

Planning Commission members

This letter is in reference to the meeting held on July 21, 2015 specifically to address some of the discussion related to the proposed development at 2250 Ann Arbor/Saline road.

During that meeting there were comments made by the fire marshal regarding access to Lambeth Drive and notes in the Planning and Development Services Staff Report for that meeting which included:

1. The report states "the drive may also assist in providing emergency access to the adjacent properties along Ann-Arbor Saline road including the assisted living facility to the north, during events of extreme traffic or road closures."
2. Plus the traffic Engineer supports the change "because the emergency connection would benefit the public by providing improved response times."

I submit the following facts which will dispute the above statements and offer a much more reasonable and better solution.

1. First and foremost, according to the city of Ann Arbor fire department, there are five active fire stations in Ann Arbor, of which only one(2130 Jackson Road) is located west of the Ann Arbor/Saline road location. The two closest are at Briarwood Circle(Probable route to 2250 would be Eisenhower to Ann Arbor/Saline and then due north) and the 5th Avenue downtown(5th to Hill to Main and then due south). Neither of these responders would go past the facility to turn onto Scio Church to then wander through Chaucer to Ascot to Lambeth and into 2250. Even the Jackson road facility if called would probably get on I94 to Ann Arbor/Saline road.
2. Second, during times of extreme traffic conditions, ie at football games, the streets of Chaucer, Ascot and Lambeth are filled with parked cars on both sides of the street making access by a fire engine highly impractical, plus being a longer drive than a direct approach. Neither Scio Church or Ann Arbor/Saline allows parking and both have turn lanes making them a preferred route in any case.
3. Third, the residents and management to the North(the assisted living facility) has been left out of this discussion entirely. We have contacted their resident director and she had no knowledge whatever of the plans for the adjoining property.

Therefore, the only useful purpose for the proposed gated new street would be to potentially allow easier egress from the facility, if the fire trucks cannot easily turn around, rather than providing a second emergency entrance to 2250. We saw from earlier designs for the facility that the developer was more interested in providing access to the Lansdowne subdivision for his residents than any real concern for safety and we fear that since the proposed gated street would never be used that he would eventually petition that it be opened for his residents use.

Since no city requirement calls for an emergency entrance and since this location would never be used as an entrance it should not be allowed in the proposed site plan. Even the proposed sidewalk, while nice, is not necessary as there are multiple other ways of getting from the Lansdowne subdivision out to Ann Arbor/Saline road. This says nothing of trying to extend a roadway and sidewalk through a wet land area. Earlier site drawings by Tony Mirafzali of LTS back in April of 2014 show that the proposed road would go right through Wetland A and B.

The alternative and better solution, especially since it would also benefit the assisted living facility would be to connect the two facilities at their rear parking lots with the proposed gate. This would allow emergency vehicles to not have to back up or turn around within the facilities, and there would be two exits as desired by the fire commissioner, both onto Ann Arbor/Saline road. Note: I'm hopeful that the planning commission knows by now that the owner of 2250 also owns two properties which could access Scio Church road from the assisted living facility allowing both properties multiple access and egress without traffic going through residential areas.