

**From:** Brummett, Chad  
**Sent:** Monday, February 20, 2023 3:57 PM  
**To:** Planning <[Planning@a2gov.org](mailto:Planning@a2gov.org)>  
**Subject:** 711 Church St

I'm writing to provide my strong opposition to the proposed high rise apartment building proposed on Church St. This building would be even taller than the very large buildings on South University but would be further set back towards the surrounding neighborhoods of small condos, apartments and single family homes. This is part of a disturbing trend of high-rise development proposals from out of state developers (including another one block over on Forest). These developers do not know our city or understand the local challenges. This violates city zoning without a clear rationale or justification. Such a large scale development is outside of the look and feel of the neighborhood. Furthermore, there will be insufficient infrastructure to support the additional cars and traffic. Anything higher than the current zoning is unreasonable and should not be approved.

Sincerely,  
Chad Brummett  
1530 Hill St

Chad M. Brummett, M.D.  
Senior Associate Chair for Research  
Bert N. LaDu Professor of Anesthesiology  
University of Michigan Medical School  
Phone: 734-998-0455  
Twitter [@drchadb](https://twitter.com/drchadb)

**From:** Kellie Chestler-Root

**Sent:** Wednesday, February 22, 2023 11:57 AM

**To:** Planning <[Planning@a2gov.org](mailto:Planning@a2gov.org)>

**Subject:** Today's meeting about 711 Church Street Planned Unit Development

Hello,

I am planning on attending this evenings' meeting about the 711 Church street 19 story apartment building. It is my understanding that I have to submit my questions by Noon today.

Questions I'd like to ask:

1. Are you aware that a children's center is located at 710 S. Forest Ave that serves 200+ Ann Arbor families and University of Michigan faculty and staff? These properties are separated by a fence.
2. Will children be able to continue to play outside during construction?
3. With the outdoor playground being so close to the site, how do you plan on keeping children safe during construction?
4. What impact will noise and construction have on the children next door?
5. Will this new construction have a drive up lane required to support uber/lift/amazon deliveries?
6. How many parking spaces are being offered to future residents? and what impact will this have on the Forest parking structure where families and UM employees park daily.

Kellie Chestler-Root (*she/her*)

Teacher, Towsley Children's House

Voices of the Staff Alumni

University of Michigan

(734)763-3400

**From:** Gerstein, Marc S.  
**Sent:** Monday, March 06, 2023 2:09 PM  
**To:** Planning <[Planning@a2gov.org](mailto:Planning@a2gov.org)>  
**Subject:** comments for Planning Commission meeting

Attached are my comments to the Planning Commission for its meeting March 7 which had been previously cancelled. The comments concern the agenda item 711 Church St application for a PUD.

Thank you, Marc Gerstein

Planning Commission February 23,2023  
711 Church Street PUD Pre-Application Conference

Marc Gerstein, 1321 Forest Court

I am vehemently opposed to the application for a PUD project for the site on Church Street now occupied by buildings at 707-721. The proposed 19 story student apartment building is totally out of character with the surrounding R4C neighborhood. It disregards and disrespects the existing buildings between Willard and Hill Streets, an attractive area of well-maintained residences, fraternity and sorority houses, ample greenery with large, older trees, and a mix of long -term residents and student renters. The proposal ignores the residential buildings on Forest Court and takes no account of the play yards at the Towsley Children's House.

The proposal is in total violation of the zoning created by the City in the recent past, establishing D-1 and D-2 zones with stepdowns to preserve the integrity of the surrounding R4C zones. It is an attempt to use the PUD process to totally circumvent and bust open the current zoning. If this PUD project and the ones also being proposed on South Forest Avenue are allowed to go forward, it will destroy the zoning regulations negotiated, voted on and established by the City Council and open the whole area up to opportunistic development. The City's definition of a PUD states that: "The zoning district shall not be allowed where it is sought to primarily avoid the imposition of standards and requirements of other zoning classifications or other City regulations rather than achieve the stated purposes [of the PUD]." This is exactly the only purpose of this request for a PUD for this project, i.e. to avoid the current R4C zoning.

