

**Subject:** Some information and photos from North Burns Park  
**Attachments:** 904 Lincoln 1.jpg; 904 Lincoln 3.jpg; 904 Lincoln 2.jpg; 904 Lincoln 5.jpg; 904 Lincoln 7.jpg; 904 Lincoln 4.jpg; 904 Lincoln 6.jpg; 1015 Olivia.jpg

**From:** Lisa Jevens  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 26, 2025 5:04:56 PM  
**To:** Bennett, Michelle <[MBennett@a2gov.org](mailto:MBennett@a2gov.org)>  
**Subject:** Some information and photos from North Burns Park

Hello Brett, Michelle and Matt,

Thank you again for the presentation last Thursday. Our neighbors really appreciated the information. As you discussed with John today, most homeowners in Ann Arbor are unaware of the major changes about to affect their neighborhoods, and are shocked to learn of the impending upzoning.

We would like to respectfully refute Matt's point that he made in the meeting about speculation having subsided. *Our neighborhood is and always has been under INTENSE pressure by speculators for student rentals and fraternities/sororities looking to expand.* It is worse now with the 2022 zoning code change that allowed one dwelling unit per 2,500 square feet of land in the R2.

The influx of luxury student high rises into Ann Arbor has NOT decreased the speculation in our neighborhood in any way. In fact, it has shown developers and landlords that they can charge even more for rent if they build in North Burns Park because *the market will bear it in this location.*

Here are examples of what the de-facto upzoning has already done in our neighborhood:

1. At 904 Lincoln Avenue, a Victorian-era home and all of its mature trees were torn down, and two duplexes built, containing 16 students (and more living in the basement illegally, according to neighbors.) The lot now contains a boxy set of blue buildings with plastic siding, unpainted wood poles holding up the porch, and fake stone on the front. The "backyard" is a parking lot. The construction is shoddy. As you can see, there is exposed rebar in the deteriorating concrete after just one year. The downspouts appear to drain under the ground. (Is that legal?) The sidewalks are never shoveled. You can see from the attached photos that it does NOT fit the character of the block, was not well built and is not properly maintained per city standards.

2. The other photo I am attaching is 1015 Olivia Avenue. This is the large 1908 Georgian-style brick home that sits on a 15,000 square foot lot with a 10,000 square foot side yard that was subdivided and cleared of its 200-year-old trees. The new owner of 1015 Olivia is a speculator, and does not live there. He told the next-door neighbor that he bought the house with the intention to subdivide the lot, and resell the house to a developer to tear down. The house is up for sale at hundreds of thousands of dollars more than he paid for it last year. *The owner turned down an offer from a family last week!* Now we hear that a sorority is interested in both parcels for over \$4 million. It is listed on Realtor.com as Sale Pending.

We would like to suggest that you add these photos to your presentation, as they depict what has ACTUALLY been built in our neighborhood after the de-facto upzoning in 2022--and what we are about to lose.

We also wanted to relay some facts about the housing in North Burns Park.

- Of the approximately 400 parcels in North Burns Park, more than 20 percent of them are rental. (At least 25 percent of total dwelling units are rental, by our count.)
- Our neighborhood includes sorority houses, fraternity houses, co-ops, and the Evans Scholars housing. It includes a number of apartment buildings, townhome developments and duplexes. We are mostly zoned R2 with a few carve-outs for R4C. There are also a few AirBnB homes that nobody lives in, and a couple of empty lots.
- Our neighborhood contains a great mix of age ranges from college students to families with young children to elderly retirees.
- The north part of the neighborhood is a historic district with about 20 parcels. *An expansion of that historic district was attempted about 20 years ago, but rejected by the city.*

Obviously, we are NOT a neighborhood of people who can't tolerate rentals and students, and who don't want a mix of neighbors. *However, the balance that we had before the 2022 R2 zoning code change has already shifted us from a longstanding, stable and livable housing mix to a teardown target.* Greedy speculators, like the new owner of 1015 Olivia, don't have to live with the consequences of what they do to somebody else's neighborhood. We believe your new land use proposal will make it worse.

Our neighbors have already asked the following questions:

- How does upzoning North Burns Park help the residential "housing crisis" for families in our neighborhood?
  - To whom are these consequences equitable?
  - For whom is this affordable?
  - Does putting historic homes into landfills follow A2Zero guidelines?
- Does replacing mature trees with impermeable surfaces?

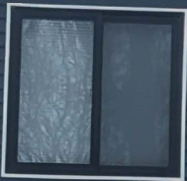
We believe that residents in future public meetings should see what has already been built when even minor upzoning occurs in a campus-proximate residential neighborhood--and what speculators are already doing there.

Thank you for paying attention to our neighborhood and taking the time to meet with us. You may feel free to share this with the other planners.

*Sincerely,*

*North Burns Park Association Leadership*

*Lisa Jevens, Ellen Ramsburgh, Chad Brummett, Eleanor Linn, Marc Gerstein*



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