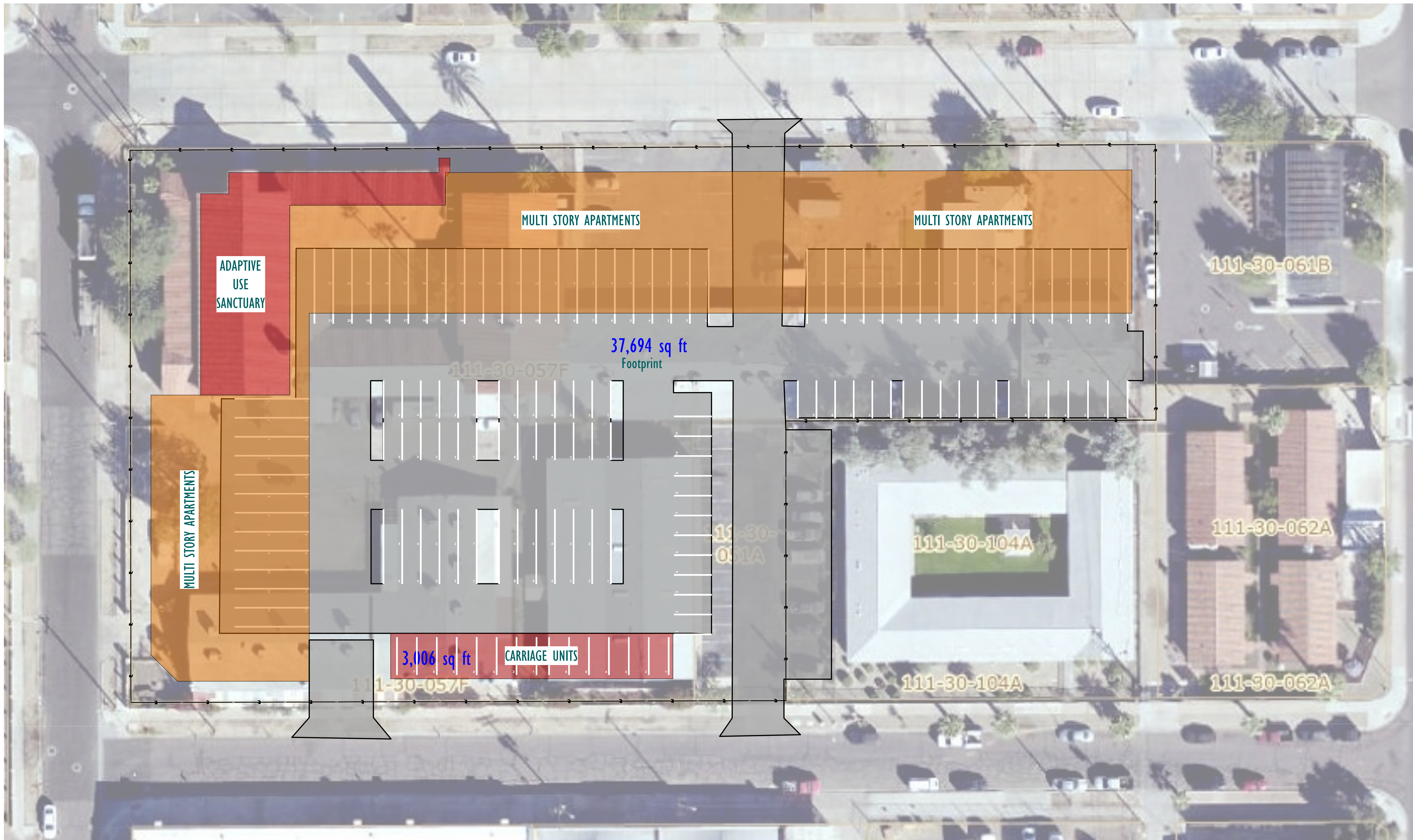
I challenge this Board and the Mercy Hill developers to really question what their driving factor is for this project. Meaningful communication and readjustment of what a "true urban project" means for the Grand Avenue community is essential, and has not yet been achieved.

Thank you for your time,

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

Michelle Meyer  
CEO, Snoodmen, LLC  
snoodmen@gmail.com





# Mercy Hill Church Site Redevelopment

**ALTERNATE PROPOSAL SITE PLAN**      Scale 1" = 20'  
 Apartment footprint and parking count roughly equivalent to developer proposal



JAN 05 2023

Planning & Development  
Department

Dear Central City Village Planning Committee Members,

My name is Paul Johnson. I am writing to express my support for Z-61-22-7, a high quality multifamily project located at the SEC of 9th Ave & Fillmore. As a disclosure I am a partner with the church on the project.

As a long time supporter of downtown Phoenix, this project helps us extend the benefits that have come from downtown development, mostly to the East of 7th ave to West of 7th Ave. As high quality, high density project west of 7th Ave will help bring much more investment dollars to a side of the street that has had scattered development, but nothing that reaches the quality of project being proposed.

Along with my partners, the church, are a supporter of improving the West of 7th ave, because we intend to stay a part of this area. We believe that improving this side of the street, will benefit all the residences and business that exist there.

In addition to this, the requested zoning is just good land use. Much of the existing proposed property is already zoned R-5, so it could already go multifamily. However, by rezoning to WU Code, it allows staff and the developer the flexibility necessary to create a true urban project, rather than trying to design around what the existing site would allow, which would result in a less cohesive project. City staff, has recommended approval, I believe because it is next to a major arterial, and they know that if this site is developed hodgepodge the area will suffer. They recommended it as having a strong basis for multifamily at this location.

The units are not subsidized housing that is often misunderstood as the only version of affordable housing. This is market rent housing, that is affordable for middle class families and individuals who are finding it more difficult to find housing in our existing market. The product is designed to be more affordable to the average family or young professional.

