

From: Paul Fontaine
Sent: Wednesday, June 20, 2018 8:40 AM
To: DiLeo, Alexis <ADiLeo@a2gov.org>
Subject: to be shared with DRB

Hi Alexis: I am not sure how to do this - a colleague at Um wrote up some thoughts on the parking deck we are examining today and I wanted to share it with the DRB. Here is a pdf - what is the process of sharing?

On a related note, I am not sure if I can make it today - coming from Detroit and will be leaving very late. My apologies for the late notice.

Paul

Imagine a walkable city with an expensive housing market that is mostly built out. Now imagine that said city has the opportunity to take an existing structure and add multiple floors to it. This city struggles with inequality for which it creates initiatives related to health. It also finds ways, despite state prohibitions, to include affordable housing in developments. It buys and sells land for parks and open space. So, here's the quiz: What does the city put on this precious structure in the middle of the city that can support many more floors? (a) Health clinics (b) affordable housing (c) subsidized parking.

If you guessed "c," sadly you are correct! In 2018 there is a serious proposal to add additional floors to a large parking garage on Ashley and Ann Streets. Currently the garage plunges Ann in permanent darkness with a bridge and deadens Ashley with a blank wall that spans two blocks. Cities around the world are eliminating parking minimums, reclaiming street space for parklets and café seating. Some are converting existing garages into retail or flex space. This is what one does in 2018. Sadly, in Ann Arbor it is back to the 80s. The proposed garage expansion will tower over a Marriot and loom over adjacent housing; a beacon to drivers and a signal to the rest of us about where the city's priorities lie. There is no plan to activate the ground floor or brighten the underpass. As for housing? that goes to the periphery. Down a small road out by the interstate is where the affordable housing goes, while cars will sleep soundly in the middle of town.

With all of the evidence that cars sit idle 95% of the time and are the largest contributors to global warming it is particularly sad that Ann Arbor would spoil its downtown with more parking. One has to ask what problem we are trying to solve. Living nearby I can attest that the current garage almost always has spaces available. If it is game day issue of which there are only 7, do we solve it with concrete? If it is a farmer's market issue, do we think sales in the produce stalls are directly related to additional car stalls and if so, at what cost to tax payers, the neighborhoods and our health?

Less than 2 miles from the site is M-City where the future of mobility is being determined. Should we ask the experts if floating 10-30 year bonds for out of town car owners is a good future bet? Should we ask our elected officials what happens when revenues don't cover the debt service. This question is being asked and answered more and more. The new Yankee Stadium, in an urban neighborhood and transit adjacent built "lots" and lots of parking. Never breaking even, the operator defaulted on \$240 million in bonds. Ann Arbor, don't put yourself in a tough spot, weigh the risks, understand the opportunities and think about the future of the city.

Cars at the periphery and people at the center is true equality.

http://www.mlive.com/news/ann-arbor/index.ssf/2018/03/racial_inequalities_in_ann_arb.html