

From: [ERIN CARRIER](#)
To: [dence - City Council](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] No to Bill 161, 3201 Curtis Street Rezoning
Date: Sunday, August 16, 2020 11:32:15 AM

Please do not rezone this location. It is right next to a children's playground and the heart of a quiet residential area. No one wants a bar in this quiet area. We don't want to become another Larimer Street.

Kindest regards,

Erin Carrier
3212 Arapahoe Street

Sent from my iPhone

May 26, 2020

TO: Councilmembers Sandoval, Flynn, Torres, Black, Sawyer, Kashmann, Clark, Herndon, CdeBaca, Hinds, Gilmore, Kniech and Ortega

Denver City Council
City & County Building
1437 Bannock St., Rm. 451
Denver, CO 80202

Dear City Council,

Thank you for your continued commitment to the People of Denver during these difficult times.

As a concerned Citizen of Denver, I have researched the details and circumstances surrounding the application to rezone 3201 Curtis. Included are my findings on the matter.

I look forward to answering any questions that you might have at the 6/1 Public Hearing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Vranas", with a stylized, flowing script.

Paul Vranas

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1. Executive Summary

Women's Bean Project is a historically well regarded non-profit serving women in need. It's mission of changing women's lives is one that we as a society should support and hold in very high regards.

Women's Bean Project has built a stellar reputation in Denver. It appears that a significant amount of it's success is due to long standing partnerships with the City of Denver. Like all partnerships, trust, communication and collaboration are essential components to mutual success.

Based on a review of public information beyond that which has been presented thus far, I ask that you consider that:

- 1) It is questionable if the application meets Denver Zoning Code Requirements legal criteria [\[Denver Zoning Code 12.4.10.7\]](#)
- 2) Discrepancies exist between the testimony given by Women's Bean Project, it's strategic plan and it's financial statements:
 - a) [February 25, 2020 Land Use Committee Hearing - Applicant Q&A Starting at 7 min 45 seconds](#)
 - b) [Women's Bean Project 2018-2021 Strategic Plan](#)
 - c) [Women's Bean Project Financial Statements](#)

2. Women's Bean Project Facts

Based on a review of publicly available information, these following statements appear to be undisputed:

- 1) The City of Denver sold 3201 Curtis to Women's Bean Project on 8/22/1995 for \$185,000. The property was previously used by the City as a Firehouse.¹
- 2) The City of Denver approved a zoning change to permit Women's Bean Project operations. This zoning change happened concurrently with the sale of the property.²
- 3) Since selling the property, the City of Denver has given Women's Bean Project \$214,000 through grants and forgivable loans to make improvements to the building (warehouse and elevator).³
- 4) Women's Bean Project wants to sell the property, and in preparation to do so, they are applying for a zoning change to U-MX-2X.⁴
- 5) If granted the proposed zoning change, Women's Bean Project anticipates selling the 11,600 square foot property for between \$2,900,000 and \$3,480,000.⁵
- 6) Women's Bean Project is requesting a zoning change to 3201 Curtis before finding a buyer for the property or a new property to purchase.⁶
- 7) Annual Product Sales for Women's Bean Project have declined since the earliest public records are available:

Fiscal Year	Product Sales
2012	\$1,209,986 ⁷
2013	\$1,043,861 ⁸
2014	\$1,045,448 ⁹
2015	\$997,977 ¹⁰
2016	\$941,712 ¹¹
2017	\$909,317 ¹²
2018	\$995,293 ¹³
2019	\$756,485 ¹⁴

¹ <https://www.denvergov.org/property/realproperty/chainoftitle/160812102>

² <https://denver.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=8089461&GUID=E03F01A2-FC5A-40DE-9C13-57C0F071B565> Page 46

³ [Committee Meeting starting at 10min 12 sec.](#)

⁴ <https://denver.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4337101&GUID=8DA75206-C394-40EC-A45E-5BF2B1864BB3&Options=ID%7CText%7C&Search=3201+curtis>

⁵ [Committee Meeting starting at 13min 40sec.](#)