Last, the existing buildings are old and are way beyond the structural lifespan of the buildings. They have no historic value, and currently, unless we can make a change, they create a significant financial burden on the church. This project allows the church to stay in the area providing their services, and benefits them and the neighborhood with a quality project.

For these reasons, I strongly support Project Z-61-22-7. I hope you will, too.

Sincerely,

*Paul Johnson*

Paul Johnson



Preserve PHX &lt;hello@preservephx.org&gt;

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**Mercy Hill Development**

1 message

**Jennifer Kruse** <jenkr55@gmail.com>

Tue, Jan 31, 2023 at 9:17 AM

To: mayor.gallego@phoenix.gov

Cc: Hello@preservephx.org

Dear Mayor Gallego,

As a homeowner in the Triangle Neighborhood, I am deeply concerned about the impact of the proposed development by Trumont Group on the Mercy Hill Church location at [745 W Fillmore](#).

The Triangle Neighborhood has a historic and eclectic character unique to Phoenix that needs to be preserved. The Mercy Hill building is a significant piece of our neighborhood's history and it is unacceptable that its historic features are not being preserved as part of the development plans.

We are asking that the church façade, sanctuary, and arched arcade should be incorporated into the new development. These character-defining features are in excellent condition and part of the original 1946 design by Lescher & Mahoney, and the footprint of this section of the church is small considering the overall acreage of the site.

I urge you to consider the concerns of the homeowners and residents in the area. We need to ensure that any new development fits the character of our neighborhood and is respectful of the history and heritage of the area.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Kruse

**From:** [Preserve PHX](#)  
**To:** [G Hawk](#)  
**Cc:** [Anthony M Grande](#); [Council District 7 PCC](#); [Beatrice Moore](#); [gggfabgal@outlook.com](mailto:gggfabgal@outlook.com); [Sarah Stockham](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Mercy Hill Church  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 8, 2023 2:19:16 PM

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Hello,

Forwarding to Sarah Stockton who is managing Anthony's role while he is out of office.

Thank you!



[PreservePHX.org \[preservephx.org\]](https://www.preservephx.org) | [Facebook \[facebook.com\]](https://www.facebook.com) | [Instagram \[instagram.com\]](https://www.instagram.com)

On Tue, Feb 7, 2023 at 10:46 PM G Hawk <[hawksalvage@gmail.com](mailto:hawksalvage@gmail.com)> wrote:

Good morning,

As a retired individual who now owns a small business on Grand Avenue I find myself caught in the middle between the gentrification and growth of the downtown area and the preservation of what few older structures and regions of the city remain. I am in favor of supporting the increasing population of the Phoenix area by providing housing that can accommodate them but I also think it's critically important to make sure that we preserve what we have that reminds us of what Phoenix was not that long ago.

Early residents of Phoenix were industrious and imaginative. They created a land that became enterprising and fertile and this helped the valley grow to what it is today. If we give up the imagination and forget the fertility of the neighborhoods we run the risk of losing the character that's been building for generations.

Minor changes with the design plans and the preservation of at least parts of the Mercy Hill church will maintain some of the history and continuity that it holds with other structures in downtown Phoenix, ie. the Encanto Park clubhouse. Not only will the complete demolition of the Mercy Hill church damage this relationship but I'm afraid the trickle down effect will have a negative impact on the surrounding historic districts. Del Norte Pl., Roosevelt, Oakland, Woodland, FQ story are just a few that may be negatively impacted.

Thank you for your time and thank you for your continued hard work.

G Hawk  
Grand ave small business owner  
602-790-8365

February 9, 2023  
Anthony Grande  
Central City Village Planning Committee  
City of Phoenix  
Planning and Development Department  
200 W. Washington Street, 2nd Floor  
Phoenix, AZ 85003  
RE: Z-61-22, SEC 9th Ave. & Fillmore St.  
Mercy Hill Church Redevelopment  
Hearing Date February 13, 2023

Mr. Grande and Members of the Village Planning Committee:

Vice Mayor Yassmin Ansari and Mayor Kate Gallego are responsible for upholding the commitments they promised to the citizens when they ran for their positions. The Central City Village Planning Committee is also responsible for this commitment. In my neighborhood, District 7, we are waiting to see if this committee, the Vice Mayor, and the Mayor are serious about those promises.

The potential rezoning of Mercy Hill Church (Z-61-22-7) does nothing to uphold those promises. The site currently houses a handful of low-income seniors who will be displaced due to this rezoning. The incoming developers plan to charge what they described as “market-rate” housing at a whopping \$1,400 for studio apartments. I can guarantee you that when I speak with the constituents of this district, from 7th St. to 7th Ave, ASU housing, PAX, Ave, The Rey, and beyond, they are dismayed by this. When I further explain the issues surrounding Z-61-22-7, many are disheartened to hear that this is happening underneath the leadership of the Vice Mayor and Mayor, who both ran on platforms that are diametrically opposed to redevelopment plans such as these.

There is nothing in this development that contributes to sustainable growth that Vice Mayor Ansari has addressed numerous times as the city rapidly expands. No solar panels, no canopy coverages, and certainly nothing remotely close to a green building, as was discussed at the COP27 meeting. There is nothing in this development that contributes to affordable housing, where Mayor Gallego has stated Phoenix residents need “rent that makes sense.” In fact, this development has already led to the demolition of a single-family dwelling on 9th Ave to pave a new parking lot for Mercy Hill’s hopeful new church they wish to develop across the street from the current existing church.

These developments are discouraging, but they are not set in stone. The promises made to Phoenix constituents in District 7 cannot be lip service. There is an opportunity to develop Phoenix in a mindful way allowing the city to negotiate on behalf of citizens, and not on behalf of developers. This parcel is a massive piece of land and could be an incredible opportunity for a developer whose interests are more aligned with the promises made by our elected officials. I

implore this committee to oppose this zoning measure, as I implore the City Council to fulfill the promises they made on the campaign trail and bring green, affordable development to our downtown neighborhood.

