

To our fellow residents:

As many residents are aware, Wangard sent a letter to the village formally withdrawing their application for the development of the Reinder's property. For those of you that have made an effort to stay involved, this has meant a year of meetings and public input. There is a sense from a collection of people that those of us who are opposed to the development as it was proposed were "anti-development". This cannot be further from the truth. The vast majority of people we have spoken to are in favor of development of this property, but have felt that the development as proposed was unreasonable given the size of the parcel and access to it. A sprawling apartment complex in the heart of our small village did not seem to maintain the essence of why we all choose to live here.

We all want to see the village thrive, but as we delved into the details of the development we found that this was more than just "\$40 million dollars in tax revenue." It meant allowing a significant exemption for bonus density, clearing a generous amount of right of way property, approving tax incremental financing for site contamination cleanup, and extending the water main to and only to the property. It also meant allowing exceptions to the current building code height rules and changing the character of our treasured "Cave Road" among many other concessions. In my personal experience, when people hear about the development they feel it is a good idea until they learn the specifics. It is then that they realize that this sounds like something better suited for a larger community, larger property site, and with better access to higher density traffic routes. These sentiments were echoed at multiple ad-hoc committee meetings, a committee which no less was composed of village residents who were selected for their expertise to educate and provide feedback at the request of the developer. Again, they concluded what many of us had already voiced—the development as purposed is excessively large for the site and there are too many concessions being requested on the part of the village.

Some of you have probably seen the posters that are being emailed around with pictures of the site as it stands and the computer renderings of the development. To us, these posters are exactly the reason why we set out to create an email list—"Citizens for the Essence of Elm Grove at C.E.Elmgrove@gmail.com"—to actually provide people with facts and not just propaganda. We are not anti-development, we would welcome a development of the appropriate scale that fits the downtown and enhances the village. We also need to take into account that at this time, there are a number of potential developments that are poised to impact our community. This includes quite a few large apartment complexes that are currently under construction or are already approved, such as the 194 luxury apartment units just across the road in Bishop's Woods, the extension of Wisconsin Avenue, and the expansion of North Avenue. This is why we should continue to stay well informed and share accurate information with one another so that each one of us can develop a knowledgeable opinion. These opinions should be based on true facts and not just a photo of an industrial lot juxtaposed with a neat artist rendition of an apartment complex. This completely discounts the details of the discussions we have been having regarding the true issues in the past year. I encourage everyone to read the details of the property put forward by the developer themselves.

This village is an amazing place to live because of its people, the peace, and the strong sense of community. These are things we have all come to appreciate and yet maybe in the peace and quiet here, have forgotten how unique it is to have all this. Please contribute to the conversation and the direction that your leaders take by sharing your own informed opinion about issues that affect us all.

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Village web page containing development details, meeting minutes, and correspondence among many other documents - <http://elmgrovelibrary.org/index.aspx?NID=558>