

From: Katelin Rehberger
Sent: Saturday, February 17, 2018 2:27 PM
To: Barrett, Jon <JBarrett@a2gov.org>
Subject: ZBA18-005; 615 East Huron St

Good afternoon,

I hope this email finds you well.

I have received an info sheet regarding zoning and 615 E Huron St, as I live at 413 E Huron St. What is happening in Ann Arbor is truly insidious: compact "luxury" housing at exorbitant rental rates are cropping up at speeds indicative of cut corners and improper coding; indeed, as a resident of such a property and as someone who works in the field, I know for fact that these buildings work around laws in order to profit. Not only that, these buildings further increase the economic gap/gentrification in/of Ann Arbor (if such a thing is possible). We all know the University of Michigan runs on the money of wealthy student parents and that the University and the city both operating as for-profit institutions are actively allowing and supporting the building of cheaply built, high rental rate properties to increase that subset of its enrollees/residents and push out individuals of a lower SES (which often includes POC and other marginalized groups). These buildings are damaging this city--our community--and perpetuating the gross inequality that the U.S. is so wrongly structured around.

We could do better.

I understand that 615 is The Graduate and not one of these luxury housing complexes--however, it is clear as per the the info sheet that the changes The Graduate is looking to make ("construct a new rooftop restaurant and lounge") are changes motivated by the shifting landscape of E Huron St (the addition of The Foundry and The Hub luxury apartments) and A2 at large. The reputation of The Graduate precedes itself--closely affiliated with the University, and the name itself connected with elite education that few have access to, it is a bourgeoisie A2 institution that cultivates elitism and classism. To push to further this elitism and classism is ludicrous and embodies the mindset of entitlement and power-from-wealth. Ann Arbor is not in need of more elite, bourgeoisie restaurant spaces. Ann Arbor is not in need of more non-inclusive spaces. Yet we keep building them. We keep using government and resident time, holding meetings regarding the building of non-inclusive spaces. And we keep allowing it to happen. Sadly, we are only building a wicked power imbalance that is toxic and non-productive. I know there were hard- fought fights to allow The Foundry to be built, and here it stands, being re-built two years later, with management saying they managed to build & rent without being inspected. Is this the precedent we want to set? Is this what we want to allow to happen in our city? Is this the city we want to be building? One that considers money before community? One that has literally no regard at all, in fact, for community building?

Thank you for your time,
Katie