Thank you for your time,

Mollie McCurdy  
Triangle Neighborhood Homeowner and Voter

C: Yassamin Ansari, CD 7  
Aaron Kane, CD 7  
Shane Essert, Trumont Development  
Alan Beaudoin, Norris Design  
Mayor Kate Gallego  
Council Districts 1-6 +8



**From:** [Preserve PHX](#)  
**To:** [Beatrice Moore](#); [Robert Graham](#); [rbrevoort@cox.net](mailto:rbrevoort@cox.net); [mollieannemccurdy@gmail.com](mailto:mollieannemccurdy@gmail.com); [Benjamin@benjaminhalldesign.com](mailto:Benjamin@benjaminhalldesign.com); [Aaron T Kane](#); [Sarah Stockham](#)  
**Cc:** [anthony@mercyhillphoenix.com](mailto:anthony@mercyhillphoenix.com); [Shane@trumontgroup.com](mailto:Shane@trumontgroup.com); [Anthony M Grande](#)  
**Subject:** Follow Up to Community Discussion 7-9-23  
**Date:** Thursday, February 9, 2023 7:49:31 PM

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Hello Anthony, Sarah and Aaron,

I am following up as I agreed to share an update as to today's discussions between community organizations and the applicant for **Z-61-22-7**. Tonight Shane Essert, applicant for Z-61-22-7 hosted a 30 minute meeting with members of the Community in preparation for his agenda item being heard at Monday's Central City Planning Committee meeting. Organizations represented were Grand Avenue Members Association, Grand Avenue Arts & Preservation, Phoenix Historic Neighborhoods Coalition, Preserve Phoenix as well as residents and builders that live within the Triangle Neighborhood. Shane presented that the plan being put forth at Monday's meeting will be the plan presented to the Village at its last meeting in January except that there will be an inclusion of the bell tower in their setback, it was indicated that they are willing to see it apply as a stipulation to their requested zoning. I believe no other adjustments have been made to address the various community concerns brought forth in both private and public discussions with the developer. The applicant has declined to determine the feasibility of retaining the Sanctuary, colonnade and bell tower as requested by the Community and will not accept a stipulation to preserve the Sanctuary and colonnade.

As you can imagine the community is incredibly disappointed and OPPOSES the plan as presented. So, in preparations for Monday's meeting we are seeking to better understand what stipulations may be under consideration for the proposed plan and what community benefit they may or may not offer. We are also looking to better address the developer's plan for live/work units and artist work spaces within the plan and if there are or are not stipulations applied for those elements. Lastly, could a breakdown be made to address the affordable housing units that exist on the property and an update as to what the planning effort is to retain those critical needed units within the neighborhood. Answering some or all of these questions would be greatly appreciated as the community tries to advocate for a better plan than what has been presented in the past.

Thank you for your assistance in coordinating this particular case with our community groups and with concerned neighbors. Everyone's commitment to transparency and acting in a cordial nature has made this process easier and is appreciated so very much.

Have a great evening,

Ashley Harder



[PreservePHX.org](http://PreservePHX.org) [[preservephx.org](http://preservephx.org)] | [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com) [[facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com)] | [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com) [[instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com)]



## *Grand Avenue Arts & Preservation*

1301 Grand Avenue #8  
Phoenix, AZ 85007  
602.391.4016

Feb 10, 2023

Central City Village Planning Committee Members  
C/O Sarah Stockham  
City of Phoenix Planning Department  
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Dear Planning Committee Members (Re: Z-61-22-7)

Because so much time has passed since my original letter, I am updating it here.

As the Director of Grand Avenue Arts & Preservation, an Arizona non-profit corporation, our mission has been to preserve the history and arts along the Historic Grand Avenue corridor (McDowell south to Van Buren). As part of that mandate, I organized the Grand Avenue Festival for 8 years, an award winning arts Festival that showcased the arts and history in the area.

Independent of that effort, my partner and I have restored and adaptively re-used vintage and historic buildings in the area for over 30 years (including the Bragg's Pie Factory building), providing affordable art studios and incubator business spaces.

Trumont Group's residential design falls well short of a quality residential project, or a mix of uses, that Phoenix should be building in older inner city neighborhoods at this point in time. We have learned enough about sustainability, affordability, adaptive reuse, interconnectivity, and pedestrian friendliness, that we should be demanding a more integrated, financially accessible, less disruptive, and functional outcome.

Preserving a small 7,000 sq. ft. section of a sprawling 80 year old church complex, not only lends a missing sustainability component to the project, but helps create a needed step-down to the small scale residential to the north and west, softening the sheer 4-story walls. The character contributing architecture (Lescher and Mahoney) makes for a tie-in to the adjoining and nearby vintage and historic structures.

However, at every turn Mr. Essert has not deviated from his original line that the footprint of the bell tower, colonnades and sanctuary are not worth saving, or not possible to save. Instead of looking for creative ways for a successful adaptive reuse that would enhance his new construction, he has steadfastly looked for ways the re-

use will not work. Developers don't necessarily have to be creative, but they do need to know how to hire creative designers and architects and give them leeway to work their magic. And to actually listen to, and successfully address, community concerns.

We have heard repeatedly from Mr. Essert and the sellers (MercyHill Church) how much they love the neighborhood - but always couched in how much they think the neighborhood should transform to reflect the rampant development to the east side of 7th Avenue. We know if that were to happen, development pressure would lead to the destruction of much of our delightful, small scale neighborhood. This will be only the second commercial 4-story building in our district (the first being a Holiday Inn Express buffered by the large expanse of University Park).

