

Connected Communities response: Timothy Loy Sutherland, Clinton Springs Avenue

Description

Dear Mayor Aftab Pureval and Council Members,

As a resident deeply invested in the future and well-being of Cincinnati, specifically the North Avondale community, I must express my strong opposition to the Connected Communities ordinance currently under consideration. NANA (North Avondale Neighborhood Association) recently voted and published their opinion on the following statement: "North Avondale opposes moving forward with the Connected Communities proposed ordinance. The City of Cincinnati must provide the data and impact analyses for meaningful review, public participation, and approval by the community council of the impacted neighborhoods."

My Concerns on the Plan Include:

- 1) The proposed change in zoning. Specifically, the elimination of single-family homes and relaxed height restrictions and setbacks.
- 2) Reduction in parking requirements without a robust public transit system.
- 3) The proposal lacks safeguarding of neighborhood character, destroying our community's unique charm.
- 4) An accelerated decision, a sham of a public engagement process. The proposed ordinance was drafted and sent to the Mayor on April 17, 2023. In addition, the Urban Land Institute wrote the original plan on June 22, 2021; therefore, our comments and participation cannot be meaningful.
- 5) The plan does not consider community-driven development to preserve North Avondale's historical, architectural, and cultural heritage.
- 6) The plan does not consider the potential impact on the environment, green space, police, fire, sewer, stormwater, and water mains.

Additionally, the Council must address the following points before any vote on Connected Communities.

- 1) **Unintended Consequences**—A recent Urban Land Institute study found that less restrictive zoning regulations increased housing supply, but not for renters and low-income people. Also, detrimental increases in housing density led to less affordability and increased crime incidents. Though I agree that increased investment in subsidy programs and affordable housing development is necessary, these zoning changes will only exacerbate the problem by further concentrating poverty and promoting higher cost rentals/ increased homeownership costs in the Connected Communities areas by driving out the affordable housing opportunities.

2) **Fairness**—Existing homeowners have purchased and invested in their homes under the current zoning regulations. Arbitrarily changing these zoning regulations after the fact to allow multi-family housing in historically single-family neighborhoods will decrease their property values and neighborhood dynamics that may have appealed to them when they chose to live in a particular neighborhood.

3) **Absentee Landlords**—Unfortunately, Cincinnati has a horrible history with out-of-town investors and landlords. These zoning changes will only exacerbate this issue and increase the potential for out-of-town investors to divide up single-family homes as investment opportunities. Unless the zoning requires owner-occupancy for an extended period of time, this will occur (it is unlikely legal to do so).

North Avondale is an economically, ethnically, and socially diverse neighborhood that needs to be protected from a plan that does not consider these values. I hope the city will respect my concerns and not move forward until they are addressed.

Sincerely,

Timothy Loy Sutherland

Clinton Springs Avenue

Date Created

June 5, 2024

Author

northavondale

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