Re: Proposed Apartment & Retail Development at 13th & Wilbur St

Dear Mayor, City Staff and Members of the Blair City Council,

I am writing to state my concerns with the allocation of TIF for the proposed development due to the following reasons.

1. The city directed & paid for a survey to establish "blighted" status of this property to allow it to apply for TIF. It does not fit any true definition of blighted, being highly desirable for development related to location, elevation, & size. If this property is "blighted" then it's likely every property in Blair meets the criteria.
2. The school board & administration have appealed to the council and planning committee that they are dealing with significant shortfalls that will only be compounded for the period of 15 years as they anticipate increased enrollment without financial support. The school board representatives reported issues with safe student transportation within the city currently, raising concerns with how the addition of students from Blair Crossing or potentially other apartments within the city will be handled.
3. The plan to install & pave the road within the development in exchange for I believe Lot 1 for a new lift or pump station. Being part of a business that has developed a few small areas within city limits, we understand the expense associated with installing the infrastructure & paved roads. Arbor Drive & the North 28th Ave cul-de-sac for the pavement alone both were in excess of $115K not requesting or receiving assistance, with all expense & risk on the developer. It is very generous and open ended to offer to install a road in exchange for approx. 1/3 of an acre.
4. Sidewalk & Traffic Control: At the previous planning meeting, when Rizer indicated it would be very walkable to Dollar General, I questioned the sidewalk. Phil stated yes, there is a sidewalk, of which there is on the north side of Wilbur. Within the city limits, every homeowner we've built for has been required to install a sidewalk on every side of their home that faces a street regardless of a sidewalk being present on the opposite side. I question whether the city will be assisting with this expense on behalf of the developer to install on the south side of Wilbur to fit with the requirements of other property owners within the city. It's also reasonable to expect there to be an additional expense and need to add traffic control at HWY 75 & the new access from Maple Drive and or at Wilbur.
5. Rizer Narrative: While I appreciated many of the insights Rizer offered regarding their proposed project throughout the previous council and planning meetings, their narrative consistently changed anytime a citizen brought up a concern. Rizer changed from it being a great option for entry level or working class to appealing

mainly to young professionals when the potential cost to rent a one bedroom brought affordability concerns. When the school board & citizens brought up concerns of increased enrollment in our school system & the lack of financial support if awarded TIF, Rizer's narrative changed from a family friendly option to they really don't anticipate many children to reside in the apartments. Simply, there is no way for anyone to predict as cannot discriminate against any applicant that meets the minimal & allowable credit & background checks. Not pro discrimination, just saying there is no way to predict.

6. Rizer Statements related to TIF, Timeline & Ownership: Rizer stated repeatedly that all their projects have involved TIF, stating that they still have ownership in the previous projects and also stating that the first project was completed in 2016, thus all previous projects are still benefiting from TIF. They stated only being interested in Blair & being able to proceed with this project if awarded TIF & awarded TIF at this time, as delays result in increased costs. Every builder, developer, contractor, administrator...understands that nothing goes down in cost as time passes. The difference is many local businesses have remained invested in Blair regardless of incentives, assistance or support. Rizer is only invested if Blair awards them TIF & only if awarded now and on their timeline. I feel it would be appropriate to experience the impact that Blair Crossing has on this community & resources before choosing to award TIF to another short-term housing development.
7. Housing Study: Rizer referenced the need for additional housing was based on a 2021 survey. Fair to say, this would not have factored in the addition of the 132 apartments at Blair Crossing, and the upcoming 137 homes starting at under $320K at Bear Creek.

I really appreciate your time and consideration for not only my many comments & letter, but so many others on this agenda item. I feel very fortunate to have moved to Blair from Omaha when our children were turning school age to attend Blair Schools. It has been a great place to raise our family. We understand having quick access to Omaha, the continued effects of Dana closing & preserving what generations have loved about Blair is very challenging, so thank you for your time & dedication.

Janette Nielsen

Nielsen Homes & Development