

From: mcjjj@comcast.net [mailto:mcjjj@comcast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, September 21, 2010 3:01 PM
To: Planning; Anglin, Mike; Anglin, Mike
Subject: Fuller Intermodal transportation Station

Dear Planning Commission members and interested citizens,

Please review the attached PDF regarding tonites discussion of the Fuller Intermodal Transportation Station. The PDF contains useful and I believe heretofore unpublished information.

Thank you
Mike Forgacs
112 North Seventh Street

Dear Planning Commission members and concerned citizens,

The Fuller Intermodal Transportation Center is problematic, both in substance and process. Please allow me to explain.

Below is an illustration created for the 2005 Medical Center Master Plan to illustrate and explain the Master Plan for this area. As you know, Master plans put forth a vision, and in so doing guard against a situation where the latest issue or newly-developing cause takes priority over the over-arching vision. In the design thought process, letting the newly-developing issue take priority ahead of the over-arching vision is known as the-tail-wagging-the-dog and it is to be avoided in Planning, Architecture and Design.



Medical Center Master Plan - 2005



Medical Center Master Plan - 2005

The Medical Center Master Plan of Summer 2005 illustrates respect for the river valley and its edge. As has been pointed out, this area is the only place in the city where you can get a sense of the Natural River Valley. Respecting the Natural River Valley and its edge is also valuable in terms of achieving desired outcomes in the Medical Arts, where negative stressors are induced by health maladies and the medical environment itself. These stressors have been shown to be substantially reduced (please cut and paste *Healthy Environments - mitigating patient stress, improving medical outcomes* into your web browser to see for yourself) Creating stress-reducing, positive environments connected to nature has been a substantial proportion of what a host of planners, architects and landscape architects have been doing for as long as I've been involved in Medical Planning and Architecture and Design (some 20 years).



As presently designed, the present FITS site configuration does not respect the Natural River Valley. In fact, at the FITS meeting in the City Hall Council Chambers this Spring, the architect was asked whether the proposed site configuration/massing represented the best solution for the site. Rather than replying yes, he replied that his office was not responsible for the present site configuration, that it was his office's job to develop the planned site configuration and elevations. That lack of affirmative response to the question is telling. The proposed site configuration / massing does not represent the best solution for the facility proposed for this site. FITS DOES NOT FIT!

At this point, allow me to say a few words about process. At the meeting of the Parks Advisory Committee on March 16th 2010, Commissioner Sam Offen and others were shown the following image taken from the video record of that meeting :



Sam made it clear that he for one would greatly benefit from seeing the FITS Site Master Plan build-out at ground level. Sam is and was not alone. He couldn't have been more clear in his straight-forward request. His request was acknowledged. To my knowledge, showing the Site Master Plan build-out from ground level has never been done / made public by the design team. That is wrong and something should be done about it!



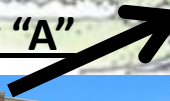
View "A" - Perspective view I created in response to request for a perspective view at ground level of FITS Site Master Plan build-out . View from Fuller looking South

Because the public deserves to know what is planned for developments affecting Ann Arbor's public lands and public parks, and because I 'm not aware of another way to obtain the information requested, I provide the above view based on information that *was* provided. In terms of process, it is very legitimate for interested Ann-Arborites to want the information requested. Information should have been provided and made known to the general public. I believe that it is not too difficult to deduce why the results of this legitimate request haven't been made known far and wide. That is because it is unflattering to the project to say the least ... even if we were looking for an ugly suburban parking structure/office building to be located in Troy, Michigan. But in fact - I hope you can agree - we are not looking for that. We are looking for an appropriate and becoming entry gateway to Ann Arbor and respectful treatment to the River Valley of our beloved city .

At the same meeting where Sam Offen made his request, the respected landscape architect Peter Pollack appropriately and wisely advised consideration of a longer and lower structure that can be designed to be part of the park. Peter noted that he had met with city staff in mid-September 2009. At that point, there had already been a decision to build on the current foot-print. The decision had been based on a larger meeting that had not been open to the public. That decision is reflected in the unfortunate, inappropriate and ugly beast of a structure we see today.



View "A"



View "A"

The fact is, the site / structure could be much more appropriately configured than it is today. The long and low idea deserves review on such an important site - with an eye toward integrating the structure with the river valley and the park. As has been said before, there is just one chance to design the facility at that location, and it should be done in the best way possible. Ann Arbor doesn't need still another ugly structure. There is a better way forward. Please vote this iteration down and request an evaluation of a long and low structure that integrates itself with the river valley and park and solves other problems inherent in the present scheme.

Thank you.



Mike Forgas M. Arch., M.U.P.
State of Michigan licensed Architect Planner # 32593



—Original Message—

From: Joel Batterman [mailto:jomba@umich.edu]

Sent: Tuesday, September 21, 2010 4:25 PM

To: Planning

Cc: Cooper, Eli

Subject: Crash underlines need for bicycle planning in Fuller site design

Dear Commissioners,

This afternoon, I arrived at the intersection of Fuller and Glen, about 1000 feet from the site of the proposed Fuller Road Station parking structure site, to find a bicycle and a boot lying on the pavement surrounded by emergency response personnel. The responders told me a bicyclist had been struck there. I asked if the crash was serious. "It was serious enough," they said.

What took place at the intersection was not an accident, but the logical result of planning efforts that fail to accommodate bicycle transportation. Designs for the Fuller Road Station site, located just 1000 feet east of the Glen-Fuller intersection, must begin to address the unacceptable conditions for bicycling along the Glen-Fuller corridor. There is no excuse for failing to do so.

