

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

East Lansing Businesses Form Opposition Group in Response to Albert Street Development Proposal

Over 20 businesses have signed a petition to stop the 530 Albert Avenue proposal which proposes to turn the Bailey Street parking lot into a 122 unit, 5 story, privately-owned, low-income workforce housing unit. The project will not add parking or replace parking lost and does not incorporate sufficient public or commercial space.

Citizens to Protect East Lansing Access (CPELA) is a group of East Lansing businesses and residents who support full access to the downtown business district for all who visit our community to shop, work and participate in cultural activities. The coalition is calling for transparency for decisions made by the city, community input and robust discussion concerning the future development of our town.

"What we are looking for in a downtown development is something that will provide East Lansing residents and visitors, more reasons to come downtown; another place to enjoy a meal, shop or connect with friends. This proposal does just the opposite. It only makes it more difficult to visit and will result in a decrease in the number of visitors to our downtown," says Wild Goose Inn owner Al Bay, a coalition supporter.

The Albert Ave. development as proposed will damage the existing businesses in the 500 block and beyond and will also harm the continued fostering of a vibrant downtown for visitors and shoppers. It will eliminate access to the designated art district during cultural events, restrict the flow of customers to businesses and create barriers to the handicapped and elderly. Further, it would occupy the last available retail space downtown without adding new business that could attract more visitors. This is simply the wrong location and design for new housing in East Lansing.

Supporters of CPELA seek recognition of the taxpaying citizens and enterprises that are the basis of our community. When local government makes decisions without adequate regard to outcomes for residents, property owners and businesses, and without transparency and clarity, we believe action must be taken. The evolution of East Lansing belongs to everybody, not just City Hall. CPELA is a voice for those who want to see our community grow responsibly with access for all, and to prevent projects lacking public scrutiny and proper design from damaging our neighborhoods and local businesses that provide culture, livelihoods, and jobs in the downtown area.

CPELA urges residents to attend the August 9th Planning Commission meeting at 7:00 PM at the Hannah Center on Abbott Rd. to debate the merits and shortcomings of this proposal, and to protest the lack of transparency exhibited by the City in trying to rush the project's approval process without adequate public notice or input. CPELA is prepared to defend the community interest against this project.

More information about the development and CPELA can be found at www.CPELA.org. Media Contact and Questions can be directed to:

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