

University Heights City Council Emails received from May 21 - 31, 2009:

jimlane@yahoo.com <jimlane@yahoo.com> Wed, May 27, 2009 at 7:05 AM

Reply-To: jimlane@yahoo.com

To: louise-from@university-heights.org, stan-laverman@university-heights.org, amy-moore@university-heights.org, david-giese@university-heights.org, andy-dudler@university-heights.org, brennan-mcgrath@university-heights.org

This is to express my strong support for the development project presented by Jeff Maxwell on the St. Andrews Property in the city of University Heights . This project will offer opportunities for many residents, both in and outside University Heights , to live in our town as they look for alternatives to a single family home. The tasteful commercial space will provide opportunities for members of the community to meet, and will also provide a sense of identity for University Heights in the future. This project will be a catalyst for our community to grow smartly and enhance our community benefits for future potential residents.

While single family residences or Birkdale-like structures would be a good use of the St. Andrews space, it does not appear to be economically feasible due to the high costs for the lots. This leads us to the University of Iowa or a related entity as a potential purchaser if the Maxwell project is not approved. Should the University of Iowa purchase this land we are now talking about a 10 acre or more development due to the University owning land to the north of St. Andrews Church .

A “guessing game” will begin as to what the University will do to utilize this land. Regardless of how environmentally sensitive the University develops this land I think it will still be a substantial project generating the same or worse environmental and traffic concerns that are being expressed by some with the Maxwell project. More importantly the University Heights Council gives up the right to control the use of this property. No doubt there will be a constant concern over what the University of Iowa will do. I think the council should avoid this “guessing game”, remove this cloud over our community’s future and become proactive leaders of the changes in our community.

The ability to have a growing tax base is also a plus for this project. University Heights offers many more services(e.g.library privileges, vacuuming leaves, spring clean up day) to its citizens than when we moved here 22 years ago. Many of these were requests by citizens which the Council was able to oblige. These requests for additional services will continue to be made to this Council and successor Councils. Without a growing tax base you and future councils will be impeded from meeting some of these requests and probably be looking at how to eliminate some services.

Change is inevitable in any community especially one like ours which has been in existence for almost seventy-five years. The decisions you as leaders make will impact our town’s future for years to come. The Maxwell project will be a positive change for our total community and lead to a real sense of identity for University Heights . I urge your support for the zoning changes for the Maxwell project.

Best regards,

Jim Lane

Ken Yeggy <ken.yeggy@gmail.com> Wed, May 27, 2009 at 10:03 AM

To: amy-moore@university-heights.org, david-giese@university-heights.org, stan-laverman@university-heights.org, brennan-mcgrath@university-heights.org, andy-dudler@university-heights.org

Please review my the attachment with supporting opinions regarding the Maxwell SAPC project.

Thanks

Ken Yeggy
305 Ridgeview Ave.

The development of the SAPC property is a project that has both supporters and opponents. I attended the three developer meetings and the two zoning committee meetings. I listened to both parties present their concerns and their endorsements and have decided to strongly support this project. My decision is based on the following:

1. I think the city needs the future tax revenues this project will provide. We are an aging city and need to look to the future instead of living in the present and the past. We don't have the resources to survive for another twenty years. We need to grow in order to survive.
2. I respect the opinions of both sides of this issue. I can understand the concerns of those who will be directly affected by this project, those who don't want the church to move, and those who don't want change. But as a city we must consider the affect this project will have on the entire population of University Heights. Do we want to remain a viable community or will we fade into obscurity?
3. I realize that change is hard for some people to accept. I worked for a major corporation (Pearson Education) for 38+ years and survived many changes. There were those employees that fought every change and those who accepted change as a good thing. Those who accepted the changes prospered, those who fought change were either replaced, left the company, or spent their careers complaining and in dead end jobs. Who was right? In those 38 years the company went from \$5,000,000 to \$2,600,000,000 in annual sales. I for one accepted the changes and worked hard to make the changes a success. I feel the same way about the SAPC development and would work to make this change a success.

