

Ann Arbor Charter Township

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July 26, 2016

Northfield Township
8350 Main Street
Whitmore Lake, MI 48189

Re: Public Hearing Scheduled for August 3, 2016 re Master Plan Change

To Whom It May Concern:

I am Ann Arbor Charter Township's Supervisor. On September 3, 2014, I presented our Township Board's significant concerns regarding this proposed Master Plan change to your Planning Commission. I reviewed the video of that presentation this week and ask that any Northfield Township Planning Commission member or Board Member who was not then in office or attendance watch that presentation. I present this letter of opposition to the proposed change for those who cannot do so.

I have attached a map used in that presentation that shows the location of the proposed area of change which borders approximately 1100 acres in our Township that we have placed in Agricultural Preservation after we, with assistance from Ann Arbor's Green Belt program and the Federal Farm and Ranchland Preservation Program, payed about \$9,300,000 dollars to purchase the development rights in order to limit the use of that property to agricultural preservation. In conjunction with the purchase of those development rights, we are actively promoting farming on the preserved lands, including ordinance changes to permit those properties to have commercial kitchens in order to add value to the raw farm goods grown and raised there. Our farmland program has been more than 20 years in the making, including planning and ordinance changes.

As I explained in more detail in the September presentation, we have serious concerns about the effect of placing such dense development in the study site on Whitmore Lake Road and the farming operations on our preserved farmland.

Such an abrupt change of use is not good planning. I note that since my presentation you have commissioned and received a report from your planner McKenna Associates. That report substantiates our earlier-expressed concerns: On page 5, McKenna reviews the additional traffic that would be generated on Whitmore Lake Road and opines that "the impacts of such a dramatic change would not be harmonious [and would] generate densities extremely inconsistent with the guiding principle and basic tenets of the adopted Master Plan." After

reviewing the surrounding uses in Northfield and Ann Arbor Townships, McKenna opined on page 6-7 that such a dense residential development adjacent would be incompatible with farming activities that generate dust, noise, odors, chemicals, etc. and would be inconsistent with the basic tenets of the Master Plan. On page 9, the McKenna report notes that "higher density MDR development would be inconsistent with the preservation of ... important natural features and [again] contrary to the Master Plan's guiding principles." Again, addressing traffic on Whitmore Lake Road, where farm vehicles related to the farming activities in Ann Arbor Township would be present, noted on page 10-11 that "if the Review Area were to develop at MDR density, Whitmore Lake Rd. would [see] traffic ... increase by 30% to more than 500% ... [and] would likely require improvements to the road, such as additional lanes and traffic control devices." In its section recommending denial of the proposed Master Plan change, McKenna reports that "the [current] Northfield Township Master Plan is compatible and coordinated with the plans of Ann Arbor Township and Washtenaw County. The requested change to the Plan would be contrary to sound planning principles, because it would leap-frog 100's of acres, creating a hedge-podge of development, contrary to an orderly and efficient plan as expressed in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33, of 2008." Id., at 17.

For all of those reasons and those previously expressed in my presentation of September 3, 2014, we state our objections to the proposed amendment and urge you to deny it.

Sincerest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Michael Moran".

Michael Moran
Ann Arbor Township Supervisor

Northfield Township

Study Area

Biltmore Properties

Township Protected Properties

Township Protected Properties

Township Educational Farm

Food Hub

Ann Arbor Township

