

Benjamin Buckley

From: Dan Royal <danroyal@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 10:57 PM
To: Historic District Commission (Staff)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Pubic comment

These comments are with that's to the following item before the commission:

STAFF REPORT 12-13-2023

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2023-00134 ADDRESS: 795 LONGFELLOW (VOIGT PARK)

I am a resident across the street from Voigt Park and I have the following comments/concerns about what I've read in the staff report.

1. I agree with the conclusion that the city's proposal for benches and new tree plantings is appropriate.
2. The report references an "apparent neighborhood organization". The complete name of the body in question is in fact Friends of Voigt Park LLC. It is a for-profit company with only one member listed in public records. At the very least the language of the staff report should be corrected. Furthermore, I do not believe it is appropriate for the historic commission to be considering input from private businesses in matters they are not party to. I would like to see this portion of the report deleted.
3. Similarly, the block club is also not party to the proposal before the committee, and the discussion of that groups proposal goes beyond what was actually brought before the commission. I would like to see this portion of the report deleted. If this discussion is too remain then the block clubs official name on file with the city should be used: the Friends of Voigt Park Block Club.
4. The proposal submitted by the City is limited to tree planting and bench installation. The staff report goes beyond these items and opines on various other hypothetical proposals that are not relevant to what has been submitted. This seems an inappropriate overreach by the commission. Opining in this way on hypothetical matters will have a chilling effect on future proposals. My fear is that future proposals for this park will now be limited to only those items that have been "pre-approved" by the commission. This park deserves the full range of creativity and innovation that often blossom out of public engagement and thoughtful planning. I would like to see the portion of the report addressing these hypothetical proposals deleted.
5. Comparisons to Clark Park are not really relevant, as mentioned above. However I feel it is worth noting the historical facts that Clark Park is roughly 50% larger than Voigt Park. Also, Clark Park has always had a mixture of residential, commercial, recreational and educational properties as immediate neighbors. Voigt Park was always surrounded completely by single family homes. These are matters of historical facts that refute the staff report's claim that these parks are directly comparable. I would like either to see this additional context added to the report, or to see the comparison deleted from the report altogether.

Thank you

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