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April 16, 2021

Mayor Christopher Taylor  
Ann Arbor City Council  
City Administrator Tom Crawford  
301 E. Huron Street  
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

**Re: Valhalla Ann Arbor Project**

Dear Mayor Taylor, Councilmembers and City Administrator Crawford,

Over the course of the last several months, the U-M has been following the proposed Valhalla Ann Arbor project and the site plan that was approved by the Planning Commission last July 21<sup>st</sup>. We understand the conditional rezoning of the subject property will be considered at the April 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. U-M is not taking a formal position for or against this project, however we do have concerns. While these concerns have to do with the proposed site plan layout and its impact on the surrounding university property, we understand the requested R4E zoning is what is driving the proposed scale and density which dictates the concentrated use of the entire site, extending to each shared boundary line.

We have been in correspondence with the development team involved with Valhalla Ann Arbor and have made some progress in addressing those concerns. However we still believe there are features of the current layout that will adversely impact our property and the corresponding land uses if the site is developed as currently proposed that we wanted to bring to your attention at this time.

Please consider the following:

1. U-M representatives continue to have concerns with the civil engineering and site details proposed by the developer's various consultants:
  - The detention basin spillway overflow in the northeast corner of the site is directed toward and onto the U-M Golf Course. Not only is this not considered to be a best practice, if the redirected water harms the University's golf course, U-M will pursue recourse against the project developer. Therefore, we ask that it not be approved as currently designed.
  - U-M remains concerned about the potential impact the retaining walls and the required grading and construction of these site elements will have on the natural features of the U-M Golf Course (north), and the U-M men's and women's golf team practice facilities (east and south). Specifically, harm to the existing slopes, drainage and mature vegetation. The adjacent sites are specifically contoured and carefully designed to appear natural but at the same time effectively manage storm water away from greens, bunkers, fairways and trees. If such impairment occurs due to the developer's construction, U-M will seek recourse against the developer. The development team has shared additional retaining wall details with us, which we appreciate. However our concerns remain due the type of walls proposed and their close proximity to property lines and natural features.

- Both the sanitary sewers and storm water system require individual lift stations and are located in close proximity to the north property line. Should either or both fail at any time, the overflow could enter the U-M golf course (as well as the residential buildings themselves). The damage to the mature vegetation, slopes and course itself could be significant and U-M will seek recourse against the developer. Also, It is not clear to U-M who is responsible for the maintenance and care of the lift-stations after the project is completed? Is it the City of Ann Arbor who maintains the stations or the owner of the apartment complex?
2. The latest site plan drawings indicate a six-foot (6'-0") height fence around the north, south and east property lines which U-M greatly appreciates. However we would ask the development team include high, protective netting along the property lines. The netting is important to keep the residents, buildings and vehicles safe should errant golf balls enter the site from either the adjacent golf course or driving range. Again, the residents should be aware of the activities associated with the adjacent land uses. To not indicate these security measures at this time seems unusual.

U-M raises these issues at this time to be proactive. We want to have a positive relationship with the future residents and the incorporation of high, protective netting at this time ensures there are no misunderstandings about our shared concern with the current project team or successor developers, regarding the safety of individuals, personal property, buildings or grounds in the future.

Our initial outreach to Planning Manager Brett Lenart in August after Planning Commission approval, expressing U-M's concerns was our attempt to notify the developer before the site plan petition reached City Council so our issues might be resolved satisfactorily. This approach seemed fair to all parties.

On September 15, 2020, U-M officials met with representatives from the Valhalla development team. In early January 2021 we were informed the plans were forthcoming and some of our concerns were addressed (i.e. perimeter fence, backup natural gas generators on lift-stations). However many of the concerns stated herein were met with the response that additional details U-M was requesting are subject to final engineering review by city staff during the construction documents approval process, not by City Council. While this may be true, Council does have the latitude to address site plan issues during consideration of the petition and make them subject to final approval while the university has limited recourse should the project receive rezoning and then site plan approval.

U-M Campus Planner Sue Gott and I would be happy to further discuss these items with you at your earliest convenience. We appreciate your attention to the concerns and issues being raised.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Rein  
Director of Community Relations

Cc: UM: *C. Kolb/C. Allen/ C. Comerford/S. Gott/P. Spence/ R. Rademacher*  
City of Ann Arbor: *D. Delacourt/M. Kowalski/B. Lenart*  
Development Team: *Agents (JB Moore/T. Pascoe)*  
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