

From: KEN GARBER
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 4:33 PM
To: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>
Subject: Maple Cove II site plan (public comment)

Dear Planning Commission:

I am writing about the sustainability elements of the Maple Cove II site plan, or rather their absence. Above all, it is very disappointing that the petitioner intends to heat these 70 units with gas. As you know, strategy 2, action 1 of the A2Zero plan assumes no future use of natural gas in new construction.

Maple Cove II, if it proceeds with gas, will have a large and lasting impact on local greenhouse gas emissions. According to the American Gas Association, the average Michigan household requires 103 million BTUs a year for heat. That's 100,000 cubic feet of gas, or 1,000 therms. At 13 kg CO2 equivalent emissions per therm, a conversion factor that takes into account upstream emissions, that comes to 13 metric tons CO2 equivalent emissions per household per year, just from burning gas. Multiply that by these 70 units, and you get 910 metric tons CO2 equivalent emissions per year from this project, from gas combustion. And that's every year for the next 50 years.

We cannot, as a city, continue to dig ourselves into an emissions hole. Retrofitting our existing building stock with heat pumps, a central goal of A2Zero, is enough of a challenge without adding new construction that burns fossil fuels.

It doesn't have to be this way. Just last year, the following fully electric (air source heat pump or VRF system) residential projects received city approval:

1. Lockwood Senior Living, 154 units. Approved February 1, 2021.
2. 2111 Packard, 72 apartments (plus retail space). Approved February 1, 2021.
3. Valhalla Glen apartments, 455 units. Approved May 17, 2021.

None of these developers stated that going fully electric was a technical challenge or an economic hardship.

I also do not see rooftop solar in the Maple Cove II site plan documents. But even if the petitioner agrees to install rooftop solar, that does not compensate for gas heating. The negative emissions impact of gas is roughly six times the positive impact of putting solar panels on the roof of any given unit. This petitioner should do both, but building electrification is the key.

Thank you for considering this information.

Respectfully,
Ken Garber
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