

Rone Tromble

From: Erica Bird <EBird@trustmarktitle.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2020 5:22 PM
To: Rone Tromble
Subject: EXTERNAL EMAIL : Fwd: Opposition Letter to NOUN Hotel Project

See below, This was sent to me directly Because he did not know the process to submit for consideration. Can you please send out for tonight's meeting?

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Mark Millsap <millsap.mark@yahoo.com>
Date: May 14, 2020 at 5:14:13 PM CDT
To: Erica Bird <EBird@trustmarktitle.com>
Subject: **Opposition Letter to NOUN Hotel Project**

Members of the Planning Commission

Members of the Norman City Council

Re: NOUN Hotel opposition letter

Dear Members,

My wife and I are owners of the Holmberg House Bed and Breakfast located on campus corner at 766 Deans Row Avenue in Norman. We have owned the Holmberg House since October 2016.

We are opposed to the NOUN Hotel for the following reasons:

1. Most obvious, the NOUN Hotel will be a direct competitor to our business. We are a small business, operating on a small budget and we rely on room nights during the week from OU and their departments. 80% of our business comes directly from OU through the departments. Guests interviewing for jobs at OU, guest speakers and teachers and researchers here to work on projects. We rely on these room nights to operate. A hotel in close proximity to the campus will impact our business negatively.
2. We are proud members of the Campus Corner Merchant Association. I am currently the treasurer of the organization. My wife is part of the marketing committee. There have been many discussions about the hotel and two face to face meetings with the board and the developer. The most recent meeting was yesterday May 13. At that meeting, the developer finally corrected statements to our board that were much different than the statements made in a meeting in March with the same board. He clarified that there is a restaurant and two bars in his plan. He also clarified that there will be a gift shop and meeting rooms. All of these things were not very clear the first time the board met with the developer. In fact, the developer stated in the first meeting with us that he was not planning a restaurant. Once it was clear that there was a restaurant and two bars, many campus corner merchants (restaurant and bar owners) were not excited about the project. At first, the developer said that he would work with campus corner restaurants to do food for the hotel. Now, there is a restaurant planned which will led to some guests

never going out to campus corner dining establishments. Also, a gift shop was confirmed to us yesterday which will directly compete with some of our clothing and boutique establishments. Needless to say, not all campus corner merchants are excited or even want this hotel project to move forward. Some are very excited, but there are many that are not.

3. The developer is not local. Nor does he plan to be local. He has said many times publically that he is local. That is not the case. His wife is from Norman. He has extended family in Norman. But he lives in Tulsa. He will be managing this project and the hotel from afar. The Campus Corner Merchant group is a very tight group of local, Norman based business owners that promote shopping, dining and activities on Campus Corner. We are all in. Will the developer be all in? He has claimed that he will have a staff that is involved. Time will tell if that will happen. The biggest issue to me with this outside developer is that he can very easily develop and complete this project and very quickly, turn around and sell out to a chain or other investors that are not local. Who knows what the future could look like? How about a chain hotel on Campus Corner? Will that be good or bad? Again, time will tell.

4. I know there has been much discussion in the last few years about "outside" developers coming to Norman and wanting concessions or exemptions to build or operate here. This is another one. Should we allow that? I think we should not allow that. As a local property owner and small business operator, now more than ever, we should take care of our local people.

Thank you all for your consideration in this matter.

Mark and Melanie Millsap

Owners, Holmberg House Bed and Breakfast

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