

CITY OF ANN ARBOR
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March 8, 2008

1407 Wakefield Avenue

Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Mayor John Hieftje, and
Members of the City Council
100 N. Fifth Avenue
Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48104

Dear Friends,

I urge you to consider favorably the proposal brought by Alan Haber for interim use of the "Y Building" as an Ann Arbor Commons, until a contract for new construction on the site is signed and ready.

This proposal is respectful of the longterm commitment to build housing on the site, including lowcost housing.

It protects the city and the DDA from the embarrassment of a possible long wait for a developer with a viable project.

A surface parking lot would be a step down, a loss, a failure of planning and imagination. Far better would be to invite creative uses for the spaces in the old Y. As Mr. Haber suggests, it offers venues for discussions, performances, artists' studios, historic exhibits, health and fitness, demonstration of start-up technologies. The inventive spirit is strong in Ann Arbor, and this would be a place to demonstrate the full extent of it.

When the time comes to vacate the building, everyone involved will have benefited from the creative forces set in motion.

Please hold the wrecking ball; allow full exploration of this living alternative.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Hathaway