

Ann Arbor Mayor and City Council Members  
City Planning Commission  
City Design Review Board

Re: Proposed hotel on Firestone location

I write to ask that you reject the proposal to build a hotel on the present Firestone Garage location. Our property, Parkhurst House, at 412 East Huron, adjoins the Firestone property and our property line will be right up against the proposed hotel.

First, it is important to understand a little of the background of Parkhurst House. Prior to our purchase of the property in 1999, the house had been designated as part of the Historic District. At present, it is located in an overwhelmingly commercial and non-historic area. Beginning about 12 years ago, the city has allowed tall commercial properties to surround us on three sides. First came the student housing highrise on Washington Street, right behind our property, then came the highrises to the east of us and across Huron Street. All three are in excess of ten stories. What little sunlight and feeling of space we now have come only from the Firestone property. The proposed hotel, which will apparently come right to our property line, will complete the total encirclement of our small two-story house by skyscrapers.

After the first highrise behind us was approved by the city and completed, we went to City Council and requested, because of the changed neighborhood, that we be allowed out of the historic designation. This was eleven years ago, and city council denied our request without following the procedure set out in the ordinance regarding the appointment of a study commission. We learned later that members of the Historic District had met with council members prior to the meeting to persuade them to deny our request. Then the city approved the second and third highrises, and the fourth is now to be considered.

Essentially, by encircling us with highrises while, at the same time, refusing to allow us to be removed from a historic district that is not in touch with reality, what the city has done is take our property from us. We are denied the use of that property free from hovering highrises. Property all around us is being sold for its fair market value. Witness the recent Firestone purchase. But the city denies us the right to sell our property at its fair value. The city labels us historic, but denies that status through its continuous actions approving commercial highrises surrounding us. The real world confirms that we are historic in name only.

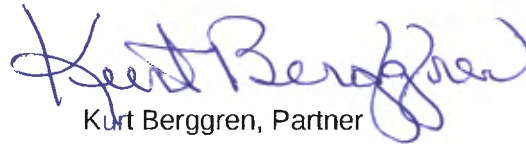
Now, regarding the proposed hotel. It is to be crammed into a too-small space with no parking and no allowance for greenery and trees. It will be a totally vertical structure built right up to our property line, hovering above us, further denying us and our longtime tenants the right to enjoy the property. During construction, there will be no room for construction vehicles, deliveries, or parking. Our property, including the cars parked on our property, will be subjected to all the effects of highrise construction, including dust, dirt, noise, falling debris, overhanging cranes,

and illegal traffic by delivery and utility vehicles that have no other place to stop. These nuisances, among others, will deprive our tenants of the right of quiet enjoyment given in the lease agreement.

In conclusion, it is our position that the hotel should not be approved as proposed and that our property should be removed from its historic restriction in recognition of the current reality. Our prior request to do so should be reopened and reconsidered in light of seriously changed circumstances. Under no circumstances should the hotel be approved if we, the most negatively affected citizens, continue to have our property designated as historic. The cumulative effect of approving all of these highrises has been to destroy our alleged "historicness."

The city has not treated us fairly. It is not too late to do the right thing. Thank you.

9/9/19

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kurt Berggren". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kurt" being more prominent than the last name "Berggren".

Kurt Berggren, Partner  
On behalf of Parkhurst House, LLC  
1420 Golden Avenue  
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104  
(734) 665-9571