There is no discernable public benefit in this PUD proposal. The vague remarks in the proposal about "public green spaces and/or plazas" and "allowing public enjoyment of on-site amenities" do not correspond to anything in the various site drawings and schematics provided. Any "housing crisis" in Ann Arbor will not in any way be addressed by this proposal, which will solely be marketed for high-rent student housing.

I strongly urge you to reject this PUD proposal for such a large, out of scale and out of character building that is in total violation of the zoning and will open the way for other such PUD applications in the R4C area between Willard and Hill.

**From:** Lauren Sargent  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 22, 2023 3:15 PM  
**To:** Lisa Jevens  
**Cc:** Planning <[Planning@a2gov.org](mailto:Planning@a2gov.org)>  
**Subject:** Re: 711 Church Street PUD  
Very interesting!

On Wed, Feb 22, 2023 at 2:02 PM Lisa Jevens wrote:

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I am sure you were as shocked as my neighborhood was to learn that the 2.5-story townhomes planned for 711 Church Street (which NOBODY was protesting) abruptly morphed into a 19-storey megapolis housing 1,000 students!

If you ever walked down this street, as I do often, you would have found it regularly strewn with student litter punctuated by dead street trees. That was when there were just a few student rental houses there. I can't imagine the garbage, litter, traffic, and strain on our already deplorable streets and aging water/sewage system that something like a 1,000-person behemoth would cause.

This neighborhood simply cannot bear the delivery, maintenance, workers, and trash traffic required for daily life. I live next to a student rental house with 8 people living there. It is a CONSTANT stream of delivery drivers of all kinds morning to well into the night--Amazon, Uber, UPS, FedEx, DoorDash, you name it. That is only for 8 people! They have four large trash bins that are often full, plus two recycling bins PER WEEK. Multiply that by 125 and you will see that something like this

kind of density is unsustainable. Not to mention the strain on our already aging and inadequate water and sewer system in Ann Arbor.

Please DO NOT APPROVE THIS PUD and instead, require the developer to stick with the townhomes originally proposed, which were appropriate for the site and nobody objected to. A townhome model could even be rented by permanent residents, not just students, thus providing the type of housing that Ann Arbor says it wants and needs.

Thank you,

**Lisa Jevens**  
**North Burns Park Neighbor**  
**(773) 816-7926**

Planning Commission Feb 23, 2023  
711 Church Street PUD Pre-Application Conference  
Eleanor Linn Comments

My name is Eleanor Linn. I live at 1321 Forest Court, less than a five-minute walk from the Church Street properties that are in question. The developer's proposal for a 19-story student high-rise is totally out of compliance with the zoning of the neighborhood, the size and scale of the surrounding buildings, and the well-being of the nearby residents.

Back in 2009 when numerous proposals were sprouting up for high-rise buildings along South University, local residents and city officials were shocked at the lack of city guidelines for development. We worked long and hard to write the A2D2 regulations that spelled out D-1 and D-2 zoning districts along South University and adjacent parcels down to Willard Street. The idea was to permit greater density along South University, in accord with the Calthorp proposal, but to provide a meaningful stepdown to preserve the integrity of the surrounding R4C area.

Without the city changing this agreement, developers from all over the country are jumping on a loophole in our zoning, asking for special exception Planned Unit Developments to override maximum height, density, and set-back regulations. There are already two such proposals along South Forest and now this proposal on Church Street. THIS TREND IS WRONG. IT IS HARMFUL TO THE INTEGRITY OF THE CITY-SCAPE, AND IT IS PARTICULARLY VILE TO MY NEIGHBORS AND ME, WHO LIVE PEACEFULLY ON FOREST COURT.

The developers have been particularly untruthful in their pre-petition proposal. They call the existing two-story residences "tenements," that word simply means "apartments," according to the Oxford English Dictionary, which the current buildings certainly are not. After Jacob Riis published his muckraking journalism about early 20th-century slum conditions, it has come to mean unhealthy, overcrowded(!) buildings that should be torn down. I find this derogatory language offensive when it is used to describe my tidy neighborhood.

The pre-petition proposal also lies about the placement of nearby residential buildings and heritage trees. The aerial view photographs they submit do not show our houses because we are nestled under towering oak trees. Their "Land Use" and "Bird's-Eye Perspective" drawings are more devious.