Because it is our hope that the historic fabric along, and in close proximity to Grand Avenue and the original Route 60, will exist far into the future for new generations, we must oppose this rezoning in its current form. Where are the much needed affordable housing units? Where is a courteous step-down to the adjoining small residential? Where are the art studios and small commercial ground floor spaces requested by the neighborhood early on? And where is the preservation of key character-contributing church elements honoring 80 years of church history?

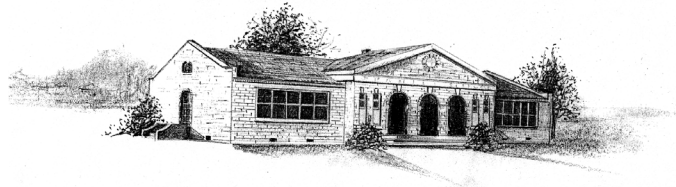
Thank you for your time.

Sincerely yours,

*Beatrice Moore* (signed electronically)

Beatrice Moore, Director

Phoenix Historic Neighborhoods Coalition



HISTORIC FRANKLIN SCHOOL

February 10, 2023

Via Email

Central City Village Planning Committee

RE: February 13, 2023 Meeting

Agenda item #6: Request for zoning change to WU code

PHOENIX HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD COALITION OPPOSES ZONING CHANGE

Dear Member of the Central City Village Planning Committee:

Grand Avenue and its environs have always been part of the idea that created Phoenix. The most cohesive part of its' history is the portion from Five Points (Van Buren/7<sup>th</sup> Avenue/and Grand) to Six Points (McDowell/19<sup>th</sup> Avenue/and Grand).

The Story Historic District is adjacent to Fairview Place Historic District, and Encanto-Palmcroft Historic District, both of which are adjacent to the Del Norte Place Historic District. Grand Avenue is also adjacent to Roosevelt, Oakland and Woodland Historic Districts. Anything that disturbs the historic setting of Grand Avenue has repercussions, like earthquake aftershocks, to affect the adjacent historic districts. All of these elements are part of the undivided whole of Phoenix history.

The Phoenix Historic Neighborhoods Coalition (PHNC) is composed of people who live throughout the historic neighborhoods within the city. We come together because we value the history of Phoenix, and we seek to share our love of our city's historic neighborhoods to preserve not only the buildings, but also help stabilize and build strong communities.

The MercyHill Church was designed in 1946 by Lescher & Mahoney as part of Phoenix's post World War II history. The façade is remarkably similar to the pre-war Clubhouse at Encanto Park designed by the same firm.

The PHNC is concerned about the damaging impact of this proposed project on the existing neighborhoods and the larger Grand Avenue community. While the MercyHill Church may not be technically historical, it is certainly historically significant due to the original church design by Lescher & Mahoney.

The PHNC supports the church's efforts to recover financially and continue its mission by selling their property; however, the coalition cannot support a plan that doesn't incorporate the architecturally significant sanctuary, colonnade and bell tower within the larger 2.5 acre site plan. The Grand Avenue community has requested partial preservation of specific character-defining structures; affordable housing units; artist work spaces; and a step down to the interior residential neighborhood. The current plan does not include any of these provisions.

Consequently, the Phoenix Historic Neighborhood Coalition does not support this rezoning and is opposed to moving forward until these items are addressed with adequate stipulations.

Thank you for your time and attention to this information.

Jack Marks  
Phoenix Historic Neighborhoods Coalition  
1638 Palmcroft Way SW  
602-920-4751



February 10, 2023

Central City Village Planning Committee Members  
C/O Sarah Stockham  
City of Phoenix Planning Department  
Phoenix, AZ 85003

**RE      Z-61-22-7; SE Corner of 9th Avenue & Fillmore**

Dear Central City Village Planning Committee,

On behalf of Preserve Phoenix the advocacy voice for historic preservation in Phoenix, I am writing to request that stipulations be created to preserve a historic building, colonnade and bell tower for Zoning Application Z-61-22-7, a 3.24 acre proposed development site on the southeast corner of 9th Avenue and Fillmore. The applicant has not provided an adequate community benefit in exchange for entitlements and their current plan is not reflective of the neighborhood or of the City's goals for quality development that imparts a positive impact to the community it's built in. **Preserve Phoenix does not support a plan that doesn't include stipulations to preserve the historic structures and asks the members of the Central City Village Planning Committee to vote "No" and not recommend this application in its current iteration to the Planning Commission.**

Our organization has been continuously engaged with the community impacted by the proposed development at 9th Avenue and Fillmore over the past year. Since April of 2022 Preserve Phoenix has met routinely with representatives of Mercy Hill Church along with *Grand Avenue Members Association*, *Grand Avenue Arts and Preservation*, their members and members of the community. The potential demolition of a longstanding historic building and church within a small neighborhood off historic Grand Avenue generated great concerns for the members of the community and the public. Preserve Phoenix has convened these organizations and members to coordinate community engagement to determine a consensus to present a unified voice to the City and to the developer.

Please see attached Neighborhood petition with 47 signatures of residents and small business owners that live in or are directly adjacent to the Triangle Neighborhood, along with seven letters we've received that have been sent to Councilwoman Ansari's District 7 Office and to the City of Phoenix Planning Department. The Neighborhood petition asks neighbors to support 6 requests for the proposed zoning allowance, including the primary request by *Preserve Phoenix*, *GAMA* and *GAAP* to preserve and incorporate the Sanctuary, colonnade and bell tower into the development plan. I am disappointed to relay that none of these requests have been met in the current plan. At this time no alternative plans or even preliminary studies have been produced that substantiate the applicant's position that their proposed plan is the only workable plan. The Sanctuary building, colonnade and bell tower are situated

in an ideal location to be incorporated into the larger 3.24 acre site and its preservation creates other desired design and community benefits like creating a step down into the interior of the neighborhood and allocating open space for the public's benefit at the corner of 9th Avenue and Fillmore. This is what the community has formally requested from the developer and the developer has denied the primary request as well as the other 5 requests included in the petition. We are calling on members of the Central City Village Planning Committee to question how this application provides an acceptable benefit to the community and are those benefits addressed through stipulations to zoning?

