

To: Knoxville–Knox County Planning Commission

I am writing to comment on the petition for a Plan Amendment to 1625 Clinch Avenue and 1634 Laurel Avenue (file number 10–C–26–PA).

I own and live in a home on the 1600 block of Clinch Avenue — right across Clinch from the site under consideration.

I understand that as yet there has been no building permit requested. But, of course, my worst fear is that what is under consideration is one of those monolithic high-rise apartment complexes — such as what we now see up and down Cumberland Avenue.

My understanding is that Fort Sanders is protected by an NC–1 Neighborhood Conservation Overlay, which is supposed to ensure that new construction matches the area’s character. Right now — despite the fact that most residents on this block are students — the 1600 block of Clinch is still a modest, charming neighborhood such as one might see in the suburbs. Viewed from Clinch Avenue, each house on our block is a two-story structure (plus perhaps a small attic). The only taller structure is the four-story Fort Sanders Manor, which is a brick apartment complex designed by Charles Barber and built in 1922.

One house on our block — 1618 Clinch — was recently demolished and reconstructed. My understanding from speaking to one of the construction crew members on site is that they were required to stick to the original footprint of the historic construction. I found that very reassuring.

A walking tour of the Fort Sanders neighborhood created by the Knoxville History Project included two still-extant houses on this block that are of noted historical significance (the William Rule house at 1604 Clinch and the Evelyn Miller house at 1620 Clinch).

The character and scale of this neighborhood are worth preserving! I am not opposed to multi-family dwellings or to office space. My concern is the SCALE of construction.

Martha Rudolph
1634 Clinch Avenue
mrudolp2@utk.edu