- THEY DO NOT SHOW THE 7 HOUSES ALONG THE SOUTH SIDE OF FOREST COURT, NOT THE 5 HOUSES ALONG THE NORTH SIDE OF THIS STREET.

- THEY DO NOT SHOW THE CENTURY'S OLD OAK GROVE THAT RUNS FROM THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH THROUGH OUR YARDS, AND THE BEAUTIFUL DEEP SET-BACK AT THE FOREST PLAZA APARTMENTS

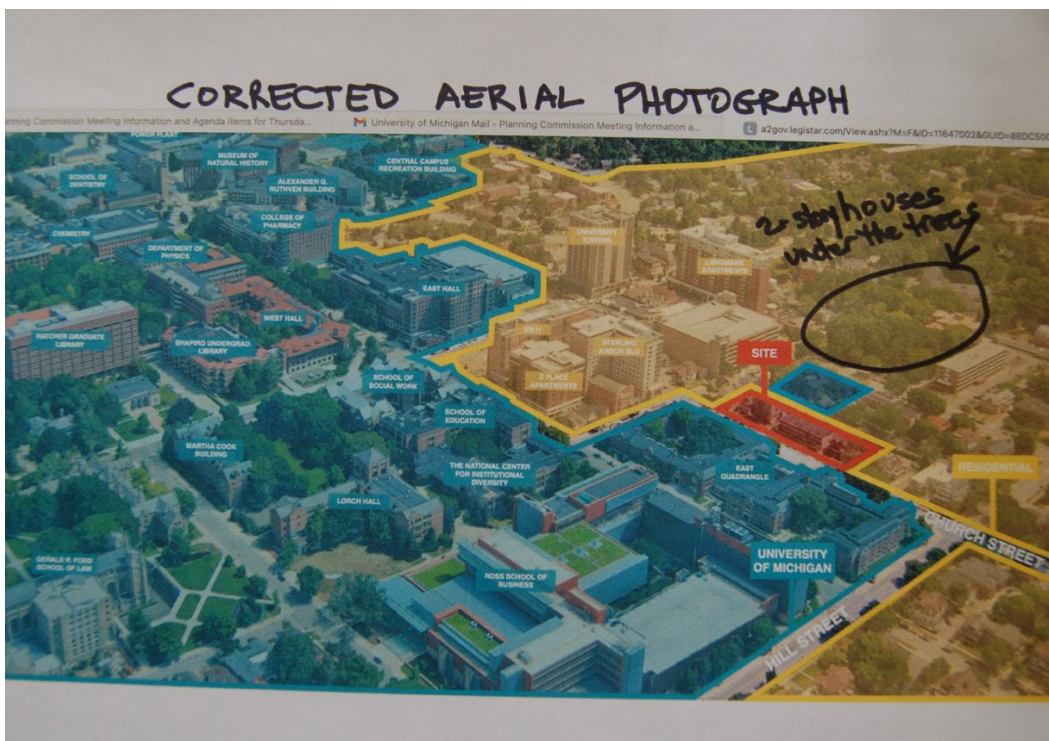
- AND THEY DO NOT SHOW THE FACT THAT THE EAST END OF FOREST COURT IS CLOSED TO VEHICULAR TRAFFIC, PERMITTING ONLY PEDESTRIANS TO WALK FROM THE CAMPUS AREA TO THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, AND THE NORTH BURNS PARK AND OXBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOODS.

The neighborhood between Hill Street and South University is an attractive and tranquil area with well-maintained houses, ample greenery, and a harmonious mix of long-term residents and short-term student renters. Several guidebooks to Ann Arbor have called it a "hidden gem."

It is the kind of urban landscape that should be protected, celebrated, and replicated in our desire to make Ann Arbor a livable city.

