

Dear Alderman Waguespack,

On behalf of the Northwest Neighborhood Alliance, The People's 32nd, and Chicago Growth Project, we strongly support the housing development at 1704 N Milwaukee Avenue as currently proposed, with 12 residential parking spaces, ground floor retail, and 60 residential units. We believe this building will be an asset to the community by boosting transit ridership and helping the dozens of businesses located nearby. Furthermore, we are glad to see that 20% of the units are being designated as affordable, and we believe that the additional apartments that will be provided will help to provide downward pressure on rents for the whole neighborhood.

Our members were present at the recent Wicker Park Committee meeting discussing the housing project. While complaints against the development were varied, many boiled down to one common point: a fear of more cars in the neighborhood. If the primary concern is more car traffic, the benefits of the current proposal as-is far outweigh the concerns.

This proposal is the epitome of transit-oriented development. It is within walking distance (<10 minutes) from not only the Western and Damen Blue Line stations, but also the #49, #X49, and #72 bus lines, and the soon-to-be-extended Bloomingdale Trail. It's directly located on the most heavily-used protected bike lane corridor in the city, as well as directly served by the #56 Milwaukee bus. Grocery stores, parks, restaurants, bars, and the library are all within blocks and would not require a car. People who live in this building will have more opportunity to live car-light lifestyles than almost anywhere else in the entire city.

This development will not bring an avalanche of car traffic. It will bring much-needed foot traffic, helping struggling local businesses by providing dozens of new customers within walking and biking distance. Because only 12 parking spots are being allocated for the 60 residential units, this building will attract primarily those who do not own a car or who plan to live car-free after moving here - a growing pattern among transplants and young people. Limiting parking in this way is a great way to bring more neighbors to Wicker Park & Bucktown without causing "carnageddon".

By blocking or reducing this development, the 32nd Ward would be passing up an opportunity to bring more transit-riders and pedestrians into our neighborhood. We should be seeking to maximize the number of units while minimizing the number of cars brought into the neighborhood. Watering down the proposal by reducing the number of units or expanding the number of parking spaces would create the very problems that community members are concerned about.

We ask that you please give this development your approval.

Sincerely,

The members of the Northwest Neighborhood Alliance, The People's 32nd, and Chicago Growth Project

