

Ann Arbor City Council Regular Session: April 7, 2025
Email Redactions List Pursuant to Council Resolution R-09-386

Sent Time	TO	From	CC	Redactions	Reason for Redaction
9:01 PM	Travis Radina & Ayesha Ghazi Edwin	Noah Kazis		Personal Contact Information	Privacy
7:57 PM	Travis Radina & Ayesha Ghazi Edwin	Mrs. Van Parunak		Personal Contact Information	Privacy
7:02 PM	City Council All	Luis Vazquez		Personal Contact Information	Privacy

From: [Beaudry, Jacqueline](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: FW: final Arbor South amendment
Date: Monday, April 7, 2025 9:16:41 PM

Jacqueline Beaudry, City Clerk (she/her/hers)

Immediate Past President, Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks

2019 Michigan City Clerk of the Year

Ann Arbor City Clerk's Office | Guy C. Larcom City Hall | 301 E. Huron, 2nd Floor · Ann Arbor · MI · 48104
734.794.6140 (O) · 734.994.8296 (F) | Internal Extension 41401

jbeaudry@a2gov.org | www.a2gov.org

From: Cornell, Jenn <JCornell@a2gov.org>
Sent: Monday, March 17, 2025 7:04 PM
To: Beaudry, Jacqueline <JBeaudry@a2gov.org>
Subject: final Arbor South amendment

RESOLVED, That City Council directs the City Administrator to negotiate commitments from the developer for features in accordance with the City's A2Zero and Vision Zero Plans, that could include for example solar or geothermal energy, increased access to bussing, and safe multi-modal transportation.

Jenn Cornell
Ann Arbor City Council Member, Ward 5
Pronouns: she/ her/ hers
City of Ann Arbor
301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
<https://www.a2gov.org/>

From: [Noah Kazis](#)
To: [Radina, Travis](#); [Ghazi Edwin, Ayesha](#)
Subject: Comprehensive Plan: Supporting Greater Residential Density
Date: Monday, April 7, 2025 9:01:39 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

This message was sent from outside of the City of Ann Arbor. Please do not click links, open attachments, or follow directions unless you recognize the source of this email and know the content is safe.

Dear Council Members,

I am a resident of the Burns Park neighborhood (Wells St). I also teach land use and housing topics at Michigan Law, and write in both my capacity as a resident and a researcher. I support the city's efforts to write a comprehensive plan which facilitates more flexible development and allows us to meet our city's housing needs. I also strongly oppose the current effort to limit heights and density within this proposed district, including by capping heights at three stories.

As you know, R1 and R2 districts make up the majority of developable land in Ann Arbor. Our choices for these districts are going to drive our future as a city, and it is important to choose well.

I understand the urge to allow only "incremental" or "harmonious" change. However, the path to incremental change is to allow a substantially larger zoning envelope. Making incremental changes to the zoning designations will lead to no meaningful increase in what can be built--keeping our neighborhoods frozen in amber. Other cities, like Minneapolis, which have "legalized" multi-family development without liberalizing regulations about form, have proven this.

Recent [empirical research](#) out of Houston, Texas, underscores this point. Houston has some of the least restrictive land use laws of anywhere in the country. For example, the relevant height limit is 75 feet, a number hardly under consideration in Ann Arbor, and homes may be built on lots as small as 1,400 square feet with a 0-3 foot side setback between buildings. Under these conditions, in a city of over 640 square miles, fewer than 100 single family structures were redeveloped into high-density townhouses per year. In other words, redevelopment is slow and gradual even when the regulatory regime is incredibly permissive. Minor changes to the zoning envelope are likely to result in no meaningful changes to our housing supply.

Here in Ann Arbor, the height limit in R1 and R2 districts is already 30 feet. Going to 35 feet may not unlock substantially different housing typologies -- standing alone, probably it will just mean higher ceilings as homes get renovated. If combined with meaningful other mechanisms to allow development--with a sufficient increase in total density to make costly redevelopment worthwhile--it could be a helpful component, but it appears that the City is also considering limits on those other dimensional and density factors.

I am thus also concerned about the proposal to layer additional density and form limits into a proposed low-density zone. The experience of other cities is that even well-meaning limits interact with each other in complicated ways, leading to "Death by a Thousand Cuts," in the

words of law professor (and former Hartford planning commission chair) Sara Bronin. Simpler rules allow the City to get what it aims for. Moreover, micromanaging form leads to bad design, while a more flexible set of regulations allow architects to build products that residents and neighbors prefer. Ideally, the City would use just one regulatory approach (e.g.: FAR) and not mix-and-match.

To briefly turn from policy details to values, I think it is important to remember that no neighborhood begins as "high-density" or "student housing" or "low-rise", and no neighborhood should be expected or entitled to remain in its current form, any more than all of Ann Arbor should have remained an "agricultural district" because it was once farmland. My neighborhood of North Burns Park is close to downtown and to campus. It's where growth *should* go.

I hope you'll support zoning policies which help us to build a more sustainable, affordable, welcoming, and equitable city. I am happy to discuss this further if I can provide any useful information as you think through these important issues.

Sincerely,
Noah Kazis



From: [Mrs. Van Parunak](#)
To: [Ghazi Edwin, Ayesha](#); [Radina, Travis](#); [Planning](#); [Lenart, Brett](#); [Bennett, Michelle](#)
Subject: Future zoning recommendations
Date: Monday, April 7, 2025 7:57:39 PM

[You don't often get email from [REDACTED] Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

This message was sent from outside of the City of Ann Arbor. Please do not click links, open attachments, or follow directions unless you recognize the source of this email and know the content is safe.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

My attention has recently been drawn to the comprehensive land use plan currently under review by the city council.

