



**CGNA PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES – 2014 W Grand Avenue Proposal**

By:	Peter Frisbee	Date	10/15/2024
Meeting Date:	October 9, 2024	P & D Committee Attendees	Peter Frisbee
Meeting Time:	7:00 pm		Timmy Mathew
Meeting Location:	Space 1858		Liz Tomka
Next Meeting Date:	November 14, 2024		Julie Sawicki

**Meeting Agenda:**

7:00 pm – 2014 W Grand Proposal

**Purpose of Meeting:**

The 36th Ward and CGNA facilitated a Community Meeting September 17 at Output Lounge. At that meeting, there was strong opposition to the 2014 W Grand Proposal from residents at Le Grande Dame (LGD) 2020 W Grand Avenue, located next door to 2014 W Grand. CGNA invited LGD board members to this meeting P & D Meeting to review the 2014 W Grand Proposal with Mr. Ali Manesh (owner/developer) to determine if there was a compromise Mr. Manesh could make to get the board's approval for his project. LGD was represented at this meeting by Scott Nenninger, Michael Smith, and Jason Crawford.

**2014 W Grand Proposal:**

Mr. Manesh proposes a Type 1 Zoning Change from B2-2 to B2-3 for the property at 2014 W Grand Avenue to construct a 4-story 5-unit rental building with basement, elevator, no roof deck, and two onsite parking spaces. Proposal includes demolishing existing 2-story frame building. The proposal requires a zoning variance to reduce the 30' rear yard setback and a parking reduction using the TOD Ordinance. Under B2-2 classification only two dwelling units are allowed for the small 92'x24' lot. For a financially feasible project Mr. Manesh says he needs the zoning change. With one dwelling per floor, four of the units are 3-bedroom; the basement unit is 2-bedroom.

**Background:**

Zoning classifications along Grand Avenue were revised and updated by the Chicago Zoning Department in 2014. The zoning classification of various manufacturing or residential properties were changed to B2-2 classification. The LGD Condo, built in 2001 with a zoning classification of RT-4 was one of the properties changed to B2-2. Under the RT-4 classification, the code height of the building was limited to 38'. This is substantially below the 47' building height allowed on a B2-2 lot with a frontage of 25' or less. This height difference of approximately one story is the main conflict of interest between LDG and Mr. Manesh.

Another difference is that original RT-4 classification for 2020 W Grand required front and side yard setbacks; the current B2-2 classification for 2014 W Grand has no required front or rear yard setbacks. Since the 2020 W Grand was reclassified as B2-2, there are no constraints on



the proposed 2014 W Grand building setbacks; the setbacks would have been if the 2020 W Grand property was still classified as RT-4.

Given the substandard lot size of 92'x24', Mr. Manesh could only build a 3-story 2-unit building by right under the B2-2 classification (lot area per dwelling unit 1000 sf and FAR of 2.2). The FAR of 2.2 would allow a 3-story if each floor was the same area as the floors of his proposed building. Given the proposed floor-to-floor, the height measured to the under of the structure (building height per code) would be 36'-6" approximately the same as that of the 2020 W Grand Condo.

For similar substandard lots, CGNA Guidelines support changing the zoning to the next higher classification, in this case B2-3, but requiring the building height to be limited to the B2-2 height of 47'. Applying this 3.0 FAR would allow a 4-story 5-unit building provided the building code height was limited to 47'. Mr. Manesh's proposal shows a code building height of 48'-6" over the height limit set by the CGNA Guidelines.

It is the opinion of the writer, that Mr. Mansch could reduce the floor-to-floor height by 4" (four floors gives 16") and lower the first-floor elevation by 4' reducing the building code height to 46'-10". In that case, his 4-story with basement proposal would meet the CGNA guidelines. In addition, the parapet dimension could be reduced by approximately 3'8". Both changes could reduce the overall building height by 4'-6". For purpose of the discussion this will be called Option A.

#### **Discussion:**

The LGD position could be summarized as the proposed 2014 building is too tall, blocking light to condos on the east end of the building, the building is rental (concern of renters' lack of vested interest and building owners possible lack of maintenance), and not enough parking is provided. The LGD members prefer condominium units.

Various options such as or a reduced height 4-story building (Option A) or a 3-story 4 or 5-unit building (Option B) were discussed. Option A was rejected by the LGD Condo; Option B considered not profitable to build by Mr. Manesh.

CGNA reviewers noted that there are 14 bedrooms in the proposed 2015 building. If some are adult renters, there may be a large number of cars parking on nearby residential streets since only two spaces are provided. It should be noted that the City supports reduced parking at transit served locations (TOD Ordinance). The CGNA reviewers were concerned about the building height since it was located between the 3-story with basement 2020 W Grand LGD Condo and the two 2-story buildings located to the east.

#### **Conclusion:**

The discussion was considered thoughtful and cordial by those at the meeting, but no compromise solution was found.

The CGNA Planning and Development Committee considered this a challenging project to review. Given the potential parking issues and the context of the 2 and 3 1/2--story adjacent buildings, ideally, a new building at this location should be only 3-stories with 2 to 4 dwelling units with more parking. A new building at this site would certainly be an asset.

In conclusion, CGNA does not support the zoning change from B2-2 to B2-3 to allow for a 4-story building at this location.