

Resolution to ask City Council to utilize an RFQ/RFP process that conditions the sale of the “Y-Lot” property

WHEREAS, the City Council passed a resolution to direct the city administrator to solicit responses to a Request For Proposal for Brokerage Services for the Sale of 350 S. Fifth Avenue (Fifth & William Surface Parking Lot/Formal “Y” Lot);

WHEREAS City Council directed the Planning Commission through a resolution on April 1, 2013 to review the D1 and D2 zoning;

WHEREAS the role of the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission is to advise the City Council on development issues within the City of Ann Arbor;

WHEREAS the Connecting William Street Framework Plan was created at the request of City Council on April 1, 2011 and 1) incorporated input from more than 2,000 participants from the public in its creation, 2) makes both overarching and site-specific recommendations for city-owned lots downtown, and 3) recommends a RFQ/RFP process for implementation;

WHEREAS the redevelopment of city-owned parcels are the City’s only opportunity to require a development with greater emphasis on long-term, ongoing and growing economic benefit to the community;

WHEREAS the City Planning Commission requests that the City Council and public recognize the sale of the “Y” Lot without an RFP may result in a development that 1) does not fulfill the overarching or site-level recommendations of the Connecting William Street Framework Plan, 2) does not meet the Intent statement for the Midtown Character Overlay Zoning District in the zoning ordinance, and 3) ignores the recommendations of the Design Guidelines;

WHEREAS the Connecting William Street Framework Plan contains recommendations that focus on bringing people and activities to this and other core downtown sites to achieve the common goal expressed by the community: 1) creating the interesting and engaging sidewalk atmosphere currently lacking along William Street, 2) recommends a large plate office or lodging as a primary use, 3) residential as a secondary use, and 4) active uses on the first floor;

WHEREAS the City Planning Commission has specific recommendations for this site that include: 1) discouraging surface parking, 2) discouraging vehicular access beyond the street curb, and 3) encouraging all vehicular access via the investment the City made in a stub from the existing Fifth Avenue underground parking structure;

WHEREAS the Connecting William Street Framework Plan calls for open space that is privately developed, owned, maintained, and programmed in coordination with building’s development to create an active interaction between inside uses and exterior spaces;

WHEREAS the City Planning Commission recommends open space on this site be required and incorporate landscaping;

WHEREAS the Design Guidelines are optional and making them mandatory for this project would allow the City to test this process in its ability to achieve development that is generally considered an attractive asset to the character of the district; and

WHEREAS the Climate Action Plan was adopted after the Downtown Plan, D1/D2 Zoning Ordinance, Design Guidelines and Connecting William Street Framework Plan and recommends high-performance buildings, green roofs and solar ready buildings;

RESOLVED, that the City Planning Commission recommends to City Council that the “Y” Lot is sold, an RFQ/RFP process be utilized that conditions the sale of the property in order to obtain a long-term, ongoing and growing economic benefit for the residents of the city; and

RESOLVED, that the City Planning Commission recommends to City Council that the “Y” Lot is sold, an RFP contain some or all of the following conditions:

- ✓ A building that generates foot traffic, provides a human scale, creates visual appeal and contains active uses on all first floor street frontage;
- ✓ A “mixed use” development;
- ✓ A requirement that any vehicular access and parking be accessed via the City’s Fifth Avenue underground parking structure;
- ✓ A requirement for an entry plaza or open space appropriately scaled and located to be properly activated by adjacent building uses and to be maintained by the developer;
- ✓ A requirement for the entry plaza or open space to incorporate generous landscaping;
- ✓ A requirement for mandatory adherence to the Design Guidelines as interpreted by the Design Review Board;
- ✓ A request for a third party environmental certification (eg. Leed Gold or Platinum))