The applicant and the developer were given the opportunity to improve the project through a continuance but have not changed their plan in a meaningful way or accommodated public comments and concerns. They have not provided sufficient or concrete evidence to support their reasoning. The developer has stated that the community's request of partial preservation would create a "less optimal" design and are concerned that the property would be "less marketable". We disagree with this reasoning, find it deficient and maintain that incorporating the historic parts of the property into a development plan will optimize the development by making it unique, desirable and more marketable. There is great benefit to the community and to the City in preserving character defining historic buildings. The Phoenix specific benefits including the economic benefits of preservation have been measured and reported on in the Phoenix City Council's adopted 2021 plan "*Preservation Phoenix Style*". If you are unfamiliar with the report I encourage you to review it and learn about an important measured economic driver in our City that informs zoning cases of this nature. To put it succinctly, a diverse building stock makes our City and neighborhoods better performing and more resilient.

**Preserve Phoenix is unequivocally supportive of building housing** and commonly advocates that older critical affordable housing units be maintained as one part of our City's efforts to address the current housing crisis. We are proponents that developers can preserve important and "cool" buildings and build new within the same plan and that it makes the plan better. The community impacted by the proposed development in the Triangle Neighborhood is greatly supportive of seeing housing built at the Mercy Hill Church site. They have even requested affordable housing and are concerned about the loss of the existing affordable units at the church. **The community has requested partial preservation of specific character-defining structures; affordable housing units; artist work spaces; and a step down to the interior residential neighborhood. The current plan does not include any of these requests and should not move forward until these items are addressed with adequate stipulations.**

Preserve Phoenix along with *GAMA* and *GAAP* are prepared to support a plan for housing that reflects the unique place in which it is to be built. Please support this unified request to preserve the Sanctuary, colonnade and bell tower in Zoning Application Z-61-22-7 by creating adequate stipulations that will foster a better plan for the small and historic Triangle Neighborhood.

Sincerely,



Ashley Harder  
Interim Executive Director, Preserve Phoenix

**From:** [Neal Haddad](#)  
**To:** [PDD Long Range Planning](#)  
**Cc:** [Sarah Stockham](#)  
**Subject:** CCVPC agenda item #6, Z-61-22-7, 9th Ave. & Fillmore  
**Date:** Sunday, February 12, 2023 2:44:06 PM

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Central City VPC members--

Please vote against the subject application as presented. The current plan that you are reviewing does not consider the unique character of the area.

Citizens have drafted thoughtful recommendations that mesh with the area's unique characteristics, and members of Grand Avenue Arts & Preservation have been sharing ideas with the applicants to provide a workable solution.

Without viewing and considering the site in the context of the past three decades, however, it is impossible to fully appreciate what visionaries and neighborhood stalwarts have been working toward.

The community seeks many similar things that the developer wants; yet the current plan is too thin in its considerations.

Consider:

- Grand Avenue residents and merchants want more housing; they also seek affordable housing
- Grand Avenue residents and merchants want the church to be able to sell its property and be made whole
- Grand Avenue residents and merchants will support a plan that incorporates the architecturally significant components of the church, including: the Sanctuary, the colonnade and bell tower

The recommendations made by the residents and merchants group includes:

- partial preservation of specific character-defining structures
- affordable housing units
- artist work spaces, and
- a 'step-down' to the interior residential neighborhood

None of the above recommendations have been made in the current plan.

Grand Avenue is a gem that has been polished by the residents and members of Grand Avenue Arts & Preservation and others for the past three decades. It is an area unique to our city. Will you recognize the value of this area, of this community and these people who have nurtured this into a unique and special site?

Please, vote no on this project and ask the parties to keep working on it. Then, ask the applicant to work directly with those who have been specifically responsible for bringing along this unique and special community within our city.

Thanks for reading.

--



Neal Haddad  
Neighborhood Coalition of Greater Phoenix

[neal.haddad@gmail.com](mailto:neal.haddad@gmail.com)

602.684.3889

I'd like to introduce myself,

My name is Benjamin Hall, and my wife and I have lived in this neighborhood for 13 years.

We not only have our home here but we have developed two AIA Honor Award winning multifamily properties in the neighborhood in which we remain the owners and landlords of.

Now as community members in our newly reenergized neighborhood association meetings, the community has just begun to scratch the surface of what the real impact of this new WU zoning would have on the fabric of the neighborhood.

Specifically, the scale of this project. We essentially will be doubling the population of residents in this neighborhood on a single parcel that almost occupies an entire city block.

Most of the added impact as outlined below will end up being a conversation with the city and the community in future discussions. We hope that the voice of this development ownership will be harmony with the existing Triangle Neighborhood community to strengthen our position to further beautify and protect this fragile corner of the city.

The neighborhood at this stage has identified a few of the added impacts by this newly introduced WU zoning.

Examples being:

1. A need for neighborhood public trash cans on street corners, which means added trash service throughout the community.
2. The amplification of existing street parking issues with the possible need for nighttime parking permits.
3. Added police presence / patrolling.
4. New vehicular design strategies like roundabouts and speed bumps to reduce the already high-speed cut throughs from morning and evening commuters.
5. Additional street lighting for safer pedestrian night walking.
6. Added street crossings for safer pedestrian crossing out of the neighborhood. As we are surrounded on all three sides by high traffic roads.

