

CEDAR ISLES DEAN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (CIDNA)  
JULY 5, 2005

TO: Council Member Lisa Goodman  
CPED Planning Division  
Planning Commission  
City Council

FROM: Chad Larsen, President, CIDNA President  
612-968-6030, chadcidna@thelarsens.org

Robert Corrick, Chair, CIDNA Land Use and Development Committee  
612-927-5599, rcorrick@mn.rr.com

RE: Proposed Lander Group Project  
2626 W. Lake Street

Attached please find CIDNA's resolution not to support the proposed Lander Group project. We believe that the project is too large and too high for this sensitive site. We support the general design of the project, and believe that the site is appropriate for residential development.

The challenge of this project relates to the small size of the land parcel (1.3 acres) that is located immediately adjacent to parks and trails, historic water bodies, and single family residences, compared with the large floor area that is permitted by the zoning ordinance subject to height limitations and other important considerations. We believe that a floor area of 185,791 square feet (including one garage floor above ground on the Lake Street side) would represent a very large project on such a small land parcel. We submit that maximum floor area ratio (FAR) limits established in the Zoning Code do not reflect a policy or mandate that FAR should be maximized on all zoning lots. Rather, the appropriate FAR for a site must be determined in relation to applicable yard setbacks and height limits, project design, mix of uses, the character of surrounding property and other impacts. In this case, the Shoreland Overlay and OR2 height limits, required yard setbacks, and the many low-density uses on three sides of the project strongly support lower floor area and height than has been proposed for the Lander project. We acknowledge the context of the adjacent Calhoun Beach Club Apartments, which is why we support a project height that would be higher than the 35- and 56-foot limitations of the ordinance. Most constituents and planners, however, believe that the Calhoun Beach Club Apartments represent extremely bad design and urban planning, and provide unfortunate and misplaced context for the project. The height and size of the approved project should be influenced less by the Calhoun Beach Club Apartments than is implied by the proposed size and height of the Lander Project.

To this end, we have worked closely with the Lander Group to seek a smaller and shorter structure, but with little success. The neighborhood would support a Lander project on this site subject to the following conditions:

1. The project offers graceful design that is similar to the current proposal—stepping down towards the R1 neighbors to the north and the park lands to the east.
2. The height of the tallest tower is reduced to no more than 84 feet. The height of the small tower to the east on Lake Street remains at 70 feet, and the height of the small buildings to the north remain at 35.
3. The gross floor area of the project is no more than 110,000 square feet (140,000 square feet including one garage level that is fully above ground, but enclosed, on the Lake Street side).
4. A parking plan and policy that is acceptable to CIDNA.
5. The project does not shade the single-family homes to the north of the project at any time of the year or any time of the day (including the shading effect of mechanical penthouses).
6. Emergency generators, central air conditioning chiller units and other mechanical devices are completely enclosed in building structures. Garage exhaust fans would not be located on the Greenway side of the project, and all exhaust and noise emissions from mechanical units would be substantially

reduced and directed away from the single-family residences to the north of the project. In the event that neighbors complain about noise from mechanical units, the developer agrees to use his best efforts to reduce noise to acceptable levels..

7. CIDNA approves the revised design including plots, elevations, perspective drawings, landscaping, façade construction materials/colors, and location of mechanical equipment and exhaust systems.
8. The quality of façade construction materials and design is of similar quality on all four sides of the project (although all four sides must not be identically designed).
9. The developer submits a mutually agreeable plan to minimize noise and disruption to the neighborhood during construction, including a plan for staging to minimize the adverse impact of construction on adjacent neighbors.
10. The developer agrees to a permanent restrictive covenant not to change the height and size of the buildings.
11. The developer establishes a close liaison with a subcommittee of the Land Use and Development Committee, primarily composed of immediate neighbors (meeting monthly during construction), in order to enable the neighborhood to monitor construction progress, periodically review the details of construction, and address environmental and design problems that might arise during construction for the neighborhood.
12. The developer executes an agreement with CIDNA and adjacent neighbors agreeing to the conditions set forth above and representations that have been presented by the developer.

We have listened to a broad range of constituents during the outreach process for this project. A smaller project as proposed by CIDNA would represent a reasonable compromise between the broad range of the competing constituencies and interests:

1. Higher density sought by the Minneapolis plan would still be accomplished, and the developer would continue to have a high density project.
2. A smaller project would still provide significant tax base increase for the City.
3. Adjacent single-family residences would not be forced to live with such a tall and large proposed structure.
4. A significant number of high-quality housing units on a prime Lake Calhoun location would still be offered to the public.
5. A lower project would be more consistent with zoning height limits.
6. Such a compromise would attempt to address the high cost already incurred by nearby single-family residents as a result of the Calhoun Beach Club Apartments.
7. The project would give greater respect to users of surrounding park lands and lakes, and the project would not be so readily observable by users of the lake, particularly if tall trees were planted to cover the project over the long term.
8. Sailors and windsurfers on Lake Calhoun probably would be affected less by wind eddies from a lower building than a taller building.

