

Bowden (King), Anissa

From: John Whittier-Ferguson [johnaw@umich.edu]
Sent: Friday, September 12, 2008 8:39 AM
To: Hieftje, John
Cc: Bowden (King), Anissa; Peter Nagourney
Subject: 601 Forest plan

Dear Mayor Hieftje and Ann Arbor City Council members,

I write to express my heartfelt opposition to the proposal for a 25-story high-rise apartment complex at 601 Forest. While I am absolutely in favor of considered and carefully planned development of the South University neighborhood of downtown Ann Arbor, this out-of-scale building would have a profoundly unsettling affect on downtown Ann Arbor and the neighborhoods surrounding the University of Michigan.

I have been a resident of Ann Arbor for 18 years now. My children attended Angel School (and are now at Huron and Community High schools); I teach at the University of Michigan; I have been head of my neighborhood association for a number of years. I am regularly involved in recruiting new faculty and staff to work at the University. The quality of life in Ann Arbor is wonderful for a variety of reasons--not least among them a downtown that is still more or less navigable by foot and bike (less and less so by car!)--and this gigantic development would degrade that precious and rare resource--a vibrant and attractive town center--in many ways. It would block out another piece of Michigan sky (we've seen this happen in the corridor of tall science buildings along Huron, and around the Hospital); create even more monstrous traffic snarls at the entrance to the South-U. side of the University and the commercial center of town; and grotesquely change the scale of buildings in this part of Ann Arbor. There are a variety of other problems, having to do with parking, safety, student residents, surrounding neighborhood life and economics, and models for further development in Ann Arbor's center city. I trust you are already aware of these, and I would hope that you do everything in your power to prevent this disastrous development from continuing.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter,

yours,

John Whittier-Ferguson

~~~~~  
John Whittier-Ferguson  
Associate Professor  
English Department  
University of Michigan  
3156 Angell Hall  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1003  
~~~~~