The Glen-Fuller corridor, which provides a direct route between the University of Michigan's Central Campus and North Campus, is one of the more heavily trafficked bicycle routes in the city. It is also one of the most dangerous. Bicyclists are forced to either share a high-speed, high-volume roadway or use a sidepath which poses serious hazards at conflict points, such as the Fuller-Glen intersection.

It is critical for the City to begin addressing this dangerous situation in planning for the proposed Fuller Road Station site.

Short-term safety measures could include separation of bicycle and pedestrian traffic and AASHTO-compliant signage, such as stop signs for bicyclists and warning signs for turning motor vehicles, along the path leading through the property. Over the long term, the City must rework bicycle circulation through the area, as recommended in its Non-motorized Plan. In comments on the Fuller site, the Washtenaw Bicycling and Walking Coalition has specifically called for construction of the long-planned adjacent path network along the Huron River.

Unfortunately, the current site plan retains the existing, inadequate non-motorized path while increasing the number of conflicts from turning vehicles. So far as I am aware, it makes no provision for connection of the Station to a bicycle transportation system which complies with current design standards. This is not an appropriate beginning for a site which may one day constitute a major regional transportation node.

Bicycle transportation facilities are not an amenity or a luxury. They must not remain the eternal afterthought of Ann Arbor planning activities. They are a critical part of a transportation system which meets the needs of Ann Arbor and its residents, and which averts potential tragedies. I urge the Planning Commission to work with the University to provide adequate facilities for bicycle transportation through the Fuller site, and to ensure that the larger Fuller corridor does not continue to endanger so many citizens.

Many thanks for your concern.

Sincerely,

Joel Batterman

Joel Batterman

University of Michigan

Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning transportmichigan.org

From: LDeck1@aol.com [mailto:LDeck1@aol.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 23, 2010 1:17 PM
To: Planning
Subject: Funding for trails near Fuller Station

(Message to Jean Carlberg and other Planning Commissioners who may be interested)

Jean,

At Tuesday night's Planning Commission meeting, I'm glad that you asked about funding for completing the long-planned trail connections near the proposed Fuller Road Station.

A reasonable guess of the costs involved would be \$150,000 for the bridge over the river and \$100,000 for the trail connections to each of the three road underpasses, for a total of roughly \$450,000. It's hard for me to understand how there is not enough money for this work when the rest of the project would cost something like 100 times as much, and when these trail connections are an important part of the multi-modal project.

Moreover, since these trails would include a portion of the Border-to-Border Trail and immediate connections to it, I think it is quite possible that Washtenaw County's greenway program would fund a portion of the work. As you probably know, the county has been dedicating about \$1 million per year to trail projects, especially those focused on the Border-to-Border Trail. In addition, the county has now begun dedicating about \$600,000 more per year to other high-value trail projects through its "Connecting Communities Initiative." As a member of the county's Greenways Advisory Committee, I can say that this seems to me to be the sort of project that has rated highly in the past.

As Eli Cooper mentioned in response to your question (and as you know), there are also state sources that fund good trail projects.

My judgment is that now is the time to build these trails.

Please call me at the number below if you'd like to discuss this further.

-- Larry Deck 971-7741
Board member of the Washtenaw Bicycling and Walking Coalition

From: mamanildi@comcast.net [mailto:mamanildi@comcast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, September 21, 2010 6:11 PM
To: Planning
Cc: jhieftje@umich.edu; sabra briere; courant57@me.com
Subject: Re: Fuller Road Station Project Review

Dear all -

I apologize. I said "east end" when I meant "west", and "westerly" when I meant "easterly." Good thing I am not on the Planning Commission. Still, I hope you will consider our concerns.

Thank you so much,
Marta

----- Original Message -----

From: mamanildi@comcast.net
To: planning@a2gov.org
Cc: jhieftje@umich.edu, "sabra briere" <sabra.briere@gmail.com>, courant57@me.com
Sent: Tuesday, September 21, 2010 4:52:52 PM
Subject: Fuller Road Station Project Review

Dear Planning Commission and Staff,

While I hope to be able to make tonight's meeting, I wanted to give some preliminary comments in writing regarding the proposed Fuller Road Station transportation hub project. We live at 1045 Cedar Bend Drive, which is within 300 feet of the proposal and which backs directly on the Huron River. Unfortunately, we could not locate your reports on the project, which were not on the project web page, until our councilmember, Ms. Briere, forwarded a link, so I have not had time to review all the material carefully. Therefore, please excuse my sending these comments after your requested deadline of noon today, as I did not have the report until after that.

We appreciate the value to the City of a hub like this one, and many of the ideas in the planning including improved landscaping, increased use of native plants, and use of porous paving materials. At the same time, we are concerned about significantly increased noise, light, and odor pollution so near the river and, frankly, so near our home and the homes of our neighbors. In the short run, therefore, we would like to know how much vehicle emissions will be increased in the area, and whether any assessment has been made regarding possible increase in noise levels. But our greater concern is in the long run. Phase I appears to propose building the main facility on the far east end of the site, which should help minimize the negative effects on our neighborhood. We would like some assurance - restricted zoning, perhaps - that would prevent later expansion into the more westerly end of the site. Also, the plan contemplates adding additional decks to the parking structure in the more long term future. We think it is important that the structure be designed to minimize the amount of light spilling out, especially if the structure will be kept lit all night. This concern

increases with the height of the structure. For a facility of this size, we think landscaping will be very important, and we encourage plentiful use of native trees, shrubs, forbs, grasses and sedges.

Thank you,
Marta Manildi and Paul Courant
1045 Cedar Bend Dr.
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
734-665-5597