My Great Uncle from France, who received the high honor from the French government, Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur, stayed with us for a while in Ann Arbor.

He commented,

“ You Americans tear down the old and build new. We French preserve the old.”

Ann Arbor has so many interesting houses demonstrating different periods of architecture.

It is a great shame not to seek to preserve them.

Please make it possible for the neighborhoods to stay intact. Not with developers making big buildings.

With respect,

Mrs. Van Parunak

From: [Hutchinson, Nicholas](#)
To: [Akmon, Dharma](#); [Brydon, Trevor](#); [Stewart, Skye](#); [Roberts, Jordan](#)
Cc: [Briggs, Erica](#)
Subject: RE: CA-11 followup
Date: Monday, April 7, 2025 7:22:08 PM

Councilmember Akmon,

We can go ahead and make the change in the contract based on this email chain. However, if you want to take an action at tonight's meeting, I think you can just direct the Administrator to make the change discussed below in the contract before it is executed. Then we'll handle it from there. That would save us having to try to wordsmith something at the last minute here.

Nick

From: Akmon, Dharma <DAkmon@a2gov.org>
Sent: Monday, April 7, 2025 6:54 PM
To: Brydon, Trevor <TBrydon@a2gov.org>; Hutchinson, Nicholas <NHutchinson@a2gov.org>; Stewart, Skye <SkStewart@a2gov.org>; Roberts, Jordan <JRoberts@a2gov.org>
Cc: Briggs, Erica <EBriggs@a2gov.org>
Subject: Re: CA-11 followup

Ok, great. Any particular way we should do it? Can we just move to add it to the contract or do we need to specify section? or can you do it administratively?

sorry for last minute!

--

Dharma Akmon
Council Member, Ward 4
Ann Arbor City Council

View and sign up for my newsletter at <https://www.dharmafora2.com/news>

From: Brydon, Trevor <TBrydon@a2gov.org>
Sent: Monday, April 7, 2025 6:44 PM
To: Akmon, Dharma <DAkmon@a2gov.org>; Hutchinson, Nicholas <NHutchinson@a2gov.org>; Stewart, Skye <SkStewart@a2gov.org>; Roberts, Jordan <JRoberts@a2gov.org>
Cc: Briggs, Erica <EBriggs@a2gov.org>
Subject: RE: CA-11 followup

Hello CM Akmon,

Thank you for the productive conversation today and for seeking assurance that there is a shared understanding of the project's goals and policy ends.

We are would like to move this project forward, if possible, and are comfortable with the proposed amendment language incorporated into the agreement.

Best regards,
Trevor

Trevor Brydon, AICP (he/him) | Transportation Program Manager | Public Services
City of Ann Arbor | 301 E. Huron Street | PO Box 8647 | Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8647
Ph: 734.794.6410 x43671 | Cell: 734.623.0629 | Email: TBrydon@a2gov.org | a2gov.org
<https://calendly.com/a2tbrydon/teams30min>

From: Akmon, Dharma <DAkmon@a2gov.org>
Sent: Monday, April 7, 2025 5:52 PM
To: Hutchinson, Nicholas <NHutchinson@a2gov.org>; Brydon, Trevor <TBrydon@a2gov.org>; Stewart, Skye <SkStewart@a2gov.org>; Roberts, Jordan <JRoberts@a2gov.org>
Cc: Briggs, Erica <EBriggs@a2gov.org>
Subject: Re: CA-11 followup

To simplify things, I think if we can amend to incorporate "set target design speeds for interactions with vulnerable road users" we will be all set. This is perhaps getting ahead of ourselves into engineering that would come later. Let me know if that is the case.

From: Akmon, Dharma
Sent: Monday, April 7, 2025 4:53 PM
To: Hutchinson, Nicholas <NHutchinson@a2gov.org>; Brydon, Trevor <TBrydon@a2gov.org>; Stewart, Skye <SkStewart@a2gov.org>; Roberts, Jordan <JRoberts@a2gov.org>
Cc: Briggs, Erica <EBriggs@a2gov.org>
Subject: CA-11 followup

Hello

Thanks again for meeting with us today. We liked what we heard in the meeting and would like to know, if we postpone this item, would it be reasonable to get some of the framing and language into the contract before we vote on it?

Let us know: we want to move it forward, just want to be sure that no matter who ushers it through has a shared understanding of framing and ends.

Thanks

Dharma

--

Dharma Akmon

Council Member, Ward 4

Ann Arbor City Council

View and sign up for my newsletter at <https://www.dharmafora2.com/news>

From: [Luis Vazquez](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Comprehensive Land Use Planning
Date: Monday, April 7, 2025 7:02:42 PM

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED] Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

This message was sent from outside of the City of Ann Arbor. Please do not click links, open attachments, or follow directions unless you recognize the source of this email and know the content is safe.

Greetings City Council members,

I am writing today to encourage City Council to continue supporting the Comprehensive Land Use Plan process and to not vote tonight to place height restrictions in the plan, considering the first draft has not even been released. I suspect part of the reason why this is being introduced as a resolution tonight is because of pressure generated by a very vocal minority through an anonymous fear-mongering flyer which claims that the City's Planning Commission is trying to ramrod "extreme heights" in "our neighborhoods" and without public input.

I have personally taken part in public engagement events and meetings and have attended Council and Planning Commission meetings expressing my support for the work Council and the Commission have put in to advance zoning reform. Now is not the time to give in to the special interests behind this anonymous flyer.

Thank you,
Luis Vazquez
[REDACTED]

Ann Arbor
Sent from my iPhone