

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING INPUT

JULY 12, 2016

TO: Commissioners

FR: Barclay Park Condo Association (BPCA)

SUBJECT: Woodbury Club Apartments – Negatives Vastly Outrank Positives

Representatives of Barclay Park Condo Association appear at Planning Commission (as at the Citizen Participation Meeting) to oppose the Woodbury Club Apartments development plan as configured and presented. We ask that it be withdrawn or denied – and re-planned.

BPCA is 291 condominium owners - the ONLY adjacent neighbor of the proposed development. We were not able to appear at the first go-round due to deficiencies in the Notice process. Of the two BPCA condo owners who attended when the defective notices were distributed, one was from the building closest to the new development. She sold her condo and left the community within months of seeing what was proposed.

Barclay appears before the Commission not only to cite specific faults and request denial BUT to offer specific suggestions for comparable development that is sensitive to the location, respectful of the neighbors, considerate of the area's special ecology and energy-conscious. Each of these considerations is of vital importance to this city and the planet. The "footprints" of your decisions will outlast us all.

Negatives / Deficiencies

1. Inefficient use of buildable land (in wetlands).
2. Excessive impact on wetlands.
3. Surface parking emphasis fails to preserve natural features (and requires mitigation).
4. Excess scale too proximate to smaller BP units.
5. Closed Institutional Building Design

Positives / Requests

1. Integrate parking into the buildings
2. Use green roofs on each bldg. Add substructure retention for less site grading, tree loss, new detention.
3. Design better for lighter footprint on sensitive ecology. Dramatically reduce both energy use and maint.
4. Concentrate WCA buildings onto north of buildable acreage. Do not disturb or mitigate shared wetland.
5. Open viewscape of buildings – also natural light upper corridor (PV?).

Barclay Park engaged a local architect (Sahba La'al) to depict its concerns and offer SOLUTION-oriented design ideas; we are willing to meet with BRE design-planners to optimize reconfiguration of the development plan so that it can have support from its neighbors, rather than opposition & enmity.

***Submitted by Board of Directors and Management
Barclay Park Condo Association***



Condominium Association c/o Meadow Management Inc. 27780 Novi Road, Suite 110, Novi, MI 48377

SUMMARY OF REQUESTS OF PLANNING COMMISSION

In the meeting packet, the Planning Commission has information and opinions from environmental experts Paul Bairley and William Schneider, who are familiar with Barclay Park and surrounding neighborhoods. Their invaluable viewpoints and advice confirm our fears that this planned project will negatively affect our area and is not in the best interest of the residents of northeast Ann Arbor.

Consequently, we ask the Planning Commission to deny approval of the planned Project of Woodbury Club Apartments and to withhold any change in zoning pending updated information on environmental impact.

As relates to the proposal before you, we request the following:

1. A new wetlands delineation of both parcels of the Woodbury Club site to confirm or deny apparent environmental changes since 2012 and to clarify apparent discrepancies per wetlands expert we engaged but who has been denied access.
2. No disturbance by the new development shared with Barclay Park. (The current proposal calls for disturbance and mitigation adjacent to Barclay's property line.)
3. A re-design of the architectural footprints and placements of the proposed buildings to lessen their impact on the Barclay neighbors — who are in smaller buildings already, with integrated parking. This would deny any extra height allowance and move the southern-most building away from Barclay's property line.
4. For this wetlands area, require green roofs and integrated parking with under-slab retention to provide the best possible water management (and decreased size of required detention ponds).
5. Due to its delineation as a virtual 100% wetland, recommend to City Council that the eastern parcel never be zoned for residential building.
6. Require that the developer adhere to current (2014) rules for wetlands delineation and management.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William Quinn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "W" and "Q".

William Quinn, President, Board of Directors
Barclay Park Condominium Association



Trumpeter Swans sightings 2016

14

Woodbury Club

X
X X

Nest
X

Barclay Way

Cob, Pen & Cygnet
X

Oakwoods
Nature Area

Windemere
Apartments

X

Rd

Green Rd

Windwood Dr

Whispermood Dr

Whispermood Dr

Green Rd

Green

Sugarb
Park

(X) NORTH VISTA
picture

BARCLAY PARK
BUILDING HEIGHTS
@ PROPERTY LINE
w/ PROPOSED WOODBURY
≈ 30'

(NORTH VISTA)



