

From: Brad Pritts
Sent: Tuesday, June 10, 2014 8:56 PM
To: Planning
Cc: Petersen, Sally; Jane Lumm; dreim@umich.edu
Subject: 1919 Wayne Street - Jesuit petition

I am writing in support of the proposal for 1919 Wayne Street residence by Jesuit Father Dan Reim and other priests in this community.

I am personally acquainted with the Jesuits as a long time member of the St. Mary's Student Parish community. It would be my pleasure to have any and all of them as neighbors in my neighborhood. This team has made a long term commitment to serve students and residents of Ann Arbor. St. Mary's has a long history of service in the Ann Arbor area, as well as providing mission service elsewhere. Fr. Reim, for example, leads the Alternative Spring Break program in which over 130 university students "donated" their spring break time and served the poor at sites in Michigan, elsewhere in the United States, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic. In addition to the university community, the pastoral team collectively serves the Spanish-speaking community across Washtenaw County. Other service and social justice programs include St. Mary's leadership in forming the Hunger Coalition (now the responsibility of the Delonis Center) and the Family Shelter program. When shelter facilities were over capacity this past winter, the pastoral team again opened the St. Mary's facilities to the homeless. Most of these services are provided to all regardless of religious affiliation.

It appears that a key point of the debate is the extent to which this group resemble a natural family. Based on long tradition in the Catholic Church, religious community members subscribe to a common set of practices and live "in community" with each other. This has little resemblance to the typical situation of a handful of university students sharing an apartment or home. (I can fully understand neighbors who are reluctant to accept an "Animal House" environment next door; but this group of men is unlikely to provide such a situation!) Ann Arbor's own zoning regulations provide similar exemptions for licensed group homes, day care facilities, and other uses which are not strictly family residences.

It is unfortunate that an important matter of this kind is subject to the vagaries of procedure and absences of Planning Commission membership. I would hope that the matter could be openly heard, and voted upon, by the full Commission.

I will be following this situation and hope that you can support the Jesuits in their request.

Regards,

Brad Pritts

3030 Lexington Drive, Ann Arbor 48105
734-834-3675

Member, St. Mary's Student Parish