

**Subject:** Comprehensive Plan - thank you and request for engagement with Allmendinger Park

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**From:** Tracy K Swinburn

**Sent:** Monday, April 7, 2025 12:46 PM

**To:** Lenart, Brett <BLenart@a2gov.org>; Eyer, Jen <JEyer@a2gov.org>; Akmon, Dharma <DAkmon@a2gov.org>; Disch, Lisa <LDisch@a2gov.org>; Taylor, Christopher (Mayor) <CTaylor@a2gov.org>

**Cc:** Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>

**Subject:** Comprehensive Plan - thank you and request for engagement with Allmendinger Park

Dear Mayor Taylor, Council Members Akmon, Disch, and Eyer, and Brett Lenert,

I was at the Comprehensive Plan info session on Friday evening, and I want to thank you for your time and thoughtful engagement. This was my first time interacting directly with anyone from the Council and it was a very positive experience. I felt genuinely welcomed and listened to. I very much appreciate this small setting and your willingness to engage with small groups.

I live on Potter Ave. in Allmendinger Park, and I would like to request that our neighborhood have a similar info session. We do not have a neighborhood association, so we have not been involved in those communications, and everyone I've spoken to in our neighborhood was not aware of any of this until we received a flyer that you all are aware of (I don't blame you all for lack of engagement - I think it's entirely possible you were doing plenty of hard work, and we were focussed on national elections this fall). Perhaps we could have a session at Bach Elementary - ?

I am writing to you to ask for consideration of neighborhoods like Allmendinger that are currently family neighborhoods, but seem at high risk of changing into student neighborhoods under the current discussed plan.

Allmendinger is directly adjacent to the protected Historic District and so close to campus that it would face significant pressures from developers to create luxury student housing if it were permitted. We already have graduate students renting homes for \$2,000-\$3,000/mo in our neighborhood - the demand is significant.

**Our neighborhood is already doing a lot of what seems desired in the updated vision for Ann Arbor - we have relatively small lots (including some multi-units), dense for single family homes, providing housing to many key workers.** On my block alone, we have 16 houses, including 3 nurses, 1 AAPS teacher, 1 social worker, and across the street is a fire fighter. **We are exactly the type of neighborhood that planners so often seek to create - one with quality of place, diversity, connection. One where families are choosing to live more densely than most because of the quality of place and sense of community.**

**But if the future of our neighborhood were left up to developers, family homes would be razed to create a luxury graduate student neighborhood with none of those characteristics. The potential profits for investors are there.** I don't believe this would be in the interests of our

community (other than developers and perhaps the University seeking to create a more plush experience for well-heeled graduate students).

Market forces in our neighborhood make nearly all (maybe actually all) rentals student rentals and would create this very ripe student housing opportunity for developers if planning regulations change. With graduate students coming from more expensive parts of the country where \$3,000/month in rent is no big deal, the development opportunity is student apartments. Key workers would be out bid for high rents (and likely an increasingly student neighborhood would be undesirable for families, similar to other student neighborhoods close to campus).

As development increased lot by lot, single family homes would be replaced with student duplexes, townhouses and apartments, tipping the balance into a student neighborhood, and remaining residents would look elsewhere to find the kind of family-friendly, neighborly community that drew us here in the first place. It's one thing to live on small lots and very close proximity to other dense single family homes. It's quite another to live adjacent to a 3 or 4-story student apartment unit with late night noise and parties.

Turning our neighborhood into a student rental neighborhood would be counter to the goals of creating more affordable housing for key workers, both by reducing the land and communities over which affordable housing can take place, and by displacing the key workers already here.

These measures seemed poised to have disproportionate impacts on our neighborhood which we love so much. I was so happy to hear that the hope would be to keep our neighborhoods looking and feeling like what we already see. We would need restrictions on development in order to keep our neighborhood from becoming a student rental neighborhood. It's not in our city's best interests to leave it to market development forces to determine and change the character of our neighborhoods.

I hope you will meet with our neighbors and work with us on a way forward in all of our interests. I truly appreciate your care and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Tracy Swinburn