SWANS AT BARCLAY PARK



APRIL 26, 2013



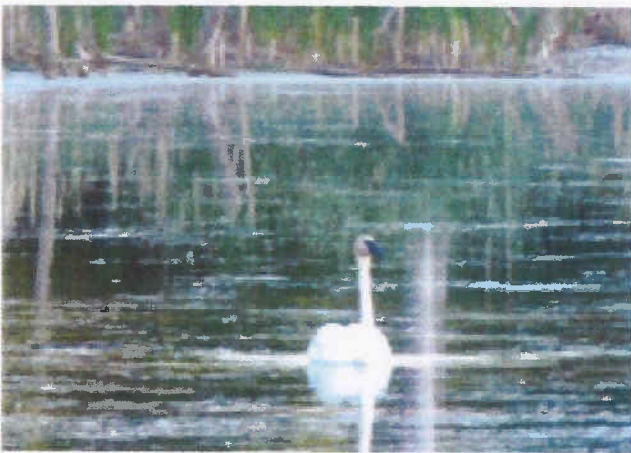
MARCH 27, 2016



APRIL 1, 2016



JUNE 2, 2016



JUNE 2, 2016



JUNE 20, 2016

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July 8, 2016

City of Ann Arbor Planning Commission
Planning & Development Services
301 E. Huron Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48107

RE: Woodbury Club site plan - Natural features and stormwater concerns

Dear Planning Commission members,

I am writing on behalf of the Barclay Condominium Association with regards to the proposed Woodbury Club development. My firm has been working for Barclay for nearly 10 years on stormwater and other landscape issues including the control of invasive plant species. We have had a front row seat to the existing stormwater issues Barclay has had to address and continues to live with. These include but not limited to the area referred to as wetland D. Barclay currently depends upon the pumping water to abate flooding of this property. Flooding and saturated soils are a reoccurring problem at this Barclay site.

After careful review of the proposed plans, wetland delineation and various correspondence between the Woodbury property owner, the city and the county I am not convinced that the proposed design will not exacerbate the stormwater problems at Barclay and surrounding properties. The last plans I reviewed only minimally address the management of stormwater on site and did not address the impacts on the adjacent wetland system.

Furthermore, I looked at the wetland delineation and report and it appears cursory and incomplete. In addition, this wetland system has shown marked changes in the 3-5 years. Given the scope of this project it would be my recommendation to have a new and complete delineation done before this development is approved.

There are a number of design changes that could be incorporated to alter the footprint and site plan to better use the developable acreage, preserve the natural features both properties share and mitigate future flooding and stormwater impacts. These include but are not limited to the use of:

- Reducing the amount of impermeable surface
- Use of permeable pavement
- Greenroofs
- Parking integrated under units

While assurances have been made with respect to stormwater management, little or nothing has been said about the how stormwater management and development design needs to change to reflect changing weather and climate in Southeast Michigan. The climate change models predict, and the data supports, that larger precipitation events are expected in the future punctuated by longer periods of drought. It is my understand that the stormwater calculations used do not factor these changing realities.

Given the permanence and long-term impacts of development there are a number of easily answered questions that have yet to be adequately addressed. I recommend a more careful review of the implication of this proposed development as currently planned before approval is given.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill S" followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Bill Schneider

July 8, 2016

City of Ann Arbor Planning Commission
Planning & Development Services
301 E. Huron Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48107

RE: Woodbury Club site plan - Natural features and storm water concerns

Dear Planning Commission members,

The intent of this letter is to make you aware of critical issues and concerns regarding the pending Woodbury Club Apartments site plan, which is on your agenda to review and discuss on Tuesday, July 12, 2016. As I will not be able to attend this meeting on behalf of the Barclay Park Condominium Association, I am providing these written comments, which are based on my experiences in providing professional forestry and horticulture consultations at Barclay Park for the past fifteen years.

The concerns that I mention in this letter only address those issues which may affect the natural infrastructure at the proposed Woodbury Club site, and the increased potential for negative storm water runoff onto adjacent properties, especially Barclay Park, and the resultant damage to vegetation and property.

I first became involved at Barclay Park around 2006, while working for the city of Ann Arbor, to establish street trees along the Nixon Road public right-of-way. The heavy, oxygen-deprived and frequently saturated soils required us to consider a limited tree species palette for the street tree installations. While visiting the site, Dave Friedrichs, whom I'd known and conferred on various projects with since the early 1980's, invited me to tour the Barclay Park site, which his property management company, Meadow Management, had recently been engaged to serve.

We toured the existing landscape plantings, especially the dense plantings of shade and evergreen trees near the main entrance to Barclay Park along Nixon Road. Many of these initial plantings were showing signs of stress and decline – primarily dieback due to poorly drained clay soils and inhibited root growth. There was also significant tree mortality.

