

From: Zona Scheiner [<mailto:zonags@comcast.net>]
Sent: Wednesday, January 14, 2015 6:39 PM
To: Kowalski, Matthew
Subject: Fwd: Fwd: Proposed development on Huron River Drive

Dear Mr. Kowalski

I am sending to you a copy of emails I sent this summer in response to the Proposed South Pond Development. Some of these issues may have been handled but many concerns still remain and I am hoping that the Planning Commission will address these before going further with this proposal. I am also attaching a letter that the Thornoaks Community prepared in response to the meeting held in October at the Planning Commission offices.

In addition to those issues, I would like to add some additional concerns that were addressed at the meeting. The Planning Committee Staff had some very serious concerns about the lack of consideration of infrastructure in the proposed development. One of the most significant was the failure to have an appropriate traffic study that was made at a time when the Washtenaw Corridor would be most utilized. I am hoping that this has been included in the current proposal and if it has not, I would suggest that any consideration be denied until such time as this has happened. I was most impressed by the diligence of the staff in vetting this proposal and I hope that the Planning Commission continues to honor the work that was created. Park areas, traffic studies, wetland infringement, destruction of South Pond are to name a few.

Thank you for your consideration of these issues.

Zona Scheiner, Ph.D.
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In August I wrote,

I am writing you as a concerned citizen and neighbor of the proposed development on Huron River Drive. As I understand the proposal, they are asking to develop 79 lots in 48 acres. A number of the homes planned appear to be facing Huron River Drive, developing steeply sloped areas near a swamp. Much of this area is in or immediately adjacent to sensitive wetland or in areas that had previously been deemed too steeply sloping to develop. I am really disturbed that there is a continuing attempt to do what has been deemed both dangerous to the wetlands of Ann Arbor as well as dangerous for any potential home owner in that area. I would suspect that the potential for damages would be fairly great should those areas be developed and then significant erosion and sinking occur. Regardless of the economic impact, the environmental destruction would be severe and perhaps permanent..

From my reading of the proposals, there are even lots planned within about 100 feet of the previous reported sighting of the threatened and legally protected Dukes' skipper, a butterfly that

is critically imperiled.

There have been other site plans that have failed that have not considered these important issues. Is there a belief that continuing to do the wrong thing will eventually result in a right outcome?

I am of course concerned about increased development overall in the area, but that is not my major issue as I write this letter. My major concern is that there be significant oversight as to the nature of the environment, the demands of the terrain, the preservation of nature. Secondly but also of great importance would be the plans for the infrastructure of the area. Huron River Drive is in bad shape and it is the only route out of that area. What are the alternate traffic patterns that are being considered as this development is planned. I believe that other proposals have failed because of the lack of consideration for the traffic patterns. There is a limit to what the area can tolerate, and I believe that limit has long been surpassed.

As a city planner for Ann Arbor, I believe that you have the best interests of this very wonderful area in your mind. I urge you to consider these issues as you make your recommendations.

Sincerely and thank you for your time

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October 14, 2014

**COMMENTARY REGARDING MIDWESTERN CONSULTING'S SUMMARY OF
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION MEETING REGARDING SOUTH POND VILLAGE**

October 14, 2014

This letter is in response to the Tom Covert's summary of the meeting regarding the Proposed South Pond Village with the community on August 28, 2014.

From our perspective that report was not actually a summary statement but rather the Developer's impressionistic and skewed recollection of the meeting. We are attaching a full transcript of the meeting and this letter will refer to different aspects discussed.

The first paragraph reflected attendance and the statement that most of the attendees were from the Thornoaks community. From appearances, and the questions that were generated, it appeared that there was an excellent Woodcreek community participation as well.

In the second paragraph, the developer stated that one of the primary concerns raised was that of traffic, particularly to Washtenaw Ave. He also stated that a traffic impact study only relates to the incremental increase in traffic generated by a particular development. Since he only mentioned Washtenaw Ave (and "other area roads") we are not certain of what area roads are they are referring to. In our perspective, it is not just the number of entrances onto Washtenaw Ave that need to be evaluated, but to Chalmers, to Huron River Drive and to the internal streets in the Woodcreek neighborhoods.

