

Aaron Panko

From: Chris Elbert <bigmopp@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 8:47 PM
To: Aaron Panko
Subject: Proposed Meyer Farm development - Subdivision Case No. SUB21-09

9/21/2021

Mr. Panko,

I am a property owner living on Kampstra St, approximately one block from the subject property. I have reviewed the proposal and have the following comments:

- I like that the development will be entirely single-family homes. I would not view it so favorably if apartments/condominiums were included. So I have nothing against the development itself.
- My chief concerns revolve around traffic congestion and pedestrian safety. Building this many new homes will result in a significant increase in traffic on the existing section of Hilfiker Ln out to Commercial St. The half-block of Hilfiker immediately east of Commercial already sees traffic backups from drivers shopping at Trader Joe's and Walgreens during most hours of the day, and adding 138 residences also using this access to Commercial St would just make this problem much worse.
- These problems mostly occur because the intersection of Hilfiker & Commercial is significantly under-engineered for the amount of traffic currently using it. It definitely will be less functional for any increase in its traffic. Re-designing the intersection is on the city's near-future agenda, so this needs to be fast-tracked and completed before allowing a significant increase in the neighborhood's population to take place.
- As the many businesses along Commercial will be within easy walking distance of the new development, it is natural to expect that there will also be a proportional increase in foot traffic along Hilfiker. I assume that adequate sidewalks will be included in the new development. However, there are few sidewalks currently in the existing neighborhood. Right now, there's only a sidewalk along the south side of Hilfiker; there is no sidewalk at all on the north side. The side streets to the north (12th and Kampstra) also lack sidewalks. I foresee this being a significant safety issue, as the combination of increased vehicle and increased pedestrian traffic will create a dangerous situation for both, walkers especially. This also really needs to be addressed in city and developer plans before people begin moving into the new homes.
- It should also be expected that the extension of Hilfiker Ln down to Battle Creek Rd/Pringle Rd will see significant use as a connector to/from Commercial St. by new residents, current residents, and outsiders. The few existing streets that join these two major road are roundabout and windy, while the newly-extended Hilfiker looks to be much more direct. So over time, increased traffic will gravitate to using it. And this will be especially dangerous since cars driving eastbound on the Hilfiker extension will be going downhill and will naturally pick up speed past these new homes. I'm especially concerned about children being at risk here. So safety needs to be a foremost consideration in designing the Hilfiker extension.
- The inclusion of some open space is very welcome, and in conjunction with the city's proposed development of Hilfiker Park will be a great addition to our neighborhood. I hope also that some way is included to create walking access from our neighborhood to Hilfiker Park, which currently is unavailable to us.

Thank you for listening to my concerns.

Sincerely,

Chris Elbert
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