

Downtown Area Citizens Advisory Council Meeting Minutes—June 3, 2015  
City Council Work Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Hall, 7:00 pm

Members Present: Ray Detter, John Chamberlin

Visitors: Christine Crockett, Jeff Crockett, Steve Kaplan, Norm Tyler

Members Absent: Marsha Chamberlin, Jim Kern, Sue Kern, Hugh Sonk, Joan French, Kathleen Nolan

First I want to remind you of our Annual Downtown Party on Thursday, June 4, 6:30 pm., to which you are invited.

Last night's CAC meeting was devoted to a discussion of the premiums issues. We were all asked to read the recent ENP Associates group document **Ann Arbor Premiums Prioritization Summary & Recommendations Report** which will be publically discussed at a working session of the Planning Commission on Tuesday, June 9, 7:00 pm.—and allow for public input.

This is tough reading—32 pages of complex reporting and discussion of future premium possibilities and alternatives. **Premium—Giving of extra FAR (floor area ratio) to a developer because their project provides some benefit that the community defines (Open space, housing, etc.)**

We are aware that some of our group and many people in the City of Ann Arbor believe there should ideally be no premiums granted for any reason. What we want as a community should be specifically required in improved zoning ordinances that recognize the need “to help articulate the massing of larger new buildings to fit sensitively into the existing development context and encourage design approaches that minimize the extent to which high-rise buildings create negative impacts in terms of scale, shading and blocking views.” “Context” is a consideration clearly defined with the goals and recommendations of our Downtown Plan. Our City Council is already in the process of revising our zoning to better achieve this design goal.

The CAC has taken the position that our discussion of premiums will be based on the principle that no premiums should be granted at any time if they have a negative impact upon the historic character of Downtown or near-downtown residential and historic neighborhoods. (Protecting the livability of residentially zoned neighborhoods adjacent to downtown is one of the important goals of the Downtown Plan.)

We happen to believe that 413 E. Huron was a zoning and premium-granting mistake. Everyone on our City Council seemed to agree, but nonetheless voted to approve the project fearing we would be sued if we did not. We don't want that to happen again.

We believe that our zoning should be regularly re-examined and modified. We also believe that our zoning premiums should be reexamined every 3 to 5 years. Those premiums we now support to incentivize developers should gradually be included among the **required** specifics of our zoning. That includes premiums for Housing (affordable,

workforce, or lower income.), Energy Preservation, and also Design. Until that happens, we will continue to support the use of the Planned Project process (not PUD's) that may be able to provide specific public benefits and better buildings in the downtown.

Example of a possible change we support: A future requirement that developers appear twice before the Design Review Board. Give it more teeth.