

Subject: 416 Long Shore Drive site plan

From: KEN GARBER
Sent: Wednesday, March 27, 2024 10:51 AM
To: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>
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To the Planning Commission:

I'm writing about the 416 Long Shore Drive site plan. Like most plans that come before the Commission, this one is not in compliance with the city's A2ZERO climate action plan, which assumes that "All new residential and commercial buildings are designed and built to operate without the use of natural gas" (page 32), and that "All new construction from 2022 through 2030 (and beyond) is built to net zero energy standards, which includes no natural gas consumption" (page 48).

Please reference staff sustainability reviews 2 and 3 for this site plan. The city's Office of Sustainability & Innovations (OSI) does not recommend approval. The site plan includes a gas connection, presumably for gas HVAC appliances. The plan drawings indicate that DTE will be replacing and enlarging its gas main along Long Shore Drive in order to serve this development. They'll be doing this at a time when we should be phasing out existing fossil fuel infrastructure across the city, not adding new capacity. There is no visible attempt here to apply Passive House construction principles, much less achieve net zero energy.

These deficiencies are especially glaring because the developer is a partnership of several well-known local environmentalists. Given the cost of these fifteen condos (\$2-4 million apiece, according to MLive), and thus gross proceeds of \$30 million to \$60 million, across only 42,212 square feet, this building could and should be a model of sustainability—passive house construction, net positive energy (on site), and of course no gas connection. Instead the developer has chosen to build a monument to excess along the Huron River, with personal elevators, butler pantries and private two-car garages.

Our climate is in crisis, with last year's global average average temperature hitting the 1.5 Celsius degree mark (above preindustrial level) for the first time, and our global carbon budget for 2 degrees (which itself will be disastrous) rapidly dwindling. We can't be installing new fossil fuel infrastructure here or anywhere in rich countries, unless we're taking a nihilistic view of the crisis that prioritizes individual luxury over global priorities. To me, that nihilism is what the 416 Long Shore Drive site plan epitomizes.

Respectfully,
Ken Garber
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