

## 'Single-Family' Stretch

### Jefferson Park residents fight to keep Michael Goodman's mini-dorms away

by [Mari Herreras](#)



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- Developer Michael Goodman says Jefferson Park residents hate students; they say they just don't like his mini-dorms.

Michael Goodman's mini-dorms have become trademark structures in the neighborhoods north of the University of Arizona—but one neighborhood isn't allowing new mini-dorms to go up without a fight.

On Tuesday, Jan. 18, the Jefferson Park Neighborhood Association filed a complaint of violation with the city of Tucson's zoning administrator in an effort to stop some Goodman developments.

At a press conference on Thursday, Jan. 20—in front of an empty lot recently leveled by Goodman on East Edison Street, one of three demolitions completed in late December—JPNA treasurer Robert Schlanger said the mini-dorms violate the R-1 zoning that dictates how single-family residences are defined by city code.

A plan shows that one of the structures on East Edison Street will have seven bedroom suites, each with its own bathroom; the building will also include a smaller living area with a kitchen, and two garages.

This, neighbors contend, is not a single-family residence.

Goodman began building these "single-family" developments, coined mini-dorms, in the Feldman's Neighborhood. Goodman told the *Tucson Weekly* in 2009 that he prefers the buildings be thought of as luxury student housing. (See "Welcome to Goodmanville," Sept. 3, 2009.)

At the JPNA press conference, Schlanger said single-family homes don't have seven separate suites.

"A single-family home in this neighborhood has two to four bedrooms," he said. "If a family or a group of people who have a long-term commitment to each other live in it, they share common access to the house. They live together in a traditional manner with the intent of living there for a prolonged time."

Schlanger said this is the first step in getting the city to protect neighborhoods from incompatible infill

projects. Potentially, the complaint could prevent Goodman from building, and if necessary, the JPNA is prepared take a lawsuit to Pima County Superior Court, he said. The JPNA has also started a Facebook page, called "Save Jefferson Park."

On Dec. 27, as Goodman sent heavy equipment in to demolish two homes on Edison and one on Waverly Street, Joan Hall and other neighbors quickly mobilized via e-mails and phone calls to protest the action.

Hall, who lives next door to one of the homes demolished that day, decided to block a backhoe from proceeding. Hall was arrested and charged with trespassing; she's slated to go to court in February.

Hall says she's skeptical that real change will occur to help her neighborhood, but that civil disobedience is the best way to get the city's attention. She has lived in her home for only three years, but her parents have lived in the neighborhood, on the other side of Mountain Avenue, for more than 30 years.

Neighbor Joan Daniels has lived in the area for 41 years.

"The city is sacrificing us neighborhood by neighborhood, thinking that's going to eliminate the threat of (Proposition) 207, but it's not. This will be their legacy," Daniels said.

Proposition 207, passed by Arizona voters in 2006, mandates that governments reimburse landowners if any action is taken by the government that reduces property values.

To protect their neighborhood, JPNA members are working on historic-overlay zones that will recognize the historic structures in Jefferson Park. They are also working with the city to complete a neighborhood-preservation zone (NPZ), which would determine what kind of development is allowed in areas with historic residences.

On Wednesday, Jan. 26, neighbors, city representatives and developers were slated to get together to look at a final proposal for the NPZ. Right now, the city and developers consider the plan to be purely advisory, but some neighbors said they won't accept anything unless it becomes regulatory.

At a neighborhood vigil on Jan. 7 in front of a semi-demolished house on East Waverly Street, neighbors spoke out against the mini-dorms—while Michael Goodman stood off to the side near his pickup.

Before the vigil started, Goodman put up banners on the lot's fence that said, "Stop Hating Students," and "U of A Million Dollar Impact." One neighbor, before being led off by her husband, told Goodman "I heard you on the radio. ... What you say about us is so foul, that we hate students. I have the keys to houses of some of the students who live here. Parents come to us to help. I take care of their cats when they are out of town. We love the kids."

As bagpipes played in the background, Goodman was asked if he feels circumstances are different in Jefferson Park then they were in Feldman's Neighborhood; after all, the Jefferson Park neighbors are giving him quite a fight.

"Not really, but it is a different set of circumstances," he responded. Feldman's Neighborhood is a whole lot less taken care of and a whole lot rundown. Nonetheless, this is a core group of people who are anti-development. Where should the students live?"

Is he a good landlord? Goodman said he does as good of a job as he can, but feels that if there's a disturbance, it's up to the police to take care of it. "We only want our rent, and we want tranquility. That only makes our life easier."

Goodman said if anyone tries to redefine "single-family residence," they can expect him to sue. "It has nothing to do with who lives here."

Back in 1938, Jefferson Park resident Jim Clark's grandmother bought the house he now lives in, and he inherited it from her after she died at the age of 104. He grew up in the house and is also a landlord of two other neighborhood houses. He rents to students and lives next door to students on both sides of his home.

"I don't see us as being powerless. We need to stand up ... and quit bowing down to these bullies," Clark said. "It's just amazing. ... The City Council is basically hiding behind (Prop) 207, but 207 has no merit. It doesn't. The city attorney is steering them in a direction ... that, 'It's going to cost you \$10, and right now, we don't have \$10.' But you know what? You're not going to have any tax revenue as the property owners go down in these neighborhoods."

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