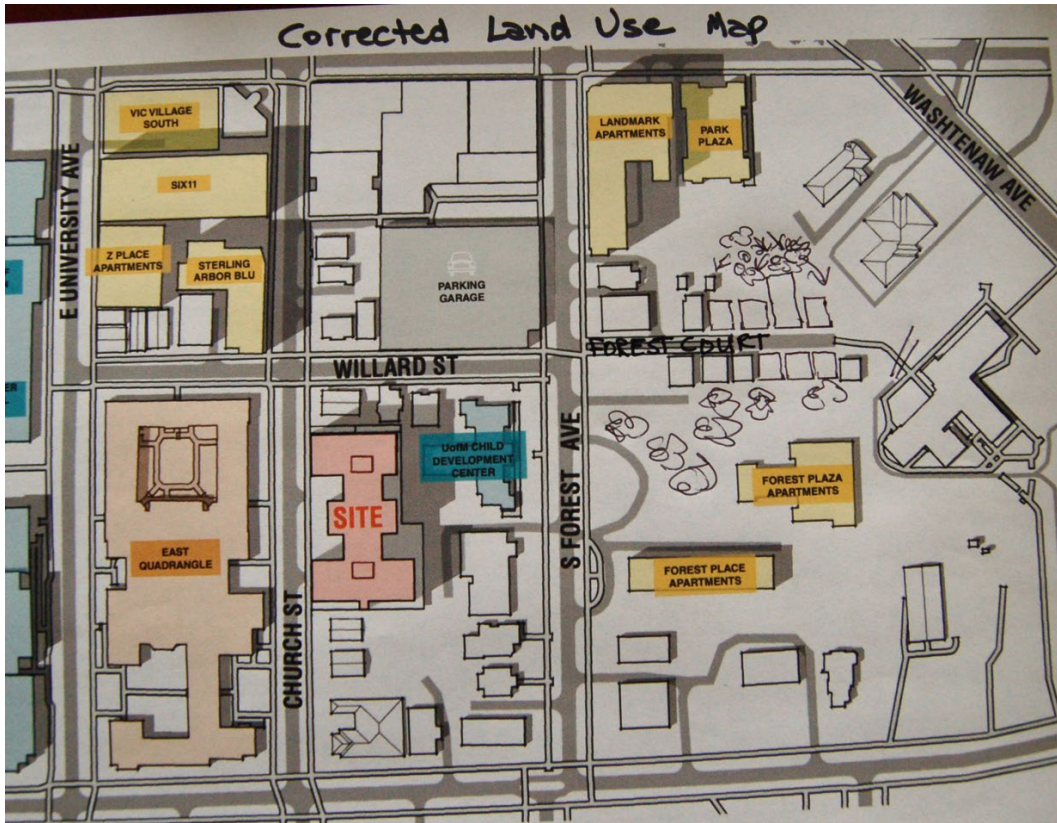
I STRONGLY URGE YOU TO TURN DOWN THIS PRE-APPLICATION FOR SUCH A LARGE, OUT OF COMPLIANCE, AND OUT OF SCALE BUILDING AND TO CONSIDER TURNING DOWN OTHER SUCH APPLICATIONS IN THE CURRENTLY PROTECTED AREA BETWEEN WILLARD AND HILL STREETS.

I have attached corrected versions of the petitioner's offending Aerial Photograph, Land Use and Bird's Eye View drawings of the neighborhood.

