

January 6, 2025

TO: Matt Kowalski

Planning Commission Members

CC: Tim Loughrin

FROM: Tim Carroll, Country Place Condominium Association

RE: SP24-0007 Planning Comm'n Staff Report vs City Policy and Goals

First, The Unified Development Code unequivocally states that R4E is intended for Transit Corridors. We are not dealing with a Transit Corridor or a parcel anywhere near a Transit Corridor.

However, the Planning Staff has maintained, from the outset, that the intent language may be ignored so long as the petitioner “has justified the new zoning according to City policies and goals.” That position may or may not be sound but it’s not relevant. SP24-0007 is in direct conflict with publicized City goals and unassailable City policy.

Just a few weeks ago, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee displayed and explained the Future Land Use Map intended for the entire City of Ann Arbor. Our area (West of South Main and South of Scio Church Road) has been designated Low Rise Residential, specifically requiring “neighborhood scale buildings” with a 35-foot height limit. Townhouses (35 ft max height) will be permitted but with limits on the number of multifamily buildings. One to 4 housing

units will be allowed - more on larger parcels. However, there definitely will be limits, even for 5 acre building sites.

The long-awaited Comprehensive Plan is scheduled for adoption this Spring. SP24-0007 is absolutely at odds with its requirements for development in our area.

Next, as we have previously urged, Robertson must comply with a very key provision of the Unified Development Code – that requiring an R4E applicant’s site plan to minimize impact on adjacent property. (Memos dated May 6 and Oct 7). Robertson has done little or nothing in that regard. This requirement cannot be so easily ignored and to do so clearly would be contrary to City policy.

We have repeatedly suggested 2-story buildings, at least along the property line we share, just as Robertson has built along the property line its Waters Rd project shares with Hawthorne Ridge. Robertson obviously knows how to build attractive, quality 2 -story condos. This concession would even support Robertson’s claim that SP24-0007 offers an “appropriate transition between uses of differing intensities.” However, Robertson has flatly refused to consider this option, insisting that the City Council’s high-density program necessitates all 75 units and all 12 tall 3- story buildings as proposed.

What about the roof decks? Are they still to be available on the proposed 40-foot-tall buildings? Robertson has repeatedly rejected our request to eliminate this building option. They cannot blame that on the City Council.

One final thought. The City Council adopted an Ordinance a few years ago limiting the nighttime hours for lighted outdoor holiday displays. The concern was “light trespass.” If Robertson’s site plan is approved, we will have 40-foot-tall buildings, just 20 or 30 feet from the homes on the East side of Audubon Drive, blocking the sun until mid or late morning. Is that not some form of trespass? Year-round trespass, not just something to tolerate during a few weeks of the year!

Conclusion. Absent substantial revision, SP24-0007, which conflicts with both City policy and goals, must be rejected and that should be the recommendation of the Commission.