

**From:** [Rachel DeSchepper](mailto:Rachel.DeSchepper@westwoodks.org)  
**To:** [leslie.herring@westwoodks.org](mailto:leslie.herring@westwoodks.org)  
**Cc:** [info@westwoodks.org](mailto:info@westwoodks.org)  
**Subject:** Public Comment on Karbank proposal  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 9, 2023 11:47:54 AM

---

Hi Leslie -- I hope that I'm not too late to submit public comment regarding the Karbank proposal that was presented earlier this week to the Planning Commission. I attended the meeting via Zoom. I live at 4919 Adams St.

I want to first make clear that I'm not anti-development in Westwood (despite it making me so sad every time I now drive by our sweet Joe D. Dennis park and imagine it gone). I understand that we need the revenue, and I am very much on board with creating a walkable neighborhood that is in character with our area. I love the idea of being able to walk to a coffee shop in the morning, mingle with my neighbors, have a close place to grab a bite to eat, and also have a more modern park.

That said, the rezoning proposal and design by Karbank that we saw on Monday could not be further from the character of Westwood or fulfilling what I imagine for our city. I'm not going to say much that wasn't already said during the meeting, but I want to also voice my disapproval on the following points:

- 1) The office space concerns me for the same reasons others mentioned. What tenants are still looking for office space given that remote work is not going away? Is there something in the works with the health system? Why offices?
- 2) The design of the buildings is, to be transparent, abhorrent. The colors are clownish, and the buildings look like rail cars. Can we not have a design that's more in line with the character of our neighborhood? If the proposal looked more like the Fairway shops, the Brookside area, even Prairie Village I think you would see a lot more support from our neighbors.
- 3) The support and infrastructure for cars and parking is out of character for a walkable neighborhood.
- 4) The gentleman from Karbank stressed that the retail space would be filled by boutique tenants, which frankly, felt elite and exclusive. That is not in line with our neighborhood. He then immediately flip flopped when one of our commissioners pushed back on that, and pointed out how non inclusive that would be. We do not need boutique tenants. I think I speak for my neighbors when I say that we want tenants that are friendly and accessible for all of us.
- 5) Another neighbor made the point that it would make much more sense to move City Hall to this parcel, and develop the current area where City Hall is. That seems so much more logical. For one, it is directly across the street from the Woodside development, retail, and restaurants; and two, it would preserve the area where Joe D. Dennis park and the school are for non-retail/parking/traffic. We would be able to reserve much more of that space for leisure, *not* capital.

Final question: Is the commission/council open to additional proposals other than what Karbank presented? I think we *absolutely* need to see better ideas.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to submit these comments.

Rachel DeSchepper

--

Rachel DeSchepper

[racheldeschepper.com](http://racheldeschepper.com)