

To: craig; 'David Chapman'; Mike Faught; graf@sou.edu; shawn; Corinne; dyoung@jeffnet.org; carol; April Lucas; tbrownpc; rpkaplan46; Debbie Miller; Melanie Mindlin; Bill Molnar; mike; tmpeddicord

October 31, 2013

Dear Commissioners,

After speaking with Senior Planner Brandon Goldman, I have modified recommendations for your consideration in the Normal Ave Neighborhood Plan. Following staff guidelines for the Normal Ave Neighborhood Plan, locating similar densities of development across from established neighborhoods has been a primary objective since the Charrette process. North of Creek Drive, and west of Clay Street, the zoning plan has been changed from NA-03 to NA-02 because the proximity and density of the higher multi-family housing type would put too much traffic out onto existing (NA-02) single-family neighborhood street frontage.

I believe this should hold true for the existing (NA-01) neighborhood along the current Normal Avenue as well. The proposed new Normal Ave. (main collector road traversing north/south) should have the most density along this "spine" road, thereby retaining the single family dwelling (NA-01) neighborhood character where it already exists along the current Normal Ave. If the housing density is shifted towards the new Normal Ave., then the need for the problematic egress across the Wetlands #9 is eliminated. The better alternative egress for a centrally located density would be to direct residential traffic **DUE NORTH** to E. Main (see option #2 below). The closer you have the higher density zoning (NA-02, NA-03) to the new main neighborhood collector road, the less vehicle miles people will have to travel through neighborhoods to egress onto a major arterial like E. Main St. The City's goal to preserve its natural areas, especially its largest designated wetland, will then be possible.

In considering alternatives necessary for the project area connectivity to E. Main St. from the west side, there are two options.

1. If connectivity is proposed by extending the current Normal Ave. through to E. Main St., the following **problems are encountered**:

a. The connector road would be a pretty *tight fit* restricted between existing structures, and even *necessitating the demolition* of some.

b. The potential intersection with E. Main St. from the existing Normal Ave. would suffer the consequences of its *proximity to the blind curve* hindering line of sight of oncoming E. Main traffic from the west, and making for a very dangerous left turn onto a main arterial.

c. The City planners have made great efforts to create a road that doesn't produce a *straight shot* through the project (from the RR tracks to E. Main). Connecting traffic would see a straight line through the current Normal Ave to continue directly to E. Main, where speeds could increase to 30 mph (similar to the problem on Faith St.). Without that straight line connection, a more central "spine" route using the new Normal Ave., with its circuitous design, will require behavioral modification as it slows vehicular speeds, making it safer for cyclists,

children, and even cars passing each other. The new sinuous Normal Ave. will be more obvious as the main collector going through to E. Main, and will be seen as access to the development, rather than a cut-through for non-residents.

2. If connectivity is proposed by extending the "spine" road (new Normal Ave.) through to E. Main, you **solve a multitude of problems:**

- a. There are *no structures which would need to be demolished* and, due to lack of nearby existing buildings, the road would not need to be a tight fit or restricted in its placement.
- b. The intersection onto E. Main would have *twice the visual clearance* distance since it is further away from the blind curve in the road (along Temple Emek property) than option 1's hazardous egress.
- c. With the zoning density more centrally shifted, this egress option is closer and more accessible for residents, with *less vehicle miles* required to reach the main arterial of E. Main.
- d. The visual *straight shot North/South road is eliminated* and through traffic will more likely be development/resident related and safer. The current Normal Ave. will retain its neighborhood feeling and safely encourage pedestrian/cyclist multi-modal use to open space and school zones.

The City has housing types which it needs to provide for all types of residences, as well as simultaneously achieving density goals for the Normal Ave Neighborhood Project. **Rezoning the land and its uses into the center of this project** will allow for economy of scale, with full block lengths accommodating multi-family dwellings and their required parking areas. Transitioning out from this core (NA-03) zone, cluster cottage-type housing (NA-02) around common greens can develop. The single family (NA-01) character can then be retained in the existing neighborhoods on the edges of the project area. The overall density of the project will remain with approximately the same number of dwelling units (450) as outlined in the most recent iteration of the Planning Land Use Zone Map.

Please review the attached version of the alternative connections and zoning recommendations I have identified. I hope you will consider these as viable options in your final plan for the Normal Ave. Neighborhood Project.

