

Make Mather share their financial data

Evanston/ As the owners of Marketing Analytics Inc. at 500 Davis St., we support the improvement of the Mather and Georgian for the benefit of its residents. However, we don't support variances from 17 zoning laws in the process.

Mather says it needs the variances to make their plans financially viable. Yet they've shown zero evidence of this, despite a legal requirement and many requests.

The failure to offer any proof of their central argument should be enough to reject Mather's requests. Moreover, other arguments made by Mather are inaccurate or misleading.

Mather states the new building is two feet higher than the current Georgian. The new building is 10 stories versus the Georgian's eight stories. Common sense says two more stories requires more than two feet. The proposed roof-line is actually 107 feet tall versus the

Georgian at 81 feet.

Mather states the new buildings will generate up to \$1.1 million in property taxes, versus \$70,000 currently. Recent laws require nonprofits to pay fair property taxes, so Mather needs to pay hundreds of thousands now, in any case. Further, condominiums and single-family homes on this property would generate \$1 million more in taxes than Mather.

Mather states their development won't harm neighborhood property values. Our firm's light and view will be obliterated. Our downstairs' neighbors invested \$1.7 million, based on having a lake view. Forty-five percent of the rooms at the Homestead would lose their sunshine and view. Many residential neighbors will be harmed.

Finally, Mather says this is being done for Evanston's seniors. Mather is capitalizing on a market opportunity: aging Baby Boomers with money. Mather's new entrance fee will be \$500,000: \$100,000 higher than the highest-priced continuing-care retirement community, of 103 examined in a 2005 study. The majority of Evanston's seniors won't afford Mather.

The truth is that the proposed buildings are much taller, generating \$1 million less taxes than alternatives. Mather is violating its neighbors' rights, while refusing to back up its central argument — preferring to pull on our heartstrings.

Zoning laws are a promise by a community to its citizens. We respectfully request the City Council keep the promise we and others invested millions relying on, and not allow Mather to violate 17 zoning laws without demonstrating why their interests are more important than those of their neighbors.

Ross and Cynthia Link