These are just a few examples:

We have been hopeful that a neighborly partnership would be formed between this developer and the current community. This developer would be the largest and loudest single member of the community organization in the future. We were optimistic it would be through this hearing process that that foundation would be built upon. Because in the future the added impacts of this project only expedite the effects of what we honestly know is coming, and that is a denser and larger rental community that will outnumber the home owners in this small neighborhood.

Know to the specifics of this parcel itself. The community understands (and frankly has mixed feelings about) what this new zoning would provide. But it's been identified that it comes with new opportunities, that are not currently allowed with current zoning. Like added height, provision for affordable housing (which is different than "attainable housing"), closer setbacks to the street for the purpose of street activation with commercial and retail shops on the ground floor. The promotion of true mixed use and live work opportunities. All great attributes that the WU code zoning provides. All that would or could have verifiable positive outcome for the community and surrounding public. But instead, the proposed plan from the developer appears to be cherry picking aspects of the

new zoning code like: (high unit density, increased lot coverage and reduced setbacks) while turning its back to the other parts mentioned prior. From what is currently understood the development is a 100% insular project with no streetside public activated retail spaces. No opportunity for the community to patron the amenities spaces within. Frankly it's not a publicly accessible project at all, which seems counter to the spirit of the WU code itself. In fact, I think this project might be a gated community in disguised.

Now understanding, that the ripple effect of a project of this scale in such a small neighborhood. Its mere presence will be felt through surrounding neighborhoods as well like FQ Story, and Grand Ave. Ironically, this project has galvanized members of all these neighborhoods under one objective. (Which frankly I think is low hanging fruit)

1. The preservation of the bell tower (which we had to bring to the developer's attention is protected in the existing setback that already govern.)
2. The preservation of the original double wythe constructed brick colonnade (again we have explained that the cost savings of preserving the authentic construction and its structurally sound footings would yield them a financial saving vs there proposal to reconstructing, in the exact same location a faux version of this historic architecture feature.)
3. The preservation and reinvented use of the existing 7,000 sf sanctuary space located on the NW corner of the parcel. Programed by developer (how they see fit) to be the community component / amenity that would be accessible to the community and the greater City of Phoenix as outlined in the WU code objective.

When volunteering neighborhood design professional's asked point blank to the developer. If a contiguous site plan configuration, which preserves these three objectives while maintain the developers proforma objective would be (in the form of the unit count, parking count, and maintaining their proposed height.) considered. The developer's direct response was:

*"We have no intentions of proposing any new site plan configuration other than the one already presented."*  
Shane- the developer

This unfortunately feels like we may not be working with a future community member that has the same long-term interest as the community itself. Which is very disheartening and concerning.



FEB 13 2023

Planning & Development  
Department

**Petition regarding MercyHill Development**

We, the undersigned, ask that the MercyHill Development being proposed at 745 W. Fillmore Street by Trumont Group in Phoenix include:

- 1) A step down from 4 to 2 stories to the adjoining residential neighbors;
- 2) More on-site parking for future residents
- 3) Integration of the existing significant vintage red brick colonnades, red brick bell tower, and red brick sanctuary (7,000 out of 106,000 sq. ft.);
- 4) Pedestrian friendly small business spaces on the ground level;
- 5) Affordable housing units that are not merely "market rent housing" for middle class
- 6) Traffic light at 7th Avenue/Fillmore and a Hawk light at Grand/9th Ave.;

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE
Tyler Goolie	1142 W Island Dr. Chandler, AZ 85248	
↳ Co owner Wayward	1028 Grand Ave 85007	
FAVIANA SUAREZ	602 FILLMORE	FAVIANA SUAREZ
Ryan Phillips	736 W Fillmore St	
Krystle Phillips	736 W Fillmore St.	
Craig Dick	626 N. 10TH AVE. APT 4	
JASON CHAPMAN	706 W. Taylor St #3	
Matthew Rodrig	814 N 8th Ave #4	
Alyssia Rodriguez	814 N 8th Ave #4	
Wm Greer Park	1109 Grand Ave 85007	
Jacqueline Lindmark	1109 Grand Ave 85007	Jacqueline Lindmark
Serena Fonze	1022 E OSBORN 85014	
Laura Csegoldi	2317 W AVALON 85015	Laura Csegoldi
James Pibarski	1050 West Park St.	
RYAN MORENO	1031 GRAND AVE	



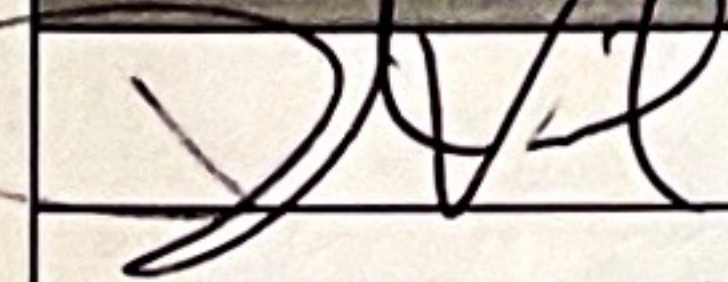
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NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE
	837 N. 11 Ave.	David Villalaz
MICHELLE MEYER	1018 NW GRAND AVE	Meyer
ASHLEY HOEKSTRA	1229 GRAND AVE	Candice Hoekstra
GREG CENTRONE	907 N. 5TH ST.	Greg Centrone
↳ Business owner on Grand Ave		
Marcus Ward	2305 12 Ave	Marcus Ward
Dominique Simpson-Bendy	1402 W Polk St	Dominique Simpson-Bendy
Robin Vining	637 N. 11th Ave	Robin Vining
Mina Vining	637 N. 11th Ave	Mina Vining
<del>Mina</del> Milo Vining	637 N. 11th Ave	Milo Vining
Nathan Garcia	618 N 9th Ave	Nathan Garcia
Rebecca Vining	637 N. 11th Ave	Rebecca Vining
Simon Marquez	629 N. 11th Ave	Simon Marquez
David MARQUEZ	629 N 11th Ave	David Marquez
Mollie McCurdy	919 W. Fillmore	Mollie McCurdy