4. We have the chance to work with a developer who is sensitive to the concerns of the residents of University Heights. This developer has made a lot of changes to address the concerns raised at the information meetings.
5. I've heard "Let's just build another Birkdale on this site". This has been brought up many times. Sounds good but the economics just don't match the situation. Like it or not the SAPC property has a sale value of \$ 4,300,000. It is not feasible that this property could be divided into 12 lots. Each of the lots would have a value \$385,300 before adding the costs for development. That would price a lot at over \$500,000. No one is going to pay that kind of money for a residential lot, especially in University Heights.
6. Jeff Maxwell has stated several times that he is going to buy this property. It makes good sense to work with someone who listens to the concerns of the residents. There has been a lot of speculation about what could happen.
 - A. The church members vote against the sale of the property and nothing changes.
 - B. The Maxwell project isn't approved and the U of I buys this property and builds with little or no input from the citizens.
 - C. Maxwell buys the property and develops it for the University.
 - D. University Heights approves the Maxwell project and the City of University Heights prospers.
7. Let's face it, we really don't know the final outcome if the Maxwell project is rejected by the City Council. Something I had never considered was brought up by Catherine Lane at the last zoning meeting. "The U of I owns the 10 acres behind the SPAC property". We should be concerned about not only development of the SPAC property but the entire plot including the UAC property. If this is a possibility, the U of I is not going to make this information public. The floods of 2008 caused a great deal of damage to U of I facilities. It is public fact that the U of I is not going to rebuild in the flood plain. This area could be developed as a West Campus, an Alumni Center complete with housing units, a convention center, or worse yet, dorms, or parking ramps with a shuttle to the UHIC. At the last Zoning Commission meeting Wally Heitman said he had received correspondence from a resident who said his "Intuition led him to believe this property would be developed by the U of I if the Maxwell project is rejected". Wally said that intuition shouldn't be used to arrive at a decision. I am the resident quoted and think that my intuitions are better than Wally's relying on the Daily lowan for information regarding this project. Intuition is an important part of survival in this world and one should pay attention to it. I strongly believe we should try to guide our destiny and do the best for everybody in the community.

8. I don't believe that 85% of the residents are against this project as was pointed out at the last Zoning Commission meeting. Like most public meetings the crusaders turn out and the silent majority stay home. I have talked to many residents who are for this project. I realize that there was a petition with lots of signatures against this project but think a lot of them signed because of the mis-information that is being projected by a few. Are proponents really destroying the community by trying to improve the community or are those against the project trying to protect their own little world while destroying the larger community?

9. One thing that needs to be emphasized is the fact that CNN picked the Iowa City area as one of the top five places to retire in the USA. They say it's because we have the arts, recreation, excellent healthcare, Big Ten athletics, an educated population, etc. There are already plans by one developer to remodel some existing apartments near downtown Iowa City into condos with the intent of luring retirees. Do we want to be part of this and realize the rewards of having a vibrant community or do we want to let the rest of the world pass us by? Why wouldn't we prefer to attract these retirees, rather than the rental community of students we are turning into? Already 23% of the housing units in this city are rentals. This is too many and we should do everything we can to improve our community and increase property values and keep slumlords out. Will I have the chance to remain in University Heights when I tire of mowing my lawn and keeping up my property? I'd like to stay in University Heights.

10. I am impressed by the scope of this development. Referring to this development as a Strip Mall is an insult. This is a \$78,000,000 project. We are talking about a tasteful development. These are not \$99,000 condos built to attract a transient population but up-market condos built to attract people wishing a comfortable life style. Any city in Iowa would be glad to have this development. Yes it will cause some changes in everyone's life but we should work together to make this a project that will benefit the entire population of University Heights. Yes the new residents will require some commercial support. They will want a grocery store, a beauty parlor, professional services, restaurant, coffee shop, etc. These are not a bunch of cheap apartments like those near downtown Iowa City built to attract students interested in living near bars or liquor stores.

11. I keep hearing about how this project will destroy the environment. What environment? A ravine that is eroding, a trashy plot of timber that receives no attention? I can see deer in my front yard and can't say they are welcome. The improvements to this property will only enhance the existing environment. It will now have proper drainage and get better maintenance than exists today. From what I have seen I would have to say this developer is very interested in not only improving this location but in maintaining it.