Many of the comments by the community (as can be seen in the attached transcript) referred also to the increased traffic within the development. One of the primary exits

from the proposed development is through the residential community of Woodcreek. The 77 houses proposed in the new development would practically double the amount of internal traffic within the Woodcreek community and not just impact the traffic on to Washtenaw Ave and Huron River Drive.

Having researched several government recommendations regarding the type of traffic study required, we will mention just a few. The Institute of Traffic Engineering recommends a comprehensive traffic analysis if:

INSTITUTE OF TRANSPORTATION ENGINEER'S (ITE) GENERAL THRESHOLD RECOMMENDATION

“Any proposed site plan or subdivision plan which would be expected to generate over one hundred (100) directional trips during the peak hour of the traffic generator or the peak hour on the adjacent streets, or over seven hundred fifty (750) trips in an average day.” Using their charts, this development meets the criteria of over seven hundred fifty (750) trips daily.

In addition, the following is cited from the same set of recommendations:

http://www.lic.wisc.edu/shapingdane/facilitation/all_resources/impacts/analysis_traffic.htm

IS A TRAFFIC IMPACT ANALYSIS NECESSARY FOR DEVELOPMENT THAT DO NOT MEET THE THRESHOLD REQUIREMENTS?

Even if the development does not generate the threshold level of trips, a traffic analysis may still be necessary under the following conditions:

- High traffic volumes on surrounding roads that may affect movement to and from the proposed development.
- Lack of existing left turn lanes on the adjacent roadway at the proposed access drive.
- Inadequate sight distance at access points.
- The proximity of the proposed access points to other existing drives or intersections.
- A development that includes a drive-through operation

Further, it was recommended by this same group (and sponsored by various Michigan governmental authorities including the Tricounty Regional Planning Commission, Michigan Department of Transportation Planning Commission and the Southeast Council of Michigan

Governments) that traffic crash information may be required, particularly for sites along an identified "Safety Management Corridor", "Congested Corridor", or at locations with identified problems. In these cases, such information may be helpful to minimize any additional problems through the design or location of access points. The need for any crash data should be addressed at the preapplication conference.

Finally, Councilwoman Jane Lumm reported at the meeting that there was a Traffic Study report in the 1990's that gave the Washtenaw Ave. corridor an F. We can only imagine what it would be today given the increase in traffic and no change in the corridor itself.

We strongly request that a very comprehensive traffic analysis be completed as that which is being considered is of very minimal value in terms of both the impact on the communities affected and the City and county at large.

As the so-called summary statement continues, the document provided does not reflect the variety of concerns of the impact of this development on the environment. There was very specific reference to South Pond, which has been seriously damaged by the ongoing run off from various developments. There were concerns expressed regarding the impact of the development with particular reference to the two houses on Huron River Drive itself on the Wetlands and to the existence of a critically imperiled species, the Dukes Skipper Butterfly.

Here again, the skimming over the serious and specific issues relating to South Pond, were dealt with in a similar manner as was the impact on traffic. The developer stated that they intend to meet current guidelines but NOT assess the overall impact of his development on the natural features of South Pond. Increasing impervious structures in the area can only aggravate an already deteriorating situation.

The lack of acknowledgement and mention of many of the conversations and issues raised along with the seeming trivialization of those that were mentioned speaks volumes to those of us who went with good faith to the Citizen's Meeting. For example, the developer cites a resident as agreeing with the description of the traffic study, but his agreement was only to inform the citizens of the inadequacy of such a study on the concerns that they were raising. If this is how the Developer responds to a meeting prior to any approval from the Planning Commission or the City, we can only speculate on what could happen if such an approval was granted.

We once again request that this approval not be granted until and unless the issues raised here are addressed appropriately by the Developer. We also wonder at the practice of getting this summary from the developer without asking them to get feedback from the community as to accuracy. It seems that it does not appear to be important to at least this developer to have accuracy and credibility. If this is an example of developer's accuracy, the Planning Commission needs to review and change its procedures. The current strategy is not working.

Sincerely,

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Bennet Wolper
Kristine Bolhuis
John Holkeboer
James Bardwell
Ursula Jakob
Rosella Bannister
JoEllen Vinyard
Lisa Cronin
Ariel Nicolaci
Cameron Innes
Diane Innes
Beth Wood
Mary Fitts
Susan Wacksmith
John Wacksmith
Ellen Vaughan
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