

From: Stephen Lange Ranzini [mailto:ranzini@university-bank.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 21, 2010 10:20 AM
To: Planning
Subject: Hoover Mansion hearing follow-up

Dear Members of the Planning Commission:

I wanted to draw to your attention certain important facts that were not mentioned at the meeting. Because my presentation was limited by your rules to 5 minutes and no one asked me any follow-up questions, I had to limit the information conveyed to the time limit.

1. The Hoover Mansion is bordered by 16 unique properties held by 14 different parties (not including the additional parcel held by University Bank's subsidiary, Hoover LLC. Of these, just three owners (four people total) stated at the meeting their opposition to the project. Among the groups in favor are the synagogue which represents several hundred members of the local community and we have their support in writing already.

2. It was falsely stated by one of the speakers at the meeting that other property owners are against the project. In fact we've been informed by many of the other neighbors who attended the various community meetings that they are strongly in favor of the project and strongly in favor of maintaining University Bank as the occupant of the Hoover Mansion. We've been good neighbors and other than the three property owners adjacent to the proposed 13 unit parking lot, there are no concerns. Several of them gave us written comments of support or statements that they didn't oppose the project.

3. University Bank was only aware of one property owner having concerns about the parking lot prior to the meeting. We offered this home owner \$10,000 in plantings to create a green screen on their property, our property or some mix of the two, to their design spec. A low wall to block headlights is easily accommodated in the plan and we are willing to do that, however it was never mentioned to us prior to last night's hearing despite all of our outreach efforts (all the neighbors have the email and cell phone number of our property manager and myself). The second adjacent property owner who spoke at the hearing in opposition never came to either of the two neighborhood charettes that we hosted, never responded to our letters, never called us and until last night we'd never seen him. The doctor/wife couple who spoke against the meeting, we had previously been told by them that they were in full support of the project and even in the hall immediately before the meeting, the wife and I were chatting for several minutes and she did not express any concerns or mention that their opinion had changed. We were ambushed at the meeting purposefully. Even so, it is our desire to be good neighbors and we are reaching out to all three property owners again to offer a meeting to them to discuss the concerns they expressed. At any meeting that is set (there will probably be three) we will also invite the other 11 property owners in case they have any concerns not yet voiced to us.

4. We had offered additional public benefits of covered and uncovered bicycle parking on site, however the planning staff did not mention this. I have also directed Kem-Tech to add a walking path suggested by the planning staff mass transit coordinator to the northwest side of the property from the city parking lot to the existing parking lot. I had previously requested this but it was not done due to a miscommunication between our project coordinator and Kem-Tech.

5. The bank is rapidly growing. We were noted as the second fastest growing business of any type in the Greater Detroit Region by Crain's Detroit Business in 2009. Currently we have 225 employees, of which 50 (in two divisions) are in Ann Arbor, 50 (in one division) in Farmington Hills, 100 (in one division) in Houghton in the western U.P. and the balance being out of state mortgage loan originators. We want to add some local loan originators, which will benefit Ann

Arbor by making more credit available, however we cannot hire them as we are at the limit of 50 employees allow per the PUD. If the project is not approved in the near term we will either have to reconsider this plan, OR we will have to move one of the two divisions now based in Ann Arbor, to our Farmington Hills operation. Once we move this division it won't be able to bring it back. This will cause the loss of 12 jobs in Ann Arbor and the permanent loss to the area of this rapidly growing business, which grew 64% in revenues in 2009 and has the potential to be an employer of about 100 persons over time.

6. I bicycle to work to free up a parking spot. That is how critical our parking problem has become. Our employees express high dissatisfaction with the current parking lot situation, as do our bank examiners and the senior management of the FDIC and OFIR, our regulators. Because the regulators have to carry heavy boxes and the nearest on street parking off-site is more than ½ mile away (not limited to 2 hours), parking is a serious problem and public transportation cannot fix the problem. Having its regulators upset at the bank for parking issues is foolish in the extreme and management either has to solve this problem or relocate the bank. If we relocate the bank, we will sell the Hoover Mansion and problem would relocate the entire operation to Farmington Hills and/or Houghton where there is adequate parking and available inexpensive space currently available. As to our employees, because of the formerly high residential prices in Ann Arbor, most of our employees commute to work from Western Wayne County, Oakland County, or north up U.S. 23, where there is no mass transit alternative. Although as many of you know I am a strong supporter and proponent of mass transit, it doesn't yet effectively exist to serve my employees and despite my efforts to get them to use it, they refuse to, with few exceptions (two employees use AATA to commute to work, as I do occasionally when the weather is bad and bicycling is not an option).

7. The real issue here is not public transit, but there is an office building with 35 parking spots and 50 employees in a suburban type location. It isn't tenable or sustainable and is a major reason why the value of the building is much less than the theoretical value of the building and why the last seller of the building had to wait 2 ½ years to sell the building. If there were adequate parking, the next owner of the building would not be tempted to tear the building down and build 12 residential lots on the 3.4 acres. To make the building sustainable long term, the value of the office building MUST exceed the value of possible alternative uses, such as condo or home development.

8. We HATE the alternative proposal of building up berms that encroach into the lawn and parking spots alongside the driveway. This was foisted on us by the planning staff and at the suggestion of Kem-Tech, since it is the second least worst alternative to the proposed 13 unit parking lot. To illustrate to you and the neighbors how impractical the planning staff's suggestion of parking alongside the driveway is and how this will damage the view shed, we will conduct the following experiment until the parking lot is approved: While previously we had taken a variety of measures to actively discourage our employees, visitors and bank examiners from parking in the driveway, we will remove those restrictions and encourage them to park there. I hope you have the opportunity to drive by over the next few weeks and take a look and how unsightly the cars in the front lawn area are.

Thanks for taking the time to read this long letter. I'm sure you realize that 5 minutes isn't enough time to discuss and vet all the issues here and welcome the opportunity at our next hearing for a give and take discussion on why certain options were considered and rejected or why we think the way we do. As a strong advocate of historic preservation (my first project in

town saved the Tuomy Gas Station and put it on the National Historic Register) I have given long and careful consideration to this proposal. If you want the Hoover Mansion to look the same way from the street as it does today for the indefinite future, there is no viable alternative to the proposal before you.

Sincerely,
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University Bank's Vision: "We Build the Foundation for Your Future!"

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