⁶ <https://denverite.com/2020/02/25/some-denver-politicians-kringe-as-the-womens-bean-project-considers-leaving-curtis-park/>

⁷ http://www.womensbeanproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Womens-Bean-Project-June-2013-Audit-reduced_.pdf

⁸ <http://www.womensbeanproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Final-WBP-FS-2014-2.pdf>

⁹ <http://www.womensbeanproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Final-WBP-FS-2014-2.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://www.womensbeanproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/WBP-FS-2015-Final.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.womensbeanproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/WBP-FS-2017-final.pdf>

¹² <https://www.womensbeanproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/WBP-FS-2017-final.pdf>

¹³ <https://www.womensbeanproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Womens-Bean-Project-Financial-Statements-June-2018.pdf>

¹⁴ <https://www.womensbeanproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/WBP-FS-2019.pdf>

3. Application Appears Not To Meet All Zoning Review Criteria

3201 Curtis was sold by the City to Women's Bean Project with a concurrent zoning modification for the explicit use of their operations to provide employment opportunities to vulnerable women.

The Denver Zoning Code requires that an Official Map Amendment (Rezoning) may only be approved by The City Council if it complies with all of the following review criteria [\[Denver Zoning Code 12.14.10.7\]](#):

A. Consistency with Adopted Plans

B. Uniformity of District Regulations and Restrictions (not in question)

C. Public Health, Safety and General Welfare

A. Consistency with Adopted Plans:

This rezoning would appear to be inconsistent with the following Adopted Plans if it enables the use of this property in a manner that does not provide equal or greater social benefit to residents as required:

Comprehensive Plan 2040

Comprehensive Plan 2040 goals¹⁵ that appear inconsistent with the proposed zoning modification include:

Goal 1.9: Improve equitable access to quality education and lifelong learning opportunities

Goal 4.1: Ensure economic mobility and improve access to opportunity

Goal 4.4: Ensure Denver has a productive, educated, competitive and knowledgeable workforce

Blueprint Denver

Blueprint Denver goals¹⁶ that appear inconsistent with the proposed zoning modification include:

Goal 1: Serve all Denver residents with a diverse range of affordable housing options and quality employment opportunities throughout the city.

Goal 2: Ensure all Denver residents have safe, convenient and affordable access to basic services and a variety of amenities.

Goal 8: Promote enduring and compatible design that responds to an evolving community while embracing historic assets and cultural heritage.

Northeast Downtown Denver Neighborhood Plan

The Northeast Downtown Denver Neighborhood Plan goal for Curtis Park¹⁷ that appears inconsistent with the proposed zoning modification is:

C.2 Promote Economic and Housing Diversity

¹⁵

https://citycountydenver-prod.adobecqms.net/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/Denveright/documents/comp-plan/Denver_Comprehensive_Plan_2040.pdf

¹⁶ https://www.denvergov.org/media/denvergov/cpd/blueprintdenver/Blueprint_Denver.pdf

¹⁷

https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/planning/Plans/Northeast_Downtown_Neighborhoods_Plan.pdf

C. Public Health, Safety and General Welfare:

Zoning amendments must meet the following requirement:

“The proposed official map amendment furthers the public health, safety and general welfare of the City.”

Women’s Bean Project with its current building and it’s current zoning provides a service that furthers the general welfare of the City. With the levels of general welfare that this property and it’s zoning provides the City, has the applicant proven to you beyond a reasonable doubt that rezoning the property will indeed further the general welfare of the City? Or perhaps, would the approval of this zoning application set into motion a series of events that would decrease the general welfare of the City?