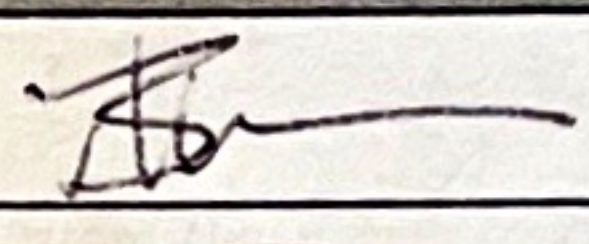
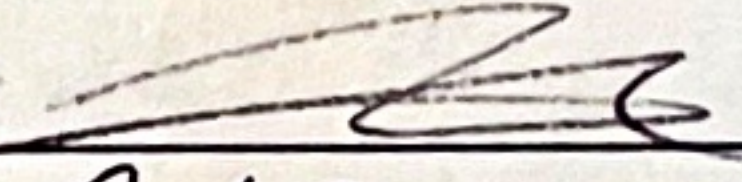
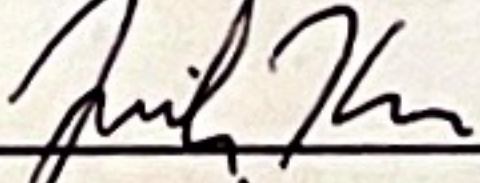
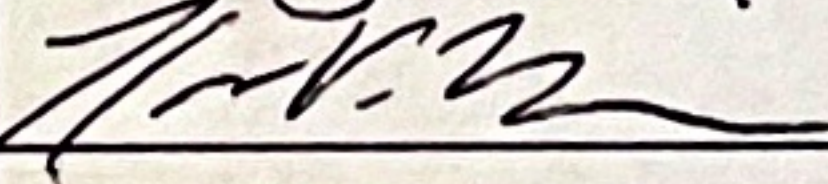
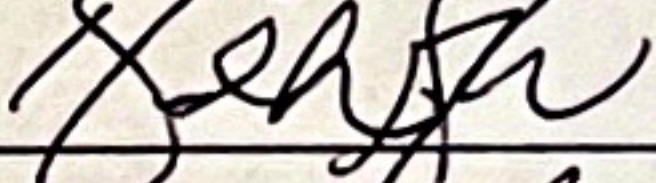
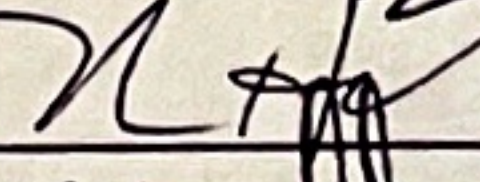

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- 6) Traffic light at 7th Avenue/Fillmore and a Hawk light at Grand/9th Ave.;

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE
Trent Heyduk	1541 W McKinley St	
MARCO AGUILAR	1541 W McKinley St	
Jennifer Kruse	630 N 10th Ave	
BENJAMIN HALL	806 N 9th AVE	BENJAMIN HALL
KEVIN VAN NORMAN	609 N 10th AVE	
Emily Fernandez	806 N 9th AVE	Emily Fernandez
HILDA CARDENAS	1028 GRAND AVE	
Maria Gutierrez	613 N. 10 <sup>th</sup> AVE	Maria Gutierrez
Tommy Gutierrez	613 N 10 ave	Tommy Gutierrez
Luis Gutierrez	613 N 10th ave	Luis Gutierrez
Tresnae Ramsey	808 N 9th AVE	Tresnae Ramsey
Doreen Ramsey	802 N 9th AVE	Doreen Ramsey
Malik Feurtado	622 N 9th AVE	Malik Feurtado
NORA HANNAIT	602 N. 9th AVENUE	
Mike Butzine	1317 W McKinley St	







**From:** [Marilyn Riggs](#)  
**To:** [PDD Planning Commission](#)  
**Subject:** City Council Meeting  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 28, 2023 5:45:25 PM

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I would to express my opinion on agenda item number 14. I am opposed to the total demolition of the Cherry Hill Church.

Marilyn Riggs  
2010 N 15th Ave  
Phoenix, AZ 85007  
Sent from my iPhone





## *Grand Avenue Arts & Preservation*

1301 Grand Avenue #8  
Phoenix, AZ 85007  
602.391.4016

February 23, 2023

Councilwoman Yassamin Ansari, District 7  
City of Phoenix  
Phoenix City Hall  
200 W. Washington Street  
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Re: MercyHill Development Z-61-22-7

Dear Councilwoman Ansari,

The Historic Grand Avenue preservation community appreciates the dialogue our District 7 Office has facilitated between residents, business owners, non-profits and the MercyHill Church and Trumont Group.

Community and preservation representatives have never asked MercyHill, nor the developer, to preserve anything beyond the character defining brick bell tower, colonnades and the sanctuary. For eighty years these features have defined this valley landmark and are not dilapidated nor irreparable.

While leading preservation professionals may differ on the historic status of these church features, we believe they are certainly historically significant due to the original church design by Lescher and Mahoney, the leading architects in mid-twentieth century Phoenix. The bell tower, colonnades and sanctuary could become a selling point for the redevelopment, and tie this development into the earlier history of Phoenix. We ask for a mere 7,000 sq. ft. out of 106,000 sq. ft. be adaptively reused to honor the illustrious history of the church.