12. Maxwell has stated that he would improve the water mains, replacing the dead end system in the north part of town with a new continuous main. I guess the question I have is "What's the condition of the existing water and sewer system; will they need replacement in the near future, and who bears these costs if replacement is required?" Wouldn't this newer water main be a benefit to those residents or is the existing system good enough?

13. I believe the realignment of Sunset Street intersection is an important part of this discussion. This isn't the 1950's; this intersection needs attention. I have heard several times that Melrose is only busy a few hours a day and this development will really add to the traffic on Melrose. After the last informational meeting at the UAC 25 cars passed as I walked toward Sunset Street. Since then I have been paying attention to the traffic load on this street at all hours and it is a busy street. Like it or not Melrose is a major arterial and this realignment and widening is a good thing for the community.
14. I have heard that the U of I has to follow the existing zoning if they purchase the property. I have seen in the comments to the Press Citizen article covering the Zoning meeting addressing governmental-governmental and governmental-proprietary nature of the development if the U of I buys this land. Meaning that the only way that the U of I could develop this land not following existing zoning would be a governmental-governmental project. The writer did state that we would have to research the State of Iowa laws to see if there was an existing Iowa statute that would support maintaining the existing zoning if the development was not governmental-governmental. I guess this is one for the city attorney but I did a little research and found that the majority of courts reject the governmental-proprietary stand. It looks like this is an old outdated statute that is usually dismissed. Do we really think that the city has the revenues to get into a long legal contest with the U of I? Like it or not the U of I has lots of influence and gets what it wants.
15. We might as well accept the fact that this plot of land is going to be developed by someone. Do we want it to be taxable and provide needed revenues for University Heights or should we let the University to buy this property and remove it from the tax roles forever? It's not hard for me to answer this question: the city will need the additional revenues in the future. Why not have some say in the use of this property? I for one am not going to bury my head in the sand and say "Only Status Quo Will Save the City". We need to look toward the future and not dwell in the past and present.
16. Like it or not most of Iowa City and people traveling to the UHIC perceive the City of University Heights as a "Dreary Little Speed Trap". I detest the tee-shirts that I see that say "University Heights More Than a Speed Trap". I see this project as a chance to provide the revenues to make this city something we can be proud of. I can envision Melrose and Sunset streets as an attractive entry-way to a vibrant community. We could have wide sidewalks, landscaping, and replace the street lights, etc. Or we can remain just another route to UHIC.
17. I have heard "If we need additional revenues we will just have to scale back on our police protection". I have lived here beginning in 1968 and remember when our only police was Ester Winder on her Harley. We got along well since I had the only other motorcycle in town. Then there were the Bob and Gary years (kind of like Andy and Barney), the questionable Brian Shimon years and finally thanks to Ron Fort a competent and professional police force we can be proud of. They do keep the speed down on Melrose through their vigilant presence and also keep the city safe from the crime that is all around us. At the last Zoning meeting it was stated "In the last five years there were 205 burglaries in the neighborhoods abutting University

Heights.” In the same 5 years University Heights had one burglary and an arrest was made in about 20 minutes. Do we really want to reduce our current police force to save money?

I realize that others have opposing opinions, but I am sincere in my commitment and feel the city needs this development. I want a vibrant viable community that will exist into the future and not disappear into Iowa City.

I think we as a community should embrace this project and give the City of University Heights a future. We just can't sit still and watch the rest of the world pass us by. I urge you to vote YES on this project.

DAN AND BETH STENCE <dbstence@msn.com> Thu, May 28, 2009 at 7:54 PM

To: louise-from@university-heights.org, amy-moore@university-heights.org, david-giese@university-heights.org, stan-laverman@university-heights.org, brennan-mcgrath@university-heights.org, andy-dudler@university-heights.org

I am writing to ask you to support the One University Place development. My wife and I believe that the proposal looks attractive and well planned and would benefit University Heights and its residents. We like the idea of additional retail like coffee shop, restaurant, grocery within walking distance of our home. We also like the additional tax revenue that will generated which should help hold down future tax or fee increases and possibly provide UH with money to spend on infrastructure improvements. We think that if this development does not happen the University will purchase the land and take it off the tax rolls and may build something less desirable on that space. I ask that you vote to allow this development to move forward.

