

From: James Bardwell
Sent: Thursday, April 02, 2015 6:14 PM
To: Planning
Cc: Kowalski, Matthew; Rampson, Wendy; Smith, Colin; Trocchio, Ginny
Subject: South Pond Village

There is probably no one in the Thornoaks neighborhood than I who has worked harder to oppose this South Pond Village project. I initiated the website: <http://www.southpondnature.org> and collected the over 1140 signatures on the petition opposing the project: http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/tiny-butterfly-vs-big?source=c.em.cp&r_by=11432140

Thus it may come as a surprise to you at the Planning Commission that I am no longer opposed to the development and if given the chance at the planning meeting on Tuesday I will say so. I have worked hard with the developer and IMO they have gone far beyond what they are legally required to do to preserve the natural features of this area. They are actively engaged in negotiation with the city to transfer 12 acres of the land, basically everything that can be seen from E Huron river drive, to the city, including all the wet lands and the adjacent forest and the two lots they preemptively cleared over labor day. The City will presumably add this land to the South Pond Nature preserve and we will be able to enjoy this undeveloped land for as long as we are in the neighborhood. They removed the two lots on E Huron River Drive, even though they would be very valuable to them, and put this into the 12 acres which should end up in the city's hands (assuming the negotiations go through, the city seems to be dragging its feet). They have also agreed to add a couple of acres that makes up the deep valley on the property under conservation easement meaning that it will not be able ever to be developed. This is the land that will contain the majority of the landmark trees left standing after the development. The vast majority of the land they intend to develop up on the plateau contains buckthorn and not much else. I wanted it to remain undeveloped because I was concerned about runoff from the development affecting South Pond. They have however made significant adjustments to the way the runoff will be handled which should effectively remove the vast majority of the fertilizer nutrients and keep that from adding to the weeds on South Pond.

I am content with the outcome as the developer has delivered on most of my demands. If it goes through planning commission the next stage is city council, and by that stage it is vital that the 12 acre transfer has actually occurred, I had hoped that the 12 acre transfer would have occurred by now, but this seems more to be much more of a problem with the city getting an accurate assessment done, than the unwillingness of the developer to release the land.

In terms of traffic, the development will increase by about 30-40% the amount of traffic on Chalmers, to me this isn't a big deal because Chalmers doesn't see much traffic now, frankly when I drive down Chalmers I rarely see traffic (much less for instance than on E Huron River drive). The development will make it harder to turn onto Washtenaw from Chalmers but one cannot have it all.

I am ready to declare victory and go home.

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