



MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
WORTHINGTON ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
WORTHINGTON MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSION
June 29, 2015

The special meeting of the Worthington Architectural Review Board and the Worthington Municipal Planning Commission was called to order at 6:52 p.m. with the following members present: Richard Hunter, Chair; Kathy Holcombe, Secretary; Mikel Coulter; Amy Lloyd; and Edwin Hofmann. Also present were: Scott Myers, Worthington City Council Representative for the Municipal Planning Commission; Lee Brown, Director of Planning & Building; Lynda Bitar, Planning Coordinator and Clerk of the Municipal Planning Commission; and Melissa Cohan, Paralegal. James Sauer, Vice Chair; and Thomas Reis were absent.

Mr. Hunter called the meeting to order at 6:52 p.m., and all present recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Hunter explained that this evening's event was just an informational meeting only concerning the United Methodist Children's Home (UMCH) property and the preliminary concept by the developer, Lifestyle Communities. He introduced the guest speaker David Fisher, who is the founding principal of Kephart Fisher LLC, who is representing their client Lifestyle Communities.

Mr. Fisher said that he is a past Board member and past Chair for the United Methodist Children's Home, and he currently serves on the Board of Wesley Family Services located in Worthington, Ohio. Mr. Fisher explained that there are not any back room deals and that is not how they do business. He introduced other members of the Lifestyle Communities team that he brought with him: Mr. Michael DeAscentis, the founder and chairman of Lifestyle Communities, Mr. Chase Miller, who is in charge of land planning, and design, Mr. Anthony Lococo, also part of the land planning and design team, and Ms. Maria Gargrave, who is in house counsel for Lifestyle Communities.

Mr. Fisher said that they have a special website set up so people can view the presentation online. Updates will also be posted on the website (www.umchdevelopment.com or as an email feedback@umchdevelopment.com). The City of Worthington also has a link on their website. Mr. Fisher said that they will continue to keep an open dialogue while working with the Board members, city administration and the public.

Mr. Fisher said that he was glad to see a standing room only crowd. The number of people from the community that are in attendance, shows how important this project is to you. He said this project is also important to UMCH and Lifestyle Communities, so their hope is to be able to work together to find some common ground, and find a way to move forward together on this very important and strategic piece of property in the City of Worthington.

Mr. Fisher outlined what he wanted to accomplish at the meeting. He wanted to demonstrate their continued efforts to have a dialogue with the city administration, the Municipal Planning Commission and Architectural Review Board, and with the citizens of Worthington. Mr. Fisher said that he also wanted to provide some background and history of the United Methodist Children's Home.

The United Methodist Children's Home has owned land in this area for over one hundred years. The land extended from Dairy Queen to Shoedinger's on the west side of High Street and went all the way to the river. Back in those days the Children's Home was an orphanage that took care of children from broken homes and their mission was to teach the children how to be farmers or housewives. The boys would be sent out in the morning with a hoe and make a row that went all the way down to the river. They would jump in the river for a swim, and then make another row on their way back up to the house. He said that UMCH's mission has changed a little over the years but their main focus is primarily to serve children in need. UMCH has been a responsible member of the Worthington Community for over one hundred years, they are today, and they will remain a responsible member of the community in the future. They are not just selling off the land to take the money and run. Their sole member is the United Methodist Church, the west Ohio Conference, who has their headquarters at that site, and will continue to remain to have their headquarters there. UMCH is very concerned about how this site is going to be developed, and how the Methodist Church is treated in that process with respect to the church's headquarters remaining on that site.

Mr. Fisher said that when he joined the UMCH Board about ten years ago, this land was viewed as Holy ground, never to be sold by the Children's Home. At that time, UMCH had a very active residential treatment program. UMCH has owned that land for over a hundred years, and people could not have imagined that UMCH would ever dispose of the land, but things change. He said that the local community was part of that change. Many of the nearby residents were troubled by the events that occurred a few years ago when some of the children in the treatment program got out into the nearby neighborhood and caused some personal injury and harm. He said UMCH completely understood those concerns, but as a social service agency, they had to live by the rules, and could not lock the children indoors. Some of the residents spoke up in the community and some called the state social service agency and said that these problems cannot continue. There was a huge community outcry, and when that occurred, UMCH conceded to those demands, they did not challenge that decision, they accepted the will of the community, and decided that they would no longer serve as a residential treatment facility. That decision put a series of events in motion because UMCH no longer needed that acreage. Children were no longer being served, and the buildings are very costly to maintain. Something had to change. In 2008, UMCH consulted with some developers, and were working on a project for about eight months, but because of the downturn in the economy the developer decided they did not want to proceed. Mr. Fisher said that they went back to the drawing board and that is when more consultants were hired to come up ideas. Nothing happened until UMCH was approached by Continental Realty and they said that they wanted to buy the land. Mr. Fisher said that UMCH held a public meeting such as this one, and after that meeting, Mr. Cass decided that he did not want to proceed with building a Giant Eagle on this site. He said it was an open process throughout and this will be an open process this time.

City officials asked UMCH to put things on hold while they proceeded with a community wide process and come up with a comprehensive plan designed only for the UMCH property to determine how your property should develop. UMCH officials said okay, and they went off the grid for a few years while the city went through this public process to come up with a comprehensive plan. He said that he understood that there are a few people in the room that do not agree with the comprehensive plan, but all groups are working together to come up with a plan. Several developers had contacted UMCH during this process while they were asked to stand down while the community went through this process. Around the time this comprehensive plan was adopted, Lifestyle Communities contacted them to say they did not just want to be their developer, they want to own the property, and they had some exciting commercial medical users that they would like to bring to the City of Worthington. He said that they all share common ground, and all parties want what is best for Worthington. This ground needs to be developed in a manner that will strengthen the social fabric and the economic base of the City of Worthington while preserving its unique history and culture. Both UMCH and Lifestyle Communities want to be respectful of the community's views and opinions and they hope to receive the same in return while working through this process together.

Mr. Fisher said that he wanted to touch on economics while he had the podium. How this property is developed will have a significant impact on the tax base for the City of Worthington and its schools. This is property that has not seen much tax paid on it. Depending on how this property is developed, it can either put a lot of children in the schools, or it may not put a lot of children in the schools. The less children that go in the schools, and the more tax dollars to the schools that is a win-win situation for everybody. If this property is developed as it is proposed, there will be a significant increase in the amount of income tax dollars to the City of Worthington from high income individuals that will be working in Worthington on that site in the medical profession that will add stability and longevity to the current tax structure in the City of Worthington.

Mr. Fisher said that he wants people to understand, that while he is wearing his UMCH hat, he has to talk about where UMCH is going from here. This project has had an incredible impact on their mission as a social service agency. This is just a real estate deal. He wants people to understand that when newspaper articles come out negative about the UMCH site and all these terrible things that are about to occur, it has an impact on the families that they serve and an impact on the social service network that works with them and refers children to them. They do not see a difference between a real estate deal in Worthington, Ohio and the social services that UMCH provides. He asked the audience to please keep that in mind when they choose to make public comments in newspapers. UMCH is very proud of their mission and accomplishments. Every dollar that comes out of this sale will go back into their mission of helping hurting children and their families and that is not going to change, and he asked everyone to keep that in mind. There are no timelines at the moment. UMCH plans to continