

Subject:

Comments on REZ24-0008 SP24-0013 - Neighborhood History

From: Jeffrey Terrell**Sent:** Thursday, January 15, 2026 12:11 PM**To:** Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>; Lenart, Brett <BLenart@a2gov.org>; City Council <CityCouncil@a2gov.org>**Cc:****Subject:** Comments on REZ24-0008 / SP24-0013 - Neighborhood History, Infrastructure Concerns, and Buffering Needs

Dear Planning Commission Members,

My wife, Linda Terrell, and I, Jeffrey Terrell, have lived on Iroquois Place since 1994. This street has been home for 32 years long enough to raise children here, get to know every neighbor (and their dogs), and watch the seasons come and go in the tree canopy behind our homes. I walk this neighborhood multiple times a day, and over the years I've gotten to know not just the people, but the patterns of the place: where water pools after a storm, which trees the hawks favor, which corners stay shaded, and how the light moves across the backyards at different times of year.

Because of that daily familiarity, I'm writing to share a few concerns about the proposed rezoning and site plan for Woodbury Gardens.

People sometimes forget that the land behind Iroquois wasn't always housing. Long before most of us arrived, this area was used by the University of Michigan for its early Botanical Gardens. You can still feel that history in small ways, the older plantings, the way the houses sit back from the street, the pockets of open space, and the general quiet that settles over the block in the evenings.

I respectfully request that staff provide the following before the rezoning advances further:

- Any land-transfer agreements, covenants, restrictions, or PUD-related documents associated with the University's sale or disposition of the former "Iroquois site."
- Any historic site-planning materials that describe the intended density, building form, or landscape conditions envisioned during the early development of Woodbury Gardens.

Even if these documents no longer hold regulatory weight, they provide essential context when evaluating whether a 7-story structure aligns with the long-standing development pattern shaped by that history.

Another reason I'm writing is that this area has handled a lot of infrastructure work over the years. Between the water-main construction near Stadium and Iroquois and the sewer/lift-station improvements along the Woodbury boundary, the ground here has been opened, redirected, and re-worked more times than I can count. The City has documented increasing strain on stormwater systems in this part of Ann Arbor, and many of us have seen that firsthand, especially during heavy rain events, which research shows are becoming more intense in this region (precipitation up 44%, extreme storms up 37% in recent decades).

I worry that adding two 7-story buildings and a large parking structure will stretch the same systems even further, and I hope the City will take a careful look at those cumulative impacts before any approvals move forward.

Although many of us hope the scale of the proposal will be reconsidered, I recognize that the Commission must evaluate it as presented. If the project does move ahead in some form, then I respectfully ask that the City require more meaningful edge protections for the homes along Iroquois.

Ann Arbor's UDC (Section 5.20) allows for landscape screening requirements when intensive development sits near residential property, and I believe this is an instance where that standard needs to be applied very thoughtfully. Deciduous trees simply don't provide enough protection in winter months when the building mass is most visible.

Therefore, I request that the site plan include:

- A continuous line of evergreen trees,
- Planted on the Woodbury side of the DTE lines,
- Positioned far enough back to avoid future utility trimming,
- Of a caliper/height sufficient to function as immediate and long-term screening.

I want to be clear: this request does not signal support for the current height or massing. It reflects the reality that if the City authorizes a building of this scale behind long-established homes, then meaningful year-round screening must be a basic expectation.

This neighborhood has always been the kind of place where people look out for one another, where kids grow up riding bikes in the street, and where long-term residents share honey from backyard beehives or harvest tomatoes over the fence. I hope the decisions made about this rezoning will honor that sense of community and the history of the land behind our homes.

Thank you for your time and for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Terrell
And
Linda Terrell
1310 Iroquois Place