4. Observed Discrepancies In Committee Testimony

Statements to review from the 2/25/20 Committee meeting include:

1) Regarding The Magnitude of WBP's Growth Since Purchasing The Building

Women's Bean Project CEO: *"When we bought the building in 1995 I think our organizational operating budget was about \$500k a year, maybe even slightly less. **Today we are a \$2.5m operation.**"*

Reference: 2/25/20 Committee Hearing, 12 minutes 45 seconds

The above statement conflicts with the FY 2019 financial statements¹⁸ which reports:

Total Revenue and other support: \$1,598,034

2) Regarding The Claim That The Size Of WBP's Building Limits It's Ability To Hire Women

Women's Bean Project CEO: **"For every woman we hire, we turn away 4 other qualified applicants".**

Reference: 2/25/20 Committee Hearing 25 minutes 20 seconds

The above statement conflicts with information from the WBP's strategic plan:¹⁹:

"..as the economy of Denver became stronger, we found that the women we were hiring were less successful in completing the program. In fact, the average tenure of the women plummeted to an average of three months during 2016." p. 4

"Of the women who left the program early, only two were relieved of their employment for attendance reasons. The remainder relapsed, returned to prison, or left due to health issues that couldn't be addressed. As a result, we found ourselves needing to hire additional women to meet our need for labor, rather than to fulfill a specific mission-related target." p. 4

"Into 2018, WBP has continued to grapple with the impact of low unemployment rates in the Denver area. Formerly strong referral sources have appeared to dry up and we have found ourselves working harder to meet our goals for each hire date. Simultaneously, we are finding that the women we hire have difficulty overcoming basic employment barriers, including health issues, sobriety and housing challenges" p. 7

"As we have been squeezed by the low application numbers, we have found that applicants' sobriety is often more recent than six months and, as a result, more tenuous. Because of concerns that one woman's relapse can have a negative effect on others trying to maintain their sobriety, we changed our drug policy and have begun doing random drug testing. The unfortunate result is that many women's employment has been terminated due to positive test

¹⁸ <https://www.womensbeanproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/WBP-FS-2019.pdf>

¹⁹ <https://www.womensbeanproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/WBP-2018-2021-Strategic-Plan.pdf#page=4>

results" p. 7

"Sacrifice quality for quantity of women hired due to labor needs." Weakness listed in SWOT analysis p. 31

3) Regarding The Claim That An Increase In Space Will Increase The Number of Women Hired

Women's Bean Project CEO: "This exercise (zoning change) is going to allow us to have a larger facility in order to hire more women"

Reference: 2/25/20 Committee Hearing, 25 minutes 30 seconds

Women's Bean Project CEO: "The goal eventually is to acquire twice as much space, at a minimum it will be twice as many women....So we are looking at a minimum of twice as many women within the first couple years."

Reference: 2/25/20 Committee Hearing, 26 minutes 45 seconds

UPON REVIEW:

A key component to WBP's strategic plan is the addition of automation to replace manual labor and increase product margins. The addition of automation combined with historically low product sales makes this move to a larger facility an interesting strategy, however it casts a shadow of doubt as to if and when it will lead to hiring more women:

"In the short term this move [to automation] risks decreasing our need to hire women"²⁰ p. 8

²⁰ <https://www.womensbeanproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/WBP-2018-2021-Strategic-Plan.pdf#page=8>.

5. In Conclusion

The statements that have been made by the applicant to your committee do not appear to be consistent with publicly available information. The City Council should represent the people of Denver to get a much greater level of transparency from the applicant regarding why these inconsistencies exist and the true circumstances related to this application.

BENITA M. GUZMAN
3238 ARAPAHOE ST
DENVER, CO 80205-2739

5/19/20

Dear Denver City Council,

I have owned my home in Curtis Park since 1974. Recently the Curtis Park neighborhood has changed dramatically. Many of my old neighbors have sold their property to make money. I do not want the money, I want to just keep on getting by and keep my home.

Everything in this neighborhood has gotten expensive with these changes. I appreciate the good work that Womens Bean Project has done in this neighborhood. There are still neighbors like me who count on the services that they provide. I have a granddaughter who I am hoping will work there.

I understand that they want to sell their property and make their money. Many of my old neighbors have left and done the same thing. I would ask that you not forget about us long time property owners. If Womens Bean Project needs to sell their property, please make sure they sell it to another organization which will help us less affluent long time Curtis Park residents and not push us out.

Sincerely,

Benita Guzman