We hope that you will require a smaller project on this sensitive site. Lander Group's proposal on a smaller scale would represent good design. We encourage the developer to engage with CIDNA to build a project that addresses adjacent park lands, protected waters, and single-family residences in a more respectful manner than is the case in the current proposal.



CHAD LARSEN  
CIDNA PRESIDENT

**CEDAR ISLES DEAN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (CIDNA)**  
**RESOLUTION NOT TO SUPPORT**  
**THE LANDER GROUP PROJECT AT 2626 W. LAKE ST.**  
JULY 5, 2005

WHEREAS The Lander Group has proposed a real estate development project at 2626 W. Lake St. on the site of Weisman Enterprises with the following features:

1. The project would consist of 4 separate buildings containing approximately 63 units and a retail coffee shop: Building A (70 feet high excluding mechanical penthouse), Building B (103 feet high excluding mechanical penthouse), and buildings C and D (35 feet high excluding mechanical penthouse). The project would contain about 154,000 square feet of gross floor area (185,791 square feet including a parking level that would be totally above ground level on the Lake St. side.) The coffee shop would contain 2,500 square feet, Building A would contain 35,449 square feet, Building B 92,029 square feet, Building C 9,781 square feet, and Building D 9,671 square feet. The lower garage level would contain 40,470 square feet, and the upper level would contain 40,045 square feet.
2. The project (including the effect of the mechanical penthouses) would not shade single-family residences to the north at any time of the year.
3. The project would require a conditional use permit to exceed the 56- and the 35-foot limitations in the OR2 zoning and Shoreland Overlay District.
4. Numerous variances, which have not yet been completely defined by the developer, probably would be required including but not limited to those for setback and lot coverage.
5. There would be approximately 112 parking spaces for condominium owners, 8 parking spaces for condominium visitors and employees, and 33 parking stalls for coffee shop visitors. All condominium owners would be required to own parking spaces for up to two of their cars, and all visitor parking would be free to users.
6. Emergency generators, central air conditioning chiller units and other mechanical devices would be completely enclosed by building structures. Garage exhaust fans would not be located on the Greenway side of the project, and all exhaust and noise emissions from mechanical units would be substantially reduced and directed away from the single-family residences to the north of the project. In the event that neighbors complain about noise from mechanical units, the developer would use its best efforts to reduce noise to acceptable levels.

WHEREAS CIDNA has held many meetings concerning the project and has considered input from most project constituencies including many CIDNA residents, surrounding neighborhoods, businesses and developers, prospective users of the project, lake and park users, and other interests.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Lander proposal fails to satisfy key provisions of CIDNA's real estate development guidelines because the project does not sufficiently respect the zoning ordinance and the character of the surrounding neighborhood primarily due to size (floor area) and height of the project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, subject to review of Lander Group's final submission package to the City, CIDNA does not support the project as proposed for the following reasons:

1. The project would be too high and too large for a 1.3 acre land parcel that is adjacent to a landmark water body/recreation area to the south, park land to the east, and single-family R1 residences to the north.
2. The project would be 47 feet higher than the 56-foot OR2 zoning guideline (183% of the guideline), and 68 feet higher than the 35-foot guideline of the Shoreland Overlay District (294% of the guideline).

3. The project would not respect the setbacks required by ordinance, increasing the negative impacts of size and height.
4. The project would not satisfy required considerations of a conditional use permit under OR2 zoning and the Shoreland Overlay District, and would be injurious to the use and enjoyment of existing property owners, specifically the single-family R1 residences immediately north of the project, and the neighboring apartment building to the west.
5. In addition, other considerations would not support issuance of a conditional use permit including minimal setback from park lands and other locations, obstruction of views to the lake, shadowing of public spaces and the nearby apartment buildings, and the existence of park land/trails on three sides of the project.
6. The project would endanger or destroy mature park trees to the east.
7. The project would impair the natural value of the adjoining shoreland, reducing the enjoyment by users of Lake Calhoun and adjacent park lands.
8. No provisions would be made to obscure views of the project from users of Lake Calhoun.
9. The project is likely to increase the negative effect of wind turbulence on Lake Calhoun for sailors and wind surfers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT CIDNA commends the Lander Group for proposing a project that meets most of CIDNA's real estate developer guidelines, and for proposing attractive project features including a roof line stepping down on the north and east sides, extensive use of glass and quality materials, condominium units facing the Greenway, attractive Greenway landscaping and trail access, Thomas Avenue access to the Greenway, no shading of single-family residences, ample parking, and proposed improvement to the Thomas Avenue bus stop and park land to the east.

  
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Chad Larsen, President  
Cedar Isles Dean Neighborhood

  
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Stephen Gove, Secretary  
Cedar Isles Dean Neighborhood

  
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Robert Cornick, Chair  
CIDNA Land Use and Development Committee