

Ann Arbor Student Advisory Council

Representing Student Interests in Local Governance

To Ann Arbor City Council:

As the Student Advisory Council to the City of Ann Arbor, we would like to express our support for the recently proposed change to the criteria for special exception uses permits for fraternities and sororities to require them to maintain an affiliation with the University of Michigan.

Greek organizations by their very nature exist as entities linked to the University; a recognition of this fact in the zoning laws is therefore not unreasonable. While fraternities and sororities do important philanthropic work, it must be noted that for fraternities and sororities to lose their affiliation with the University their conduct will have to be found to be deliberately disorderly or unlawful. It is not the role of the City of Ann Arbor to reward such behavior by maintaining special exceptions to its zoning laws.

We would however like to express our concern with one aspect of the policy. Under this new policy, should a fraternity or sorority lose their affiliation with the University of Michigan, the property will revert to one or two family dwellings. This would represent a concerning loss of the available supply of student housing. It is our belief that with the increasing student rents, and rents throughout the city, the city should not act in such a way as to decrease the supply of student housing. We question the merits of the R2B zoning district through which this policy applies, as it is our belief that property so close to the University campus which could be used to increase the student housing supply, should be zoned towards that end.

With this concern noted, we support this proposed change to the Ann Arbor Zoning Law.

Signed,

The Ann Arbor Student Advisory Council