

From: Samantha Paris
To: Planning; Courtney Manor; Jon Barrett
Subject: Opposition to Mary Court Demolition – UofM Student Samantha Paris
Date: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 8:01:29 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Samantha (Sam) Paris, and I'm writing on behalf of myself and everyone on Mary Court to express our strong opposition to the proposed demolition of the place we call home. As an out-of-state student who was planning on living here 3+ years through graduation (and beyond), I care deeply about preserving not just where we live, but what this community represents.

Mary Court is one of the few places in Ann Arbor I truly feel is authentic, where students are able to coexist in a space that's personal, welcoming, and real. It's a place where people know each other, where porches are used, and a true community is found. In a city rapidly overtaken by glass towers and overpriced "student luxury," Mary Court remains one of the last corners that feels like Ann Arbor, not an investment project.

For me, finding Mary Court was more than just luck, it was relief. After struggling to find an affordable home that didn't drain my finances or dig into my dignity, this was the first place that felt fair and human. I've built my routine, my friendships, and my sense of belonging here. The thought of losing that, and to ultimately be priced out or displaced for yet another more "modern" complex feels wrong not just for me, but for everyone who's made this small court a home.

The flaws the owner describes are nothing beyond what gives these homes their lived-in character. There's beauty in leaving something as it is, in honoring the uniqueness, history, scale, and character that already work. Beyond the cultural loss, the constant construction surrounding us has already made daily life difficult. Adding yet another project would only deepen the disruption, while replacing a living, breathing community with dust and overwhelming noise that buries the soul, story, and belonging that Mary Court brings.

Mary Court's human-scale design and historic layout are part of what defines this neighborhood; replacing it with high-density units would undermine that identity. The proposed redevelopment will objectively strain the already unacceptably limited parking infrastructure and increase traffic congestion in a space never designed for that density. In terms of community welfare, you could talk to any student in Ann Arbor and every single one would agree that finding housing in Ann Arbor is the most consistently stressful part of our college experience. Being forced to scramble for housing on short notice (and for finding housing in Ann Arbor, this IS short notice), disrupts academic focus, stability, and mental health...issues the city has a duty to consider as part of community welfare.

Mary Court doesn't need to be remade—it needs to be respected. Preserving it honors not just its residents, but the tradition and spirit of Ann Arbor itself.

I truly hope you consider more than just the financial potential when it comes to this project. These houses are history, and therefore deserve to be treated with the respect of what they have lived and breathed through. We all on Mary Court have an unmistakable connection and love for our home.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We will see you tomorrow at the hearing.

Best,
Sam Paris