

Downtown Area CAC Comments to the DDA, Sept. 6, 2017

Members Present: Ray Detter, Peter Honeyman, Nate Stevens, Kathleen Nolan, Don Duquette, Chaz Stucken

Members Absent: Joan French, Hugh Sonk

Guests Present: Susan Pollay, Jeff Crockett, Christine Crockett, Steven Kwasny, Doug Kelbaugh, Steve Kaplan

The Downtown Area Citizen's Advisory Council meeting was jammed with lots of discussion of important issues. First, we wish to once again express our strong support for the strategic selection of the Ann Ashley Parking structure to add 375 spaces to the downtown parking supply. We also want to congratulate the DDA on nearing completion of its work on restructuring South University as well as the planning phase of major changes to the North Fifth and Detroit Street intersection. As stakeholders, we were pleased to play a part in these important downtown improvements and we look forward to providing our input in future plans for East and West Huron.

Last night, we also reaffirmed our commitment to continue working with the CORE development group, and city and community leaders and agencies, to make the Library Block project the best it can be.

Much of last night's CAC discussion related to our vision of a future downtown neighborhood and the way in which downtown and near downtown areas might fit into that vision. This brought us to the DDA's current Ann Arbor Circulator (as well as fixed routes) Feasibility Study.

In August, majorities on the Ann Arbor Planning Commission, as well as the Zoning Board of Appeals, voted to move the \$146 million, 620 residential-unit development (some of them permanently affordable) on 1140 Broadway to the City Council for consideration. This followed Morningside Development's addressing a variety of issues and concerns expressed at public hearings. City Council may vote on this as early as October.

Which brings me back to the current Ann Arbor Circulator Feasibility Study being undertaken by the Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority. We all remember the Link—which ultimately ended because of cost and lack of ridership. Some of us hope that, in the process of developing possible routes and times for a new Circulator, the 1140 Broadway project will be considered as a possible stop--along with stops like the Blake Transit Center, the Old Fourth Ward, Kerrytown and perhaps a new railroad depot or park along the way.

Eventually, we hope to see direction signs in the downtown --to the Cascades, Argo Pond, the Canoe livery, the Border to Border Trail, Island Park, Riverside Park—all within walking distance, and bicycle routes to Gallup Park and beyond.