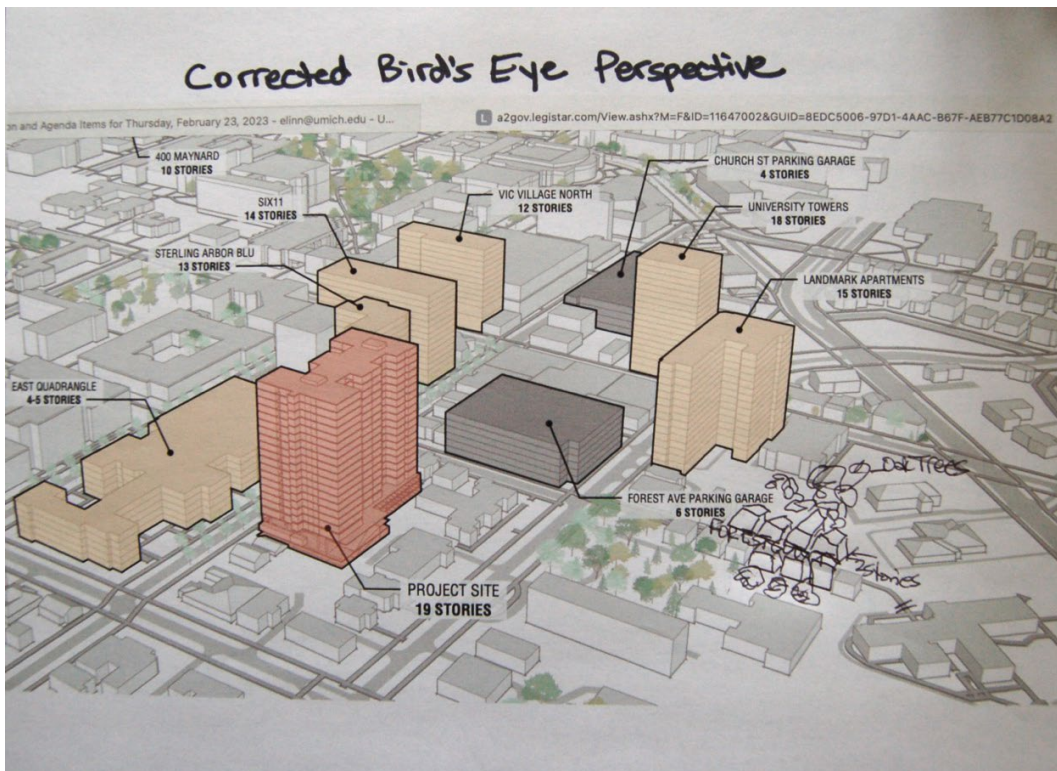


R4C Houses are under the trees





Nearby R4C Houses and Pedestrian Pass-through were missing



R4C Houses were missing. Project Overwhelms Play Yard at Towsley Child Development Center

**From:** Eleanor Linn

**Sent:** Monday, February 20, 2023 3:49 PM

**To:** Thacher, Jill <[JThacher@a2gov.org](mailto:JThacher@a2gov.org)>

**Subject:** Are you the staff person for 711 Church St?

Hi Jill,

I don't know whether you or Matt Kowalski is the staff person for 711 Church St coming up at Thursday's Planning Commission meeting. I'm sending you my comments for the group and hope to be put on the agenda.

Many thanks,

Eleanor Linn  
1321 Forest Ct  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
(734) 665-9230