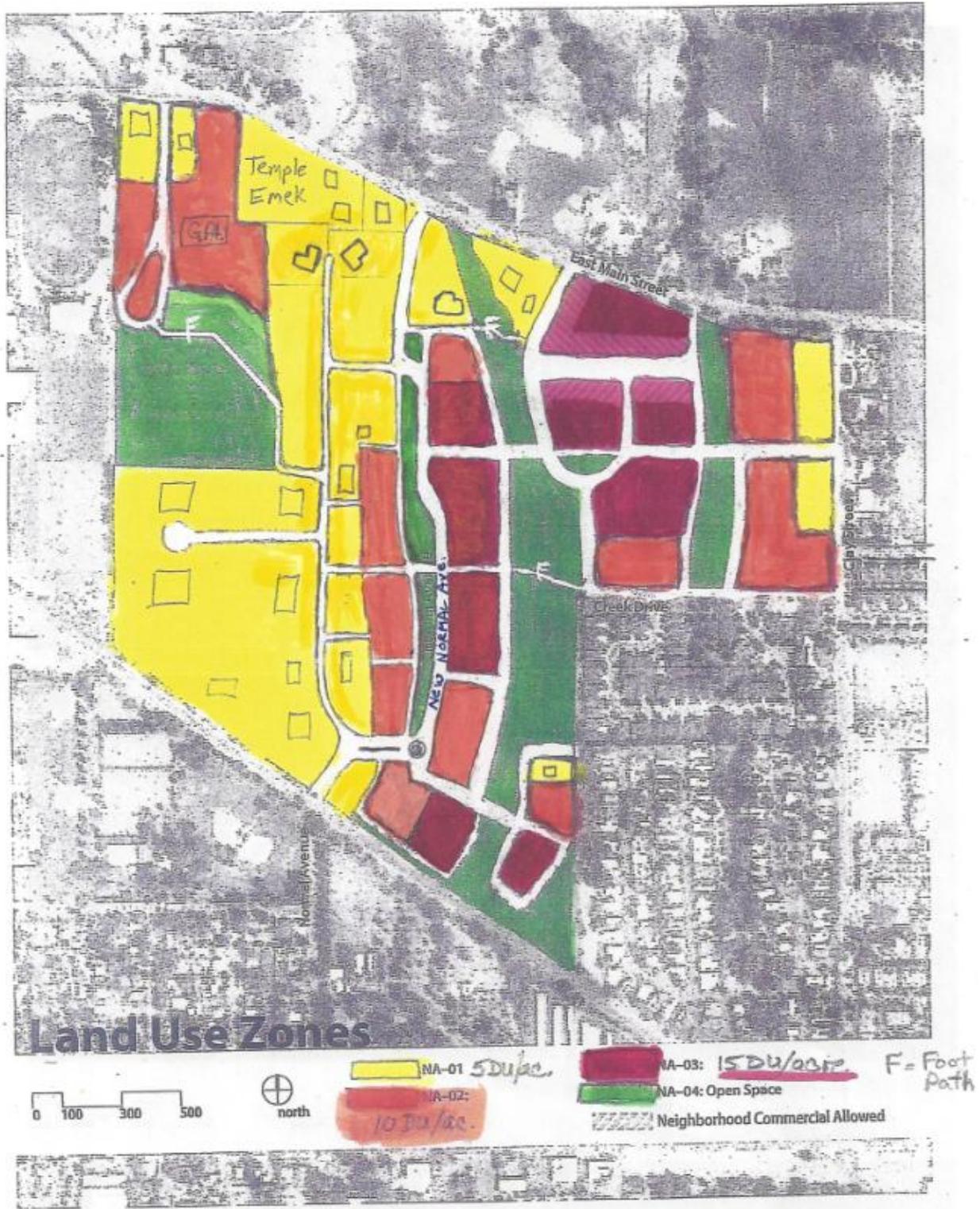
Thanks for your thoughtfulness and time. I would also like to thank Brandon Goldman, Senior Planner, for all his expertise and patience in explaining and working with me to find viable solutions that will retain the goodwill of the community involved in this project.

Sincerely,

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cc: Brandon Goldman

Submitted Illustration by Sue DeMarinis:



9/24/13 → modified by Sue 10/23/13 → 10/31/13