I provided advice to the Barclay Park board of directors on what remaining trees should be removed, which ones should be replaced, and offered a list of primarily native tree species that would have the best chance at surviving on the poorly drained site. In fact, regardless of the time of year or amount of rainfall, the soils at Barclay Park frequently exhibited water seepage over walks, curbs, even staircases. The street light poles would sink and settle and lean, which required attention, repair and resetting; outdoor staircases and railings had their functional life drastically curtailed, resulting in a financial burden as Barclay Park had to address all infrastructure issues, major and minor. Some of the HVAC units were water damaged as well. Under my direction and guidance, a few attempts were made at street tree and parking lot tree replacements, eventually trying an entire new street tree planting a

few years ago. Although we selected shade trees that are more tolerant of heavier soils, and planted them a little high to allow for better oxygenation and root respiration, this effort was also met with very unsatisfactory results. To this day, so many years after being constructed, there are very few existing street trees along Barclay Way, and less than a handful that survive on the Nixon Road easement. We've relegated what would have been a large-scale landscape, dominated by tall shade and evergreen trees, to a mere collection of foundation shrubs and a scattering of surviving trees.

Wetland "D", located centrally on the south side of the Barclay Park property, had to have its wetland boundaries redefined a few years ago, as the open water at this location swelled to the point that several mature elms and cottonwoods, once attractively shading the wetland edge and adjacent residential units, all died from eventual root suffocation and all had to be removed – a difficult and expensive process – all to preserve public safety and eliminate the risk of property damage and personal injury from failing dead and dying trees.

When Wetland "D" was re-delineated just a couple of years ago, the new wetland buffer strip (25' perimeter around defined wetland edge) actually reached into some of the foundations of nearby condo units. To prevent property damage from flooding, Barclay Park now runs an enormous pump, often 24 hours per day and seven days a week, using wasteful fossil fuels to move storm water uphill to a larger retention basin.

This is obviously not an ideal way to deal with storm water. Now, with a site plan for Woodbury Club that proposes to put 277 residential units onto a site that shares the same wetlands as Barclay Park, there are real concerns with how the storm water runoff from the increased impermeable surfaces at the new Woodbury Club will affect the adjacent land owners. We need City of Ann Arbor and MDEQ assurance that 2016 realities are recognized and that reviews are current and accurate before construction is allowed.

These "precautionary" steps not would only benefit Barclay Park and the Arbor Hills neighborhood to the east (of Oakwoods Park), but would also help to allay expensive water damage problems that have haunted Barclay Park for years from causing the same kind of havoc at Woodbury Club, not to mention exacerbating water related issues at the adjacent properties.

Do we fully understand the volume of water that would be released from, or be contained on, the new site? Are we sure in which direction the storm water runoff will flow? Can we foresee any obstructions to water flow that may be created during the construction of Woodbury Club? And can we modify the size or location of Phase I of Woodbury Club? It is physically very close to the north property line of Barclay Park and appears to be sited within a part of a wetland shared with Barclay Park. The proposed site plan appears to request construction on every buildable acre.

The Woodbury Park site plan also calls for the removal of what appears to be some 200 existing trees; trees that not only protect natural features and ecological interactions, but also serve as living reservoirs for hundreds of thousands of gallons of storm water each year. It would take over 50 years, even with aggressive, fast growing new trees that

become successfully established (asking a lot based on our tree mortality experiences at Barclay Park), to provide enough canopy to replace the water-holding capacity of the existing trees slated for removal in the site plan.

Lastly, with our changing climate, storm events already have and will continue to become more frequent and intense, challenging current storm water management policies.

Could we look at reducing the density of the housing at Woodbury Park so we are not building at the upper capacity limit for areas zoned as R-4? Taking a 27.7 acre site and allowing for 277 units (at 10/acre) certainly warrants careful consideration – and extra care. Whether density is reduced or not, we should be setting an example as a municipality to not only protect our limited yet critical wetlands but also to find ways to reduce storm water runoff, which city staffers and policies tout. These include: use of permeable pavers in parking areas to improve permeability and drainage; reductions in roof height and water run off areas by green roof and integrated-parking designs; providing additional bioswales and conservation easements when neighbors are near and wetlands are shared. On this critical matter, I urge you to consider such alternatives, some presented by an architect hired by Barclay Park in its own and the public's interest.

The parkland dedication that will result from this project is a wonderful thing. It may contain one of the largest open bodies of pond water in the city. Our challenge is to protect it.

All of this information leads me to conclude that any decision you come to on the Woodbury Park site plan needs to ensure that this particularly unique wetland, last delineated by professional study back in 2012, will not be appreciably altered by the proposed development. Based on aerial imagery, it appears that the wetland already has changed since the 2012 delineation. As such, it seems scientifically reasonable to consider a revised wetland assessment as well as the recommendation of green building techniques that would reduce water run-off via integrated parking, green roofs, areas of permeable pavement, bioswales and the preservation of mature trees.

I am confident that all parties involved can come to a consensus on these natural infrastructure concerns in order to best serve the long-term interests of adjacent residents and the Ann Arbor community as a whole.

As we all know, once site development and construction begin, it's often too late for practical mitigation. Thank you in advance for affording this project your appropriate deliberation and diligence.

Sincerely,



Paul Bairley

Consulting Forester,

Ann Arbor City Forester (retired)

734.255.5148