

September 1, 2009

Wendy Rampson, Systems Planner
City of Ann Arbor
100 North Fifth Avenue
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

Dear Wendy,

Despite the fact that we own four parcels of choice developable D1 downtown land, two of which are over 22,000 square feet, that would increase in value with the proposed revision to 500% by right FAR and up to 1100% FAR with premiums, our companies strongly oppose these recently recommended zoning ordinance revisions to the A2D2 plan. They are outlined in the third and fourth bullet points of the DDA June 3, 2009 resolution.

The third bullet point of this resolution reads:

“Now that a height limit has been established in the D1, we recommend that the by right zoning in the D1 be increased to 500%.”

The suggested 25% increase in the by right FAR from 400% to 500% will significantly reduce the incentive for developers to incorporate premiums such as affordable housing into their projects. In essence, the proposed change sacrifices community values such as affordable housing, public space and environmentally sustainable buildings for more density.

The fourth bullet point states:

Further, to increase the community benefits of new buildings, we recommend that the FAR with premiums be increased to 900%, and affordable housing up to 1,100%

This suggested zoning change is overkill and will lead to excessive density that will overshadow any community benefits. The newly proposed 900% FAR with premiums and the 1100% FAR with affordable housing far surpass the A2D2 Downtown Advisory Committee recommendations. The Committee recommendation following several years of meetings and public input is for a 700% FAR limit with premiums with up to 900% for affordable housing. These newly proposed increases to FAR are at odds with Ann Arbor's historical resistance to excessive density and are not supported by any meaningful zoning study. It is unfair to the citizens of Ann Arbor to significantly increase these FAR premiums at the last minute, well after the two-year period in which the community at large and city officials developed the A2D2 plan.

In conclusion, these two proposed changes to the A2D2 zoning amendments will result in large, massive buildings that contradict downtown Ann Arbor's core values and they are proposed well after the community's final development of the A2D2 plan.

Yours truly,

Ben Dahlmann
Dahlmann Properties