

Downtown Area Citizens Advisory Council Minutes-May 1, 2019

Members Present: Ray Detter, Peter Honeyman, Don Duquette, Joan French, Carolyn Arcure

Members Absent: Hugh Sonk, John Chamberlin, Kathleen Nolan, Chaz Stucken, John Splitt

Guests Present: Susan Pollay, Jeff Crockett, John Kotarski, Doug Kelbaugh, Julie Ritter, Ian Puren, Sofia Villalobos, Kaylie Herrera, David Diephuis

At last night's CAC meeting, CAC members, near-downtown neighbors and three students from Huron High School (14 of us) tried to come to some kind of consensus on major downtown and near downtown issues relating to affordability, density, historic preservation, design, parking, transit, and even accessory dwellings. Did we do it? No! But we had a good, informative, if not conclusive, discussion.

Following the recent Ward 5 town hall meeting discussion of affordable housing, we were all willing to accept the definition of affordable housing as "Housing costing less than 30 % of a household's gross annual income" or (although we didn't directly address it), "a combination of housing and transportation that, in total, costs less than 45% of the gross annual income."

We briefly looked at two high rises now being proposed—one (the Standard) at the corner of S. Main and William would rise 10 stories on William and 5 stories to the south on Main to Packard—a mix of studios and apartments with one to four bedrooms. Some of those present criticized the design and height—even though the site could have originally permitted a taller building.

We also looked at a proposed 19 story high rise on E. Washington behind the Michigan Theater. Some of us had attended the design review meetings on this property as well as the Citizen Participation meeting. As a result, a number of important improvements were made in the plan which now includes 241 apartments including 19 dedicated affordable housing units for low income tenants—plus 6,000 square feet of commercial space. Almost everyone present supported the proposal—including two residents of Sloan Plaza located a block away. Also included in the plans are 202 bicycle parking spaces and 141 auto parking spaces, 127 of which would be onsite and 14 of which would be leased from the city.

But in further discussion those present agreed that our concern for downtown housing sites should be less concerned with parking and more concerned with transit in future downtown residential projects.

Those present were encouraged to attend a South University Resident Participation meeting on Monday, May 6, 6:00-8:00 pm at the Pizza House Restaurant, 2nd floor.

The proposed development includes a 13-story mixed-use high rise building with underground parking. The first story is primarily commercial space. Student-focused Housing and "affordable housing units" are on the second through thirteenth floors are

included. We will try to attend this meeting. You should too! Let's see what "affordable" means on this site.

We ran out of time in our meeting, but not before we unanimously agreed to support the approved City Council resolution directing the city staff to work with the Ann Arbor Housing Commission and Washtenaw County Office for Community and Economic Development to the feasibility of developing affordable housing on select city-owned properties. (Y Lot, Kline lot, 216 W. William St., 415 W. Washington, 404 N. Ashley, 4th Ave and Catherine, 721 N. Main, 3400 block of Platt Road, 2000 S. Industrial, former firehouse at 1510 E. Stadium).