Neighbors of Belknap Lookout Development Committee Meeting Notes October 16, 2018

Committee Members Present: Elianna Bootzin Brian Bremer Todd Leinberger

Don Rietema Dean Rosendall Loren Sturrus

Gretchen Warnimont

Jason Vos (RJM) came to share the final round of drawings for Coit Square. Angel attended as well to help provide context. Todd will still not vote. Jason reviewed the statistics and the current drawing.

Gretchen inquired about space between the house on Fairbanks and the parallel parking – there is 10 feet from the fence in the Fairbanks house's lot, and another 5 feet of green space on the Coit Square side. Curbside is also available for parking. The project is down to three curb cuts! Jason verified that a similar material will be used on the corner house facing Fairbanks – there will not be any vinyl facing the street. The retaining wall towards Trowbridge has stair access west for residents coming up from the alley. There will be a landscape barrier there for the neighbors, but not a fence. This version of the project addresses a number of issues from previous meetings.

Several of those present still felt that the density should still come down a bit. Acknowledging that numbers are arbitrary, it would still be nice to get down to 46. There was general appreciation for the offstreet parking and greenspace, and Loren pointed out it would benefit nearby property values. There is still worry that it is not affordable for our neighbors. Gretchen urged the developer to do a good job. Elianna reminded the group of the housing crunch in the city and suggested that since the block is being rebuilt anyway perhaps it would be beneficial to put as many units there as possible to ensure more of the other units in the neighborhood remain available for existing neighbors. She also suggested that, since one of the City's criteria in assessment brownfield applications is public benefit, it may be beneficial to consider what improvements might be needed at Coit School; she will make some introductions. Angel pointed out that the project meets the definition of affordable and is also walkable and beautiful. Based on lot size, the maximum that could be built on that block is 88 units so by comparison this project is very spread out. Angel also expressed concern that Dean may have a business interest counter to the success of this project. Todd noted how the neighborhood has been changing and that this project is in line with the increased density around it. While our guts might suggest a preference for less than 50 units, he reminded us to consider a data driven approach (lot area per unit). Dean assured the group that his recommendations for this project are intended to help make it as good as it can be. The group clarified that the view from the street remains the same. Loren spoke about our goal of maintaining a diverse neighborhood. Gretchen said many families are gone already.

Ultimately the group agreed to move the project forward to the NOBL board with a notation requesting 43-50 units.

Brad Rosely from Third Coast then stepped in to share their progress responding to the mixed income housing RFP issued by Grand Valley. Elianna, Todd and Loren served on that committee, and Todd and Loren remained involved through their selection by and lot lease from GVSU. The RFP defined the number of units, and a desire for a mixture of income levels though still primarily affordable to maintain the diversity of the neighborhood. At the time of selection, it was an incomplete design but an obvious choice. Third Coast has experience with development of housing for low income populations and the look and feel seemed appropriate. Some notable aspects of the project include porches, off-street parking, and a sloped roof to match the preferences of the neighborhood. The RFP specified that the project could be a maximum of 3 stories, GVSU needs and MSHDA rules for financing are layered on top. The project includes some 3 bedroom units, and could reference Diamond Place as a comparable recent endeavor. There was some inclination from the group to tweak the color. The breakdown of units is:

5 studio, 28 single bedroom, 13 two bedroom and 4 three bedroom. Something like 10 would be affordable for people at 30% of area median income. A one bedroom would therefore be \$373 or \$393, a two bedroom \$785, etc. The units would be first come first serve, all with the same finishes – stainless steel applicances, some opportunities for tandem parking for a total of 50-70 parking spots, a community room, etc. There will be ADA units available. There are breaks between buildings to help with the massing, sidewalks between them for walkability, bike storage and more. The roof is technically flat in back but that will only be visible from the top floors of the Finkelstein building. Curb cuts are on Lafayette and Prospect, as opposed to where there is one now on Trowbridge. Some of the parking will be covered since the building is cantilevered. They are using Integrated Architecture. Materials include Hardie, brick and masonry (NOT bela brick which is concrete). The drawing shows a metal roof but that will likely only be on the dormers, perhaps in nickel or brass. The leasing office will be more towards the campus, on Lafayette, and there may be a workout room. The group felt the project overall provided a good transition from campus to neighborhood. Again there was some thought about changing the color. It was described as fitting better by the college, though some even said institutional or reminiscent of a dorm. The group liked the setbacks along Trowbridge and the roof calling back to the church. It has a good walking feel. Most of the roof will likely use asphalt shingle. Generally speaking the building should age well (it has a "timeless" quality), parking is good, and we liked the porches. Dean inquired about the possibility of a third floor setback, which is a no go, a larger central dormer, making the corner a bit bigger, and adding a porch for the Lafayette unit. Other suggestions included picnic tables in the greenspace. The project will use a dumpster.

The group agreed to move the project forward to the neighborhood association with the expectation of seeing a bit more treatment at the corner (they may try a wrap porch). We will find out if it is possible for an all metal ("standing seam" roof).

There was an inquiry about demand for 3 bedrooms. Although there are none at Diamond Place they are getting requests. Regarding exterior lighting, they will defer to the City.

The neighborhood may see this in November.