

From: Raymond Detter

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To: Wendy Rampson AICP <wrampson@a2gov.org>, A2 Planning Commission <planning@a2gov.org>

Subject: Madison on Main

Wendy Rampson, Members of the Planning Staff, Wendy Woods and Members of the Planning Commission:

I fully support The Madison on Main Planned Project Site Plan.

Over the course of the last four months, I have had the opportunity to attend three of the many public meetings organized around development of this project. The developer has characteristically, not only provided many opportunities for public input (including two appearances before the Design Review Board as well as the Public Participation Meeting), he has also listened and used that input to modify his proposal in ways that have improved the project and brought it into fuller compliance with downtown Ann Arbor D2 zoning requirements. It appears that members of the Old West Side Association have been encouraged to participate in all the discussions that have taken place. As a result, the project now appears to comply with all requirements for height, curb cuts, parking, bicycle parking, loading zone, setbacks, etc.

Furthermore, as stated in the Planning Staff Recommendation, the “Planned Project” status of the development should be approved “because the proposed building streetwall modification will result in better integration with the 618 S. Main building to the south.” I believe Madison on Main deserves its requested planned project status based on its provision for additional open space and setbacks, energy conserving design, street trees, stormwater management, and expected earned LEEDS points.

I know there are some Ann Arbor citizens who refuse to recognize the importance of increased density as a necessity in our downtown. The Planning Staff report, however, wisely points out the applicable Downtown Plan land use goals and objectives that this project has strived to achieve (p.5). I am someone who is very insistent about the need to achieve those goals. Density is only one of them. I am particularly sensitive to the need to avoid negative impact by developments upon downtown and near-downtown historic buildings and neighborhoods.

I am a member of the Downtown Area Citizens Advisory Council. We are downtown residents who worked with all members of the community to shape our Ann Arbor Downtown Plan. We strongly support downtown development—but insist that it must be sensitive downtown development. I appreciate the manner in which the Madison on Main developer has sought, and continues to seek, to improve his project to meet our Downtown Plan goals and objectives. In the staff comments (pp. 5-6, it is noted that changes made by the developer to deal with the impact of the mass of the building on houses on West Madison are “about as much as can be hoped for under the current ordinance.”

I believe this project should be approved by the Planning Commission and passed on to City Council.

Ray Detter

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