

From: smiller179 [smiller179@comcast.net]
Sent: Monday, April 23, 2018 9:02 PM
To: Kowalski, Matthew
Subject: Lockwood Development Proposal

Dear Planning Commission Members,

I live at 205 Westover Street, Ann Arbor. I am writing about the proposed Lockwood development from two points-of-view: that of a neighborhood home owner (since 2000) and that of a long-time birder who moved into this neighborhood in large part because of its proximity to Dolph Park.

I am strongly opposed to the Lockwood development. The Westover Hills neighborhood, to which it would abut, is a very small neighborhood of no more than 50 houses that already struggles to maintain its integrity as a cohesive neighborhood and copes with a number of problems, for example, chronically awful road condition (the road is unpaved, often flooded, and terribly pitted by large potholes—visitors have commented that coming to my house is like visiting Beirut after the bombing and worry about damaging their cars traversing it). A traffic flow design by the city encourages motorists to use the neighborhood in order to avoid the Jackson-Wagner intersection, which creates additional problems from excess traffic speeding down already dusty, unpaved roads. The Lockwood development is large (with 95 units, it would be about twice the size of the Westover Hills neighborhood—more than a third of the size of the combined Sister Lakes neighborhoods) and would represent a major alteration of the neighborhood landscape, which consists of one street, Westover, of three blocks length and three short cross-streets, Ferry, Porter, and Rhea, as well as a few houses on Wagner and Jackson.

The property proposed for development is zoned single family and should keep that zoning. Additional houses would be welcome in the neighborhood, whereas a large development that diminishes our sense that we are a neighborhood and introduces major elements such as commercial traffic, parking lots, and garbage dumps is not welcomed by most. Given the nature of the development, residents are likely to form a community of their own within the larger community rather than integrating into the Westover Hills (or Sister Lakes) community.

My second concern is for the park. The park is highly valued as a stopping place for migratory birds (second only to the Arboretum) but has major problems with invasive species and damaging run-off that has degraded the quality of the First Sister Lake. A large new development likely would undoubtedly further degrade the lake, by which it would sit, and would create a less green, less natural landscape that would deter visits from migratory birds.

The property in question should be developed as single family homes, in accordance with current zoning, or it should be purchased by the City as an addition to Dolph or developed into a dog park, which would be welcome on this side of town.

Yours Sincerely,

Susan B. Miller, PhD