



Office of Chicago City Clerk



F2011-15

Office of the City Clerk

City Council Document Tracking Sheet

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| Meeting Date: | 2/9/2011 |
| Status: | Placed on File |
| Sponsor(s): | Clerk Del Valle |
| Type: | Filed Matter |
| Title: | Objection to proposed Near South Redevelopment Project Area Amendment No. 5 |
| Committee(s) Assignment: | N/A |

George and Judy Wheeler
1329 S. Indiana Avenue
Chicago, IL 60605-2617

February 6, 2011

Miguel del Valle
City Clerk, City of Chicago
City Hall, Room 107
121 North LaSalle Street
Chicago, IL 60602

RECEIVED
CITY COUNCIL DIVISION
2011 FEB 17 AM 9:25
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RE: COMMENTS for
Near South Redevelopment Project Area
Amendment No. 5, Feb. 8, 2011, Hearing

Dear Mr. del Valle

We are against the Near South Redevelopment Project Area Amendment No. 5, a proposal to make Museum Park part of a Tax Incremental Finance ("TIF") District.

IN CASE YOU HAVE NEVER BEEN HERE...

This is probably the most recently and highly developed residential area of the city. A new southern skyline has been built in the proposed TIF District in about the last ten years, mostly luxury residences. The enclosed CD contains:

- A first QuickTime video shot on February 6, 2011, showing a 360-degree panorama view from the intersection of 14th Street and Indiana Avenue, which is within the proposed TIF district according to the map provided with the notice sent to residents.
- A second QuickTime video shot on the same date from just south of 13th Street and Indiana Avenue, showing three recently built luxury high-rise buildings within the proposed TIF district.
- A picture shot on the same date from just south of 13th Street and Indiana Avenue of the Museum Park real estate sign, showing that the new residences offered for sale range from \$250,000 to \$ 2,000,000.

See also <http://www.museumpark.com/home.asp>, which shows more information and details about this substantial portion of the proposed TIF district.

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THIS IS NOT A "BLIGHTED AREA"

According to the letter mailed recently to the residents of this area by Arnold Randall, Chairman, Community Development Commission of the City of Chicago,

"The overall goal of the Plan is to reduce or eliminate the conditions that qualify the area as a Blighted Area and to provide the mechanisms necessary to support public and private development and improvements in the Area."

[The emphasis on "Blighted Area" is in the original.]

Everyone knows what "blight" means, but we will make it explicitly of record (definition from Dictionary.com):

blight /blaɪt/ Show Spelled
[blahyt] Show IPA

—noun

1. *Plant Pathology.*

a. *the rapid and extensive discoloration, wilting, and death of plant tissues.*

b. *a disease so characterized.*

2. *any cause of impairment, destruction, ruin, or frustration: Extravagance was the blight of the family.*

3. *the state or result of being blighted or deteriorated; dilapidation; decay: urban blight.*

We take substantial offense at this characterization of our recently-developed, well-kept, and highly taxed neighborhood as "blighted." This designation will lower our property values, but not our property taxes. Of course, this characterization is plainly false, and might be used to mislead bond purchasers.

We are also concerned that our taxes will be increased to even more extraordinary levels to pay for this TIF. Since any improvements that will raise the tax base will be remote from our residence, we will get minimal value and a maximal future tax bill from the improvements. We assume a large tax base is added to the area of the TIF so it will be easier to collect taxes sufficient to pay off bonds. Otherwise, why would a prosperous, highly developed area be incorporated in a TIF district?

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There may be some areas in the proposed TIF District that do qualify as blighted areas, but most of the area plainly does not, and particularly the area for several blocks around our residence. If this is to go forward at all, the map must be redrawn to exclude the recently redeveloped neighborhood it now includes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George Wheeler". The signature is fluid and extends to the right with a long horizontal stroke.

George Wheeler

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