

** Alderman **
Michele Smith

Chicago's 43rd Ward



Statement on the Current Proposal for Children's Memorial Hospital

Dear Friends,

For every land use development decision in the 43rd Ward, I have always been committed to a transparent, data-driven process aimed at making land use decisions based on a consensus of informed community opinion.

Because redevelopment of the 6 acre Children's Memorial Hospital site involves a proposed multi-use plan, assessing community input has been and will continue to be somewhat more complicated than with respect to other, simpler developments.

Thus far, I have conducted 3 large community meetings, and at my direction, the developer has held over 50 smaller community meetings. My office has leafletted over 600 homes in a large radius around the site. We have received written input from our community groups, and petitions and e-mails from hundreds of local residents. I have personally talked to many ward residents. In addition, recently I invited community residents to serve on a working committee to dig deeper and analyze the developer's plans. Thus far, approximately 50 people have volunteered to serve on this committee and it has already met. Most importantly, I have listened to thousands of parents of children who attend Lincoln Elementary and our other public schools.

Based on all of this activity, I believe that our community has reached a consensus that the plan is simply too dense and that the plan aggravates the too-long unresolved problems of overcrowding in our schools.

An FAR of 4.33, as proposed by the developer, is too much for our community. There are also too many unanswered questions hinging on density such as traffic around the development. The plan does not yet realize our community's vision - which I wholeheartedly support - that this site create a new neighborhood crossroads, an exciting neighborhood destination for us to walk to, walk through, and enjoy. The plan contains promising concepts but there must be significant improvements before this community lends its support.

I have therefore told the developer today that he must go back and make significant modifications to the plan centered around a real reduction in density. As

the plan develops, I will continue to work with the community groups and the committee that I have formed to determine an acceptable level of density.

Finally, I cannot responsibly support this development until we have a solution to the current school issues. We cannot offer Lincoln Park as an attractive community for young couples and families while we continue to have no solution to the overcrowded conditions in our local elementary schools and the uncertainty that hangs over the heads of our magnet and other neighborhood schools.

With this announcement, we will be entering the next phase of this process. I will be working with all of our Lincoln Park stakeholders, supported by the neighborhood committee I previously announced. I have instructed the developer to continue to work with the community and my office to move this process forward so that this important project can be realized.

I will continue to insist on an open decision-making process and will fight hard to make sure that we can get everything for this community that we possibly can, and make this the award-winning project we all desire. We will keep you informed and involved as we always do.

Sincerely,



Michele Smith
43rd Ward Alderman

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