Those of us who have done the hard work over the last several decades deserve for our voice to be given equal footing with the buyer and seller, because of the immediate impact on nearby neighbors and the certain future impact on the preservation of the entire district. Trumont Group has a minimal track record; we would hate to see a significant building needlessly demolished due to lack of experience, the inability to work outside the box, and a project that ultimately may not happen in its stated form.

**Therefore we are requesting these timely next steps:**

- 1) Access be given to a historically-qualified structural engineer provided by Grand Avenue Arts & Preservation to examine the church sanctuary's condition;**
- 2) The original brick bell tower and original brick colonnades be stipulated for preservation in their current locations;**
- 3) If adaptive reuse of the sanctuary is found to be feasible by the structural engineer, that it be retained on the site until building permits are applied for by Trumont Group and approved by the City of Phoenix.**

Dozens of new owners and businesses have independently renovated and restored vintage and historic structures in this unique downtown corridor for over 30 years, creating a notable collection of vintage commercial building stock. Decades of restoration have been accompanied by years of crime fighting through eradication of drug houses, prostitution, petty crime, gun violence and blight.

Deterrence of a long list of other social ills including homelessness, addiction, gangs, and disenfranchisement of area youth, was partially achieved through community engagement programs, including a series of federally funded "Weed and Seed" grants. A decade ago the EPA's Greening America's Capitals grant assisted with collective visioning and additional neighborhood beautification projects.

The City of Phoenix has received an extraordinary gift through the efforts of many, with the preservation of an area that is an authentic representation of early and mid-20th century architecture along historic Route 60. Without proper foresight, adequate protections, and dedicated stewards, our one-of-a-kind district will come to resemble many other over-built Phoenix neighborhoods.

Thank you in advance for your timely attention to the above next steps.

Sincerely (signed electronically),

*Beatrice Moore; Director Grand Avenue Arts & Preservation*

*Bob Graham; President Grand Avenue Members Assoc.*

*Ashley Harder; Interim Executive Director Preserve Phoenix*

*G.G. George; President Phoenix Historic Neighborhoods Coalition*

*Jim McPherson; President Arizona Preservation Foundation*

*Neal Haddad, Pres/B. Paul Barnes, VP; Neighborhood Coalition of Greater Phoenix*

January 27, 2023

Central City Village Planning Committee, City of Phoenix

RE: Z-61-22-7, SEC 9th Ave. & Fillmore St.  
Mercy Hill Church Redevelopment



**SNOODMEN**

Dear Phoenix Planning Commissioners,

Greetings, I am writing again with a stance of a “NO”, or a continuance for Zoning Case Z-61-22-7, known as the Mercy Hill Church Development.

The reason for my letter is 3-fold. One is to support the community that I have been part of since 2013, two is to speak to high priority adjustments the project should consider, and last to address the letter sent to this committee by Mr. Paul Johnson.

I know that often you do not receive many case letters, but it does not mean they do not care. Not everyone has the time or ability to craft a response, even when it is so important. Many have a combination of work, families, and businesses to run. Statement requests often come on short notice, so I hope you highly consider the weight of the people who have taken the time to write letters, the place they hold in the community, and how many people their voices represent. I am the founder of Snood City: an art collective and the business owner. I alone directly represent the voices of 15 people who work with me and are based on Grand Ave, with 500+ in my local network. It is the developers sole job, which has full dedication of time, money, and resources to make sure their projects go through as they want. This is an advantage for them to the fact that people are busy working to get by and oftentimes don't even know when a decision like this is on the docket.

Many agreeable compromises have been set forth by community members. Highly notable is the rework of the site plan by architect Bob Graham (President of the Grand Ave Members Assoc.) to preserve the sanctuary, bell tower and colonnades which does not take away (it in fact adds) rentable sq. footage space. Also important to consider is the footprint of the structure. It should be dynamic and integrate into the surrounding neighborhood better. The building should not simply be a large box with towering walls that dwarfs existing homes. There is a unique opportunity here for the type of rentable space offered, and the project should seriously consider small commercial spaces at the ground level. There is a high demand for downtown studio spaces, especially for artists, which would further support the draw of Grand Avenue. Incorporating spaces of this nature will be a big win for the neighborhood. Overall, this development needs a serious creative design rework. Take a trip to Grand Ave and look at the personality. We do not want something that looks like every other development in every other city, including this one. There is no originality with what has been presented by the developers and we demand better.

Finally to address the letter by Mr. Paul Johnson:

The stance of Mr. Johnson's letter to this board, submitted on Jan 5, 2023 is aggravating. To call a studio apartment rented at \$1,200 "affordable" is laughable. It is common sentiment that the local housing market is almost criminal. The standard is that when applying to a rental you must have 3x rent for income. That means, someone has to be making \$50k per year to cover their expenses just to live in a studio apartment. How is that affordable housing? Additionally, his comment with intention to "[...extend the benefits that have come from downtown development, mostly to the East of 7th ave to West of 7th Ave"] What are those benefits? Terrible parking and street maneuverability? Bland architecture? Unused 400 sq ft. gym amenities? The notion that the Grand Ave community wants anything like what has happened on Roosevelt Row is absurd. It puts on full display the gap in understanding of the local ideology and what is desired. The reason Grand Ave exists is despite these kinds of developers. Business owners support high density projects that will bring more people to the area, but not at the cost of the soul of the community. That is why Grand Ave is even attractive in the first place. It is interesting and unique. When I look at Roosevelt Row, I don't see "high quality" projects, I see cookie cutter, so-called luxury highrises. Grand Ave has its own sense of place, and we want to keep it that way.

I challenge this Board and the Mercy Hill developers to really question what their driving factor is for this project. Meaningful communication and readjustment of what a "true urban project" means for the Grand Avenue community is essential, and has not yet been achieved.

Thank you for your time,

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

Michelle Meyer  
CEO, Snoodmen, LLC  
snoodmen@gmail.com