

Ann Arbor City Council Regular Session: June 18, 2024
Email Redactions List Pursuant to Council Resolution R-09-386

Sent Time	TO	From	CC	Redactions	Reason for Redaction
7:52 PM	Ayesha Ghazi Edwin	Lauren Sargent		Personal Contact Information	Privacy

From: [Lauren Sargent](#)
To: [Ghazi Edwin, Ayesha](#); [Mitchell, Rita \(GMail\)](#)
Subject: Re: References and Concerns South Town
Date: Tuesday, June 18, 2024 7:52:17 PM
Attachments: [preview.png](#)
[preview.png](#)
[favicon.ico](#)

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<https://www.greenbiz.com/article/whats-deal-carbon-negative-biomethane>

On Tue, Jun 18, 2024 at 6:22 PM Lauren Sargent [REDACTED] wrote:
June 18, 2024

Lauren Sargent
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear Council Member Ghazi Edwin

I am forwarding an email sent by my Washtenaw350 colleague and Environmental Commission Member Rita Mitchell to Council Member Briggs. I understand that South Town will be presented for first reading tonight and respectfully request that you ask for it to be delayed pending further information.

The project rests on a fuel cell run on DTE's "Renewable Natural Gas" with the promise that this can be replaced down the road when "green hydrogen" becomes commercially available.

This RNG is generally derived from dairy Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) which pollute air and water, generate much more methane than can be captured, is horrifically cruel to the animals and all too often the workers, many of whom are undocumented and have no protections.

This "RNG" is injected into DTE's gas pipelines, thus what is delivered is just a small fraction of the gas-it is still mostly the usual fossil gas mix.

We fear this is a move by DTE to get their RNG camel's nose under our climate action tent here in Ann Arbor. Greenwash of the highest order.

If South Town truly cannot be built as a 100% electrified project powered by 100% real renewables at present, the more honest path might be just to accept gas backup until such time as a truly renewable option is available.

Further, I would like to know what plans are underway to find affordable housing for the A2 residents who currently occupy the affordable housing that South Town will displace for as many as 3 years of construction.

These are difficult problems to solve, and it is my hope that we do not generate further difficulties due to unanticipated consequences.

I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Lauren Sargent

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Rita Mitchell [REDACTED]

Date: Tue, Jun 18, 2024 at 4:55 PM

Subject: Fwd: References and Concerns

To: Lauren Sargent [REDACTED]

I sent this to Erica.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Rita Mitchell [REDACTED]

Subject: References and Concerns

Date: June 18, 2024 at 4:07:23 PM EDT

To: Briggs Erica <EBriggs@a2gov.org>

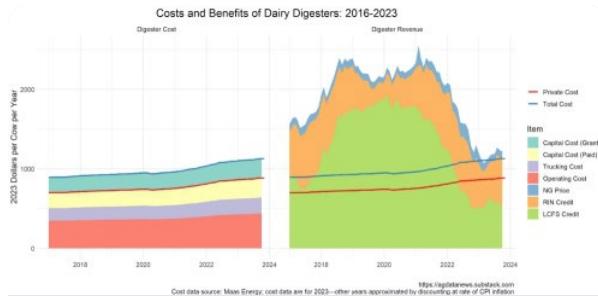
Hi Erica,

Here are some references regarding CAFOs and use of manure for methane production specifically for use for electricity production:

DTE Vantage renewable gas project in Wisconsin to turn waste from nearly 10,000 cows into fuel for transportation
ir.dteenergy.com

Labeling manure based methane as a renewable resource is a distortion that lacks recognition of the associated polluting outcomes related to Concentrated Animal Factory Operations (CAFOs). DTE is taking advantage of a greening of a potent greenhouse gas.

The attraction to manure based methane is the tax credits associated with it. There are a lot of problems with the accounting definition of a negative carbon credit that is assigned to methane based methane. If the credits were unassociated with additional pollution, I would not care, but encouraging more methane production is the antithesis of the direction that will address the climate emergency.



Biogas from dairy farms: what incentives can make it commercially viable?
energypost.eu

In the amended zoning the first attachment, item K, includes this statement that addresses carbon intensity and a change related to natural gas hookups, which is odd, because the fuel cell technology will be dependent on methane, regardless of the mix from DTE or a manure source.