Planning Commission Feb 23, 2023, rescheduled for March 7, 2023  
711 Church Street PUD Pre-Application Conference  
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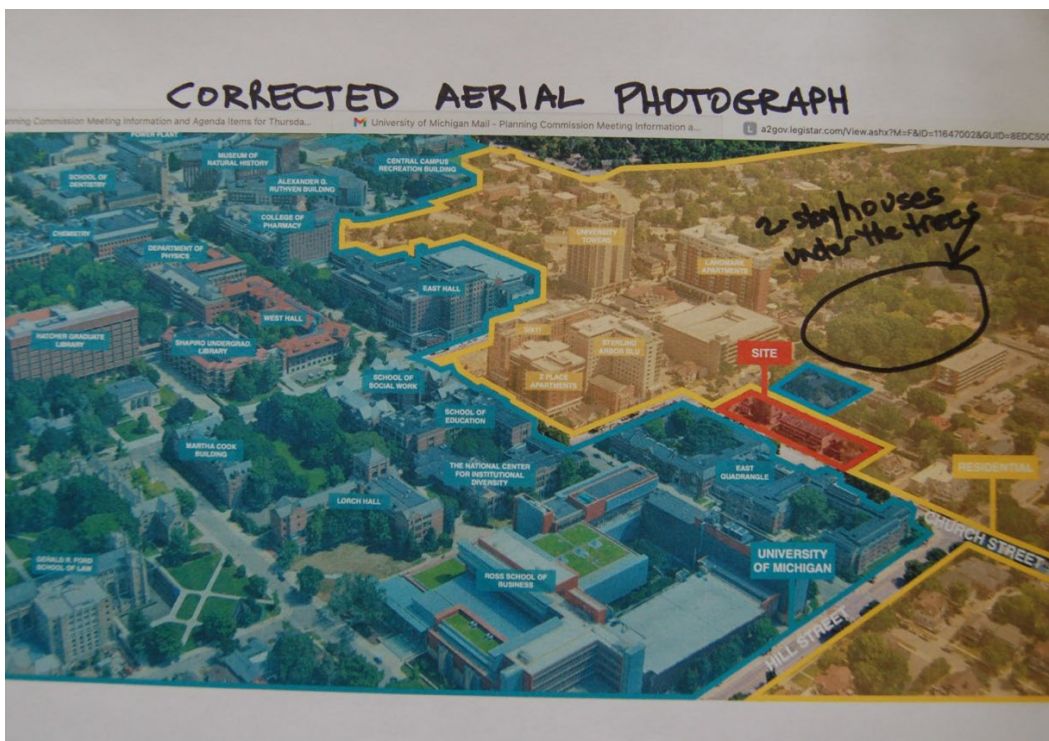
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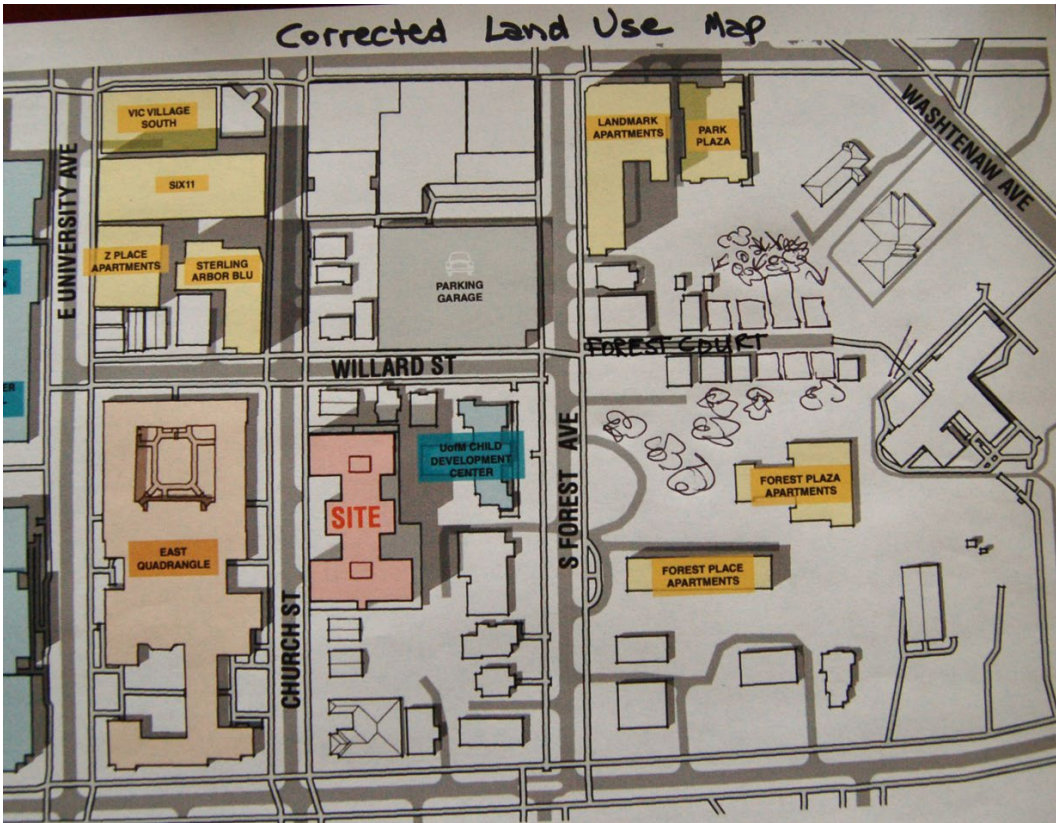
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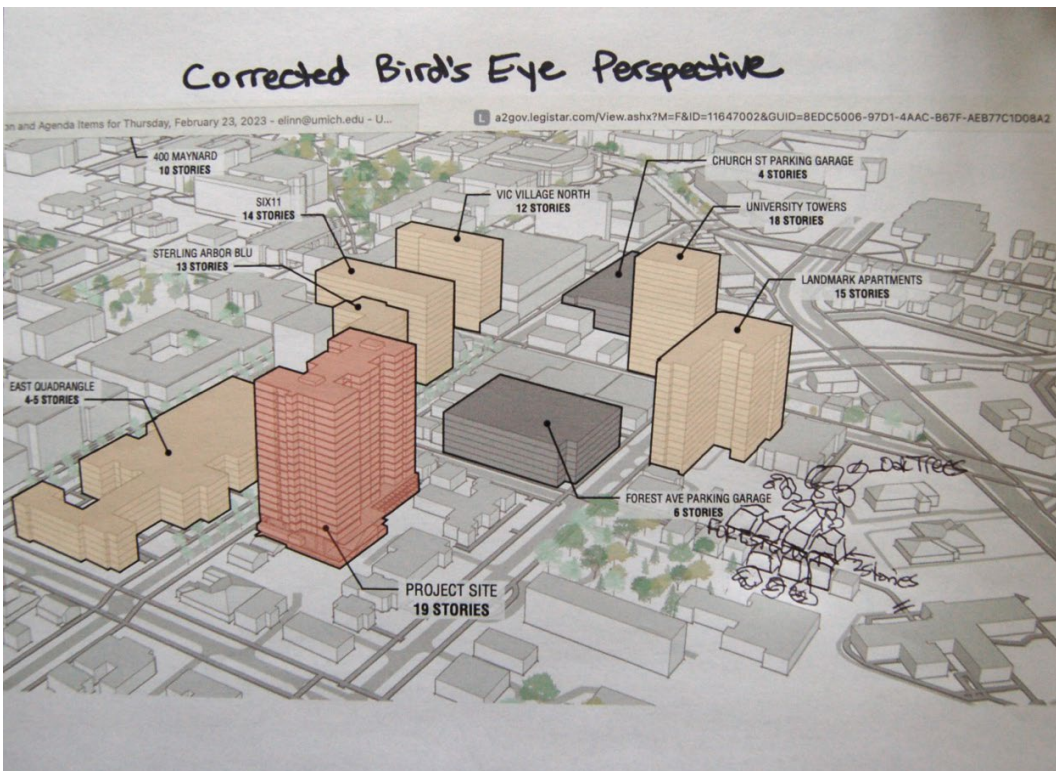
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R4C Houses were missing. Project Overwhelms Play Yard at Towsley Children's House