Thanks,

Dan and Beth Stence
310 Golfview Avenue

Orgren, Carl F <carl-orgren@uiowa.edu> Thu, May 28, 2009 at 7:59 PM

To: "louise-from@university-heights.org" <louise-from@university-heights.org>, "amy-moore@university-heights.org" <amy-moore@university-heights.org>, "heights.org" <david-giese@university.mailhost1.justmailusa.net>, "stan-laverman@university-heights.org" <stan-laverman@university-heights.org>, "brennan-mcgrath@university-heights.org" <brennan-mcgrath@university-heights.org>, "andy-dudler@university-heights.org" <andy-dudler@university-heights.org>

Dear Mayor and Council members:

Attached is our input on the proposed development.

Carl and Barbara Orgren
330 Golfview Ave.
338-0358

May 28, 2009

University Heights Mayor and Council:

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

Below are some of the reasons we strongly support the proposed development of the St. Andrew parcel. There are certainly additional reasons for such support, but those have been previously expressed by us and others in writing, and at the five meetings held thus far, the last four of which I, Carl attended. (Barbara works evenings.)

The structure of a small community provides no economy of scale. As we have seen with our contracts, when we are not providing our own services, we have little control of the costs, or nature of the service. We directly experienced that as part of the group that worked on the library contract. The services, however, are crucial to maintaining a first class community. Economic viability is essential to the well being of University Heights.

Inaction will not stop the forces at work. Note that the comprehensive plan identifies some solutions, but neither the will nor motivation brought forth active progress. As shown in the meetings, any such

plan requires changes to the current status. Absent a forward looking project such as this, no development large enough to make a difference is likely to occur.

This particular parcel has value putting it beyond the absolute control of municipal governance. We must make use of the tools we have. Simple refusal will not make this go away. We watched this play out at our former residence at 5 Melrose Place. In 2002 the University owned one property out of eleven. Eight of those properties are out of private hands now, and the ninth is in negotiation. The current proposed commercial and residential development is our best hope for avoiding similar encroachment.

The public weal is more complex than simple assertion can guide. Only careful and informed choices by the Council will forward the cause of our wonderful community. The Council is the body with both the best access to information on our fiscal health and the fiduciary responsibility to maintain that health. No, it's not all about the money, but the money cannot be ignored in any budget, public or private.

It is also important to note that voters within our community (renters and resident homeowners) are those to whom we need attend. Non-resident property owners vote elsewhere.

Thank you for your efforts in this very difficult decision.

Sincerely yours,

Carl and Barbara Orgren

330 Golfview Ave. 338-0358

randbgienapp@mchsi.com <randbgienapp@mchsi.com> Fri, May 29, 2009 at 6:04 PM
To: louise0from@university-heights.org, amy-moore@university-heights.org, david-giese@university-heights.org, stan-laverman@university-heights.org, brennan-mcgrath@university-heights.org, andy-dudler@university-heights.org

My husband and I would like you to know that we support the building of One University Place. We have lived in University Heights since 1999 and are raising our children here. We plan to stay here until they graduate and we retire. So we are here for the long haul.

We both believe that University Heights would benefit from a small commercial area and a central community area. The buildings as drawn and set back from the street far enough that the height really doesn't pose a problem and we don't think the buildings will distract from the residential "quaintness" of the area. We don't believe that University Heights should remain a strictly residential area forever. It needs to change a bit. This seems like a good change to us. We don't envision this leading us down the slippery slope to a strip mall.

Thanks for listening and for all your work on behalf of University Heights.

Barb and Rick Gienapp
38 Highland Drive

PPEYTON@aol.com <PPEYTON@aol.com> Sat, May 30, 2009 at 8:16 PM

To: amy-moore@university-heights.org, david-giese@university-heights.org, stan-laverman@university-heights.org, brennen-mcgrath@university-heights.org, andy-dudler@university-heights.org
Cc: louise-from@university-heights.org

I support the Maxwell Project. I missed the meeting because of personal health issues.

I have talked with developer Jeff Maxwell and had questions about whether families with children will be accepted there, and the price of the units.

I expressed my satisfaction that the buildings will be so tall as to be out of place within University Heights.

Juanita Forbes
128 Koser Avenue