

AUG 20, 2013

R-4

PROVIDED BY RICHARD KAZARES

**Response (in RED) to concerns raised by Reynerson's e-mail sent today (August 20 2013)**

**Here are the problems with this project; each a reason to not allow it to proceed:**

1. The developer (Cymbal Development), has a track record of not finishing projects in a timely manner that they start. In fact they have NEVER constructed a major building before!
  - a. I'm not sure what the point is here – EVERY builder or developer has started SOMEWHERE – and I'll assume that once the permits are in place – ANY developer would “salivate” at the prospect of completing this project, if Cymbal Development (for some unforeseen reason) is unable to do so. The economics of development stand on their own.
2. The building itself, (while an interesting design thank you – actually would be one of the more UNIQUE buildings in an area that is really SHORT on “interesting” designs), is much too large and too tall for the area. (It's like trying to cram a size 10 foot into a size 6 shoe.)
  - a. Apparently the economics of constructing any size building enters into the “equation” of what size and shape to build – as well as the “quality” of the design and construction. Take a look at ANY city with ANY type of density to see this is the NORM – and NOT the exception.
3. The project, if it is completed, will cast large afternoon shadows over the New River, blocking out the sun to much of the New River in that area.
  - a. The last time I looked, the New River area – surrounding the area in which this project would be constructed – there were NO venues to actually visit – virtually EVERY business that opened in the New River area several years ago – has shut down – because no-one GOES THERE - so shadow or no shadow – there will be very people to notice – that's just reality!
  - b. Further, in case no one has noticed, BUILDINGS tend to cast shadows. Homes cast shadows, TREES CAST SHADOWS. If the issue is “no shadows” – (or “no traffic” or “no parking”) there is a SIMPLE SOLUTION:
    - i. Bulldoze down about 20 square city blocks – to the ground- flat - and create a huge EMPTY LOT – THEN there will be NO SHADOWS, NO PARKING issues, and NO TRAFFIC problems in that area!!!
4. The project currently has not resolved the issue of how to handle large and very dangerous (**300,000 volt!**) power lines on the property next to the railroad tracks. So far, **NONE** of the suggestions on moving the power lines meet the minimum health and safety requirements of the State of Florida, Florida Power and Light, nor the Florida East Coast Railroad.
  - a. 44 years ago, with technology that is PRIMITIVE by today's standards, we WENT TO THE MOON – do you mean to say in a county with literally THOUSANDS of

miles of high-voltage power lines in both rural and MID-TOWN (like Manhattan) areas – we can't SOLVE THIS PROBLEM – REALLY!

5. The project would require that a large and historic African Rain Tree be moved to a new location, 600 feet away. Most experts agree that the tree could not be moved without either killing it or significantly reducing the size of the tree. **(The tree's size is 128 feet wide, 61 feet high and 20 feet in circumference! The largest African Rain Tree in the US!)**
  - a. While NO ONE would voluntarily "kill" or damage this unique tree, in this case the developer is at least ATTEMPTING to accommodate both sides – and in spite of claims that the tree will "die" if moved – that is NOT a sure thing – and is up for significant debate.
  - b. Also, the developer has offered a \$1,000,000 indemnification payment to the city in the event the tree does NOT survive the move – which I do NOT see listed, mentioned or referred to in any way in this e-mail.
  - c. I wonder that if ANYONE (particularly those who are most vocal about the tree being moved) were offered this amount PERSONALLY under the same conditions – they wouldn't TAKE IT!!!!
  - d. Well – I'm a resident of the city, and a TAXPAYER – and for the city to turn down \$1,000,000 worth of new plantings in the event that this tree (which will eventually "topple over" anyway - either due to age or wind leaving a large HOLE and an empty lot around it) would be shameful as well as irresponsible.
6. The **City does not need more development** at this time along the New River! Once again, the City is allowing wealthy developers to get their way. The New River and the Beach front are already over developed. We should be pushing developers to come up with mixed use projects, and to build in locations that need development, such as the 13<sup>th</sup> Street corridor, the northwest district, Sistrunk or Andrews Avenue.
  - a. The term "overdeveloped" is an arguable concept – development occurs when there is a SOCIAL need – as well as ECONOMIC underpinnings and support – without it – communities DIE OFF – due to OTHER communities taking up the development – and eventually older communities are simply that: a collection of old, crumbling buildings – with NO architectural or other overriding social values to show for it. Can you say: DETROIT?? (or any one of another 100 cities and towns – that STOPPED their development).
  - b. Yes, development needs to be appropriate and in the better interests of the overall community – whether the developer is wealthy or poor (in which case THAT itself would be a problem), or either from the local area or outside – I wonder what would happen if every structure in the city (either standing or new) suddenly had to be developed or built by a "local" person – and if a building wasn't constructed by a local developer – would need to be torn down. Hmmm – we'd certainly eliminate the over parking and busy street problem!!!!
7. Fort Lauderdale's Utility Advisory Committee, Fort Lauderdale's Sustainability Advisory Board, Fort Lauderdale's Historic Preservation Board, the Broward Soil and Water Conservation District, Broward

**County's Historical Commission, The Sierra Club, dozens of landscape experts, neighborhood associations and local neighborhood activists have come out against moving the tree and against this project.**

- a. I'm a resident of Fort Lauderdale, I have no relationship whatsoever with the developer, his company, his friends, his bank, or his business. I did (or will) not attend this evening's meeting for the food, drink, chair (I don't mind standing) or anything else – other than I care about my city and the area that I PAY TAXES IN!! And quite frankly, it is really painful to watch this debate over a "tree" (which I doubt is the REAL REASON some people are upset with this issue – it just happens to be a VISIBLE one) – cloud an issue that forms the core of our community. Do we sit back and watch decay – or do we proactively DO SOMETHING – to bring about "world-class" design and architecture to an area that really desperately needs that type of recognition.
- b. If the tourists decide to go somewhere else, they my and YOUR taxes will SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE – and I believe they are high enough already
- c. More people living over the same amount of ground (which is now WASTED) can only increase our tax base and provide the city with offsetting funds to reduce the future tax burden on its existing residents.

Again, as a "no benefits received" resident, I'm strongly in favor of proceeding with this project – in spite of the rather vocal objection of some members of our community.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this e-mail

Richard Kazares  
A Fort Lauderdale Resident