

Subject: Comment re: REZ24-0008 SP24-0013

From: Ruby Summers
Sent: Monday, January 19, 2026 11:18 PM
To: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>; Lenart, Brett <BLenart@a2gov.org>
Cc: City Council <CityCouncil@a2gov.org>;
Subject: Comment re: REZ24-0008 & SP24-0013 (Woodbury Gardens)

Dear Mr. Lenart and Members of the Planning Commission,

My name is Ruby Summers. I have always called South Blvd home. My first home was at 1411, and then my family moved right next door to 1435 when I was 8-years-old. I have fond memories of growing up in this neighborhood - playing with my friends, walking our dog, going to Woodbury and Frisinger parks, and watching the songbirds in the trees outside of our window.

In 2020, I moved back into 1411 South Blvd and my husband and I bought the property in 2022. Our home directly abuts Woodbury Gardens, which our 10-month-old loves because she likes to watch our neighbor's four kittens play in the wooded area between our homes.

We love this neighborhood, the people, the pets, the wildlife, and the businesses.

I also love this city and want more people to be able to live here. I support Ann Arbor's goals for increased urban density. I believe that more housing is crucial for our city's climate goals, social mobility, and racial justice. However, for density to be successful, it must be contextually intelligent.

After reviewing the REZ24-0008 proposal for Woodbury Gardens, I believe this 7-story plan represents a misapplication of city policy:

- Enclave Design vs. Neighborhood Integration: True urbanist density should integrate new residents into the existing neighborhood fabric. The current proposal, featuring two 7-story towers and a 5-level parking structure, creates a self-contained enclave. This type of internalized design often fails to promote the street-level activity and social cohesion that urban density is intended to foster. Density should feel like a neighborhood expansion, not a disconnected vertical node.

- Misalignment with the "Missing Middle": High-rise "podium" buildings (7 stories) are among the most expensive residential structures to build. These costs typically mandate "luxury-tier" rents to remain viable. By contrast, a 3-to-4 story development is the definition of "Missing Middle" housing. A lower-profile, high-density approach on this site would better align with the attainable rent structures needed to support social mobility for Ann Arbor's workforce. I request to see a comparison of today's rent for Woodbury Garden residents vs rents for the units in the proposed new development.

- Preserving the "Step-Down" Precedent: Woodbury Gardens is a massive 41-acre site. Approving a 7-story height at this early stage sets a precedent for the entire parcel. If the City allows a 7-story "Urban Core" scale here, it effectively abandons the "Neighborhood Scale" transition that is supposed to exist between transit corridors and established residential areas.

- I would like to know whether this 7-story proposal is intended to be the final high-density project for this 41-acre site, or is this 'Phase 1' of a larger master plan to add density to the entire parcel?
- If this is the only high-density phase planned, is the Petitioner willing to enter into a Voluntary Development Agreement or a Deed Restriction limiting the remainder of the 41 acres to its current density?

- Prioritizing TC1 for "Greyfields": The Transit Corridor (TC1) district was designed to transform underutilized surface parking lots and obsolete commercial strips. Using it here, on a site that is already an established residential community, feels like an overreach of the tool's intent.

I urge the Commission to recommend a scaled-back, 3-to-4 story alternative that aligns with the "Missing Middle" principles we need for a truly inclusive Ann Arbor. This allows us to welcome new neighbors without setting a 7-story precedent for the remaining 41 acres.

Sincerely,

Ruby Summers 1411 South Blvd Ann Arbor, MI 48104