



April 28, 2005

City of Kalamazoo  
Planning Commission  
241 West South Street  
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007

Dear Planning Commissioners:

The Arcadia Neighborhood Association supports the April 19 statement that was addressed to you by the Oakland Drive / Winchell Neighborhood Association on the topic of the proposed zoning ordinance update. We emphasize three of their key points below.

Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), Non-residential uses (Standards, Section 8.3.C.4). The proposed ordinance would replace specific PUD restrictions on non-residential uses and dimensions entirely with subjective criteria. We support the stated goals of overall PUD compatibility and value, but we believe that the new ordinance should retain language that restricts non-residential uses primarily to office and accessory uses and limits their area to less than 1000 or 2000 sq. ft. per 100 dwelling units, depending on the overall size of the PUD. We also believe that non-residential uses should continue to be required to principally serve the residents of the PUD. When these proposed uses do not principally serve the PUD residents, a rezoning application is the more appropriate recourse. Although we appreciate the need for flexibility in PUD design, we seek to retain controls that minimize subjective evaluation of questionable non-residential uses.

General Provisions, Application to the City (Section 1.4.B). The City should be required to abide by our zoning code. Self-enforcement through administrative policy rules is not good for the public trust in a City Manager-directed system. City land uses might include criminal incarceration, vehicle/equipment storage and maintenance, hazardous materials storage, athletic stadiums, and communication towers. Such uses could have adverse impact on adjacent owners and may require judicious transportation planning and design review. In what ways could the City possibly exempt itself from the requirements of the Wellhead Protection Overlay district requirements? This portion of the ordinance is not available for review yet.

Site Plan Reviews (Sections 8.3.H.6.a and c). We prefer more explicit guidelines for the timing of sketch and full site plan reviews, such as the current 14-day minimum. "A reasonable period of time" invites misunderstanding that may either rush or delay reviews and create perceptions of unfairness. This should be a public process. Hence, we ask that SPRC meetings be pre-announced and open to interested public parties. Public guests could be required to pre-register for attendance so that meeting space and agenda could be properly planned and controlled. We ask that plans continue to be specified available for public inspection at least 72 hours before the review meeting.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. We commend you and City Staff for taking on this monumental task and the open manner in which it has been conducted.

Sincerely,

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Cc: Jeff Chamberlain, Director of Community Planning and Development  
Bobby J. Hopewell, City Commissioner and Planning Commission Liaison