**From:** Ellen Ramsburgh  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 22, 2023 10:48 PM  
**To:** Planning <[Planning@a2gov.org](mailto:Planning@a2gov.org)>  
**Subject:** proposal for 711 Church Street

Dear Commissioners,

The proposed development for 711 Church Street is an insult to all of the planning processes that the City and citizens go through to address growth and yet be mindful of the existing built environment. This proposal expands the scale and intensity of the D1 zoning of South University dwarfing the residences of an R4C neighborhood. When zoning changes were considered for South University there was a decision making process that resulted in D1 Zoning for the block between South University and Willard. This zoning concentrated the height and high intensity usage along South University in order to decrease the negative impact of the scale of the adjacent R4C neighborhood. D1 zoning stops at Willard Street with a portion of South University zoned D2 in consideration of the scale of Forest Court. This proposal flies against all the public involvement and planning processes for increasing density on South University but being mindful of the impact on the adjacent R4C neighborhood.

To allow a building with the scale of D1 to be imposed onto the R4C scaled district is egregious but even more egregious is to allow this to go forward under a Planned Unit Development. The definition of PUD clearly states: **"The district is intended to accommodate developments with one or more land uses, sites with unusual topography or unique settings with the community, or sites that exhibit difficult or costly development problems or any combination of these factors. This zoning district shall not be allowed where it is sought to primarily avoid the imposition of standards and requirements of other zoning classifications or other City regulations rather than to achieve the stated purposes above.**

**PUDs are becoming a developer's path to circumvent existing zoning.** If the City allows this trend to continue then developers will become the force that determines the way our City grows, not the City, and certainly not the citizens who live here.

The proposal is clearly an attempt to avoid the standards and requirements of the present zoning at 711 Church Street. **I urge you not allow this application to go forward.**

Thank you,  
Ellen Ramsburgh  
1503 Cambridge Road

Dear Commissioners,

I remind Commissioners that Zoning was established to guide urban growth and development and included a public process to define regulations. Our Unified Development Codes are clear on guidelines for Planned Unit Developments, R4C districts, and D1 and D2 districts. **The proposal for 711 Church Street meets none of the guidelines listed below that should be applied to this site.** Unless the City intends to go through the public process of changing the Zoning regulations, these guidelines are still applicable as of the UDC dated 2-26-2023.

Thank you for your consideration of the public in this process,

Ellen Ramsburgh, 1503 Cambridge Road

## Planned Unit Development (PUD) District

### A. Purpose Statement

The purpose of this district is to permit flexibility in the regulation of land Development; to encourage innovation in land use and variety in design, layout, and type of Structures constructed; to achieve economy and efficiency in the use of land, natural resources, energy, and the provision of public services and utilities; to encourage provision of Open Space and protection of Natural Features; to provide adequate housing, employment, and shopping opportunities particularly suited to the needs of the residents of the City; to expand the supply of Affordable Housing Dwelling Units and to encourage the use, reuse, and improvement of existing Sites and Buildings that will be developed in a compatible way with surrounding uses, but where the uniform regulations contained in other zoning districts do not provide adequate protections and safeguards for the Site or surrounding area. The district is intended to accommodate developments with one or more land uses, Sites with unusual topography or unique settings within the community, or Sites that exhibit difficult or costly Development problems or any combination of these factors. **This zoning district shall not be allowed where it is sought primarily to avoid the imposition of standards and requirements of other zoning classifications or other City regulations rather than to achieve the stated purposes above.**

## R4B, R4C, R4D, and R4E Multiple-Family Dwelling Districts

### A. General Purpose Statement

In addition to the types of Dwellings permitted in the R1, R2, R3, and R4A districts, these Multiple-Family Zoning Districts are intended to permit attached Dwelling Units to be arranged one above the other or side by side.

### B. Specific Purpose Statements

**2. The R4C Multiple-Family Dwelling District is intended to be located in the central area of the City in close proximity to the central business district and the University of Michigan campus.**

Article II: Zoning Districts

2. D2 Downtown Interface District

This district is intended to be an area of transition between the D1 and surrounding residential neighborhoods. This district is appropriate for medium density residential and mixed-use Development.

C. Relationship to Downtown Character Overlay Zoning Districts

The D1 and D2 downtown zoning districts shall be further regulated by the character overlay zoning districts in Section 5.14. Unless otherwise specified in this chapter, regulations identified for both the downtown district and the applicable character overlay zoning district.

Article IV: Development Standards

5.17 Area, Height and Placement Regulations|

5.17.6 Downtown Character Overlay Zoning Districts 8th Edition with amendments through: February 26, 2023 Page 87

Downtown Character Overlay Zoning Districts

A. Building Massing Standards

Buildings and additions constructed after December 26, 2009 on Lots zoned D1 or D2 in the Downtown Character Overlay Zoning Districts shall comply with the building massing standards in Table 5.17-6, as applicable.

TABLE 5.17-6: DOWNTOWN CHARACTER OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICTS BUILDING MASSING STANDARDS								
OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICT	STREETWALL HEIGHT (STORIES)		OFFSET AT TOP OF STREETWALL REQUIRED AVERAGE (FEET) [A]	MAX. BUILDING HEIGHT (FEET)		MAXIMUM BUILDING MODULE LENGTH (HORIZONTAL DIMENSION IN FEET)	MAXIMUM TOWER DIAGONAL (DIMENSION IN FEET)	SIDE AND REAR SETBACKS
	MAX.	MIN.		D1 DISTRICT	D2 DISTRICT			MINIMUM DISTANCE
SOUTH UNIVERSITY	3	2	5	150	60	45	n/a	For D1, a minimum 30 foot setback from a Lot Line abutting any R zoning district. For D2, a minimum 40 foot setback. This setback shall be measured from the rear and side exterior walls of the Building to any R zoning district boundary on the same block as the Building.