SOUTHTOWN CONDITIONAL ZONING AMENDMENT
 An Ordinance to Amend the Zoning Map, Being a Part of Section 5.10.2 of Chapter 55 of Title V of the Code of the City of Ann Arbor, (1801 S. State Street - Southtown Rezoning from C1AR With [2023] Conditions to C1AR With [2024] Conditions)
 The City of Ann Arbor ordains:
Section 1. THE ZONING MAP, which, by Section 5.10.2 of Chapter 55 of Title V of the Code of the City of Ann Arbor is made a part of said Chapter 55, shall be so amended as to designate the zoning classification of property described as follows:
 Lots 1, 2, 3, and 4, Stimson Subdivision, as recorded in Liber 5, Page 30, Washington County Records, and Lots 9, 10, 19, 20 and part of Lots 8 and 18, and the various parcels of Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21, being a platted alley adjacent to said parts of Lots 8 and 18, Block 3, Harvard, Rose and Sheehan's Addition, as recorded in Liber 1, Page 24, being part of the Southwest 1/4 of Section 33, Town 2 South, Range 6 East, City of Ann Arbor, Washington County, Michigan, containing 1.00 acres, running from the South line of said Lot 1 and the Point of Beginning; thence N01°17'27" W 273.32 feet along the East right-of-way line of South State Street; thence N87°04'31" E 263.92 feet along the South right-of-way line of Henry Street; thence S01°21'25" E 273.31 feet along the West right-of-way line of Henry Street; thence S01°21'25" E 254.40 feet along the North line of Stimson Street to the Point of Beginning. Contains 1.00 acres.
 In the City of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, Michigan as C1AR (Campus Business Residential) District WITH CONDITIONS, in accordance with the attached Conditional Zoning Statement of Conditions which is hereby adopted and incorporated herein.
Section 2. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force on and after ten days from legal publication.

[View](#)
 PDF Document · 95 KB

Planning Commission considered this document which includes: **FIRST AMENDMENT TO SOUTHTOWN DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT**

SYNECDOCHE
1342 N Main St. #11, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734/ 926-5593 - hello@synecdoche.design

City of Ann Arbor: Planning Department
Attn: Hank Kelley, AICP
301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48107

To Ann Arbor Planning Department

We would like to submit the following changes to the conditional language for 1601 S. State Street project:

The adopted language:

D. The Property shall have no natural gas connections except for emergency back-up power,

will be replaced with the following language:

D. The Property will demonstrate continuous microgrid operation at 60-75% less Carbon Intensity (CI) than electricity incumbent DTE.

This requested change meets the intent of the original language to limit carbon emissions and designing utility and building systems technologies to integrate renewable and sustainable energy solutions.

The format to functionally deliver on the zoning condition as stated above would include the following operations to include in the development agreement:

1. For Period 1: South Town by 4M will power and operate its fuel cells as follows:
 1. With Renewable Natural Gas (RNG) produced specifically from agricultural sources or via biogas, if commercially available. If this fuel type is not yet commercially available, then,
 2. With RNG commercially available through DTE.
 3. Using carbon capture technology as soon as it is available, with end-use of captured CO₂, either permanent sequestration or as offsite in the food-grade CO₂ market.
2. For Period 2: South Town by 4M will power and operate its fuel cells as follows:
 1. With green hydrogen, if commercially available. If this fuel type is not yet commercially available, then,
 2. With blue hydrogen, if commercially available. If this fuel type is not yet commercially available, then,

1 of 2

[View](#)

PDF Document · 2.7 MB

The amendment includes a multi-stage series of options for fuel. My interpretation is that the most direct support for fuel for electricity would be direct use of DTE gas. The multiple “if” statements make for a complex process, that will likely be difficult to track over time. In the meantime, there will be heavy use of manure-based methane, subject to leaks in many pipelines that are already shared with DTE.

I ask for a delay and technical consideration of the technology, including siting of the fuel cell equipment.

Thank you!

I have many more references. Please consider this a start.

Rita