

May 6, 2024

To: Matthew Kowalski, Ann Arbor Planning Commission

Ann Arbor Planning Commission Members

CC: Tim Loughrin, Robertson Homes

From: Tim Carroll. Country Place Condominium Association

RE: Scio Church Development Proposal SP24-0007

Attached is a copy of our March 25 memo to Mr. Loughrin of Robertson Homes outlining our concerns and our objections to the Robertson Homes proposal for the Scio Church Road development. In response to this memo, Mr. Loughrin stated that the twelve three story buildings in the plan are consistent with the Master Plan and are required to satisfy the City's insistence on high density.

Although the Master Plan for the area contemplates attached single family homes, its language was certainly not intended to permit three story buildings about 40 feet high, plus optional rooftop decks, with as many as eight homes in each building.

The City Zoning Ordinance specifically requires that all new developments proposed to be zoned R4E be **consistent with existing adjacent land uses such that the impact on the community is minimized**. The adjacent land, on BOTH sides of Robertson's ultra high density project is zoned R2 . We have two family, two story, attached condominiums on Audubon Drive to the west . The R2 parcel on the east is vacant. In essence, Robertson is asking for R4E zoning in the center of an R2 area. These three story buildings proposed for this project, which will tower over the neighboring two story homes, are entirely inconsistent with existing adjacent land uses. This is especially true of any of those new homes where buyers have opted for rooftop decks, essentially adding a fourth floor.

The question is not whether high density (building as many homes on as little property as possible) is wise or unwise.

The only real question is quite simple. Is THIS proposal, with twelve huge buildings, some including roof decks, appropriate for THIS parcel? THE ANSWER IS CLEARLY NO!

R4E Zoning

Quite apart from the reasons outlined above, Robertson's request for R4E zoning and its plan for seventy five homes on approximately five acres, in twelve multi-family, extremely tall buildings, should be rejected for failure to meet the basic requirements of the applicable Ordinance:

The elements of land use planning and site design should ensure that the impact of such intensity of land use on the adjacent property and the community as a whole is minimized.” Sec 5.11 7 B 4 Unified Development Code.

We have seen little or no effort by Robertson to comply with this language. Even after the Zoom meeting and both telephonic and written communication, it appears that Robertson has not really budged. Nothing has been done to “minimize the impact” on Country Place or other nearby residential areas.

To comply with the Unified Development Code, modifications to the site plan are absolutely mandatory. Some seem simple and obvious. Three of these forty foot buildings are only thirty feet or so from our homes on Audubon Drive. Instead of these huge structures, Robertson could build two story condos along the property line, as they have done at their Waters Road project along the boundary with Hawthorn Ridge. While Pittsfield Township may not face the same housing issues as Ann Arbor, the Waters Road project clearly shows that Robertson Homes knows how to build beautiful two story homes and that they can do so without materially affecting density.

Robertson could also move the larger three story buildings further from the west edge of the property by eliminating a half dozen or so condos from the west edge of these buildings. The development would still satisfy any reasonable density requirement.

We ask that the Planning Commission give full recognition to the legitimate concerns and reasonable expectations of Audubon Drive and other nearby home owners, who have been paying Ann Arbor taxes for many years. In the absence of substantial modifications, we urge you to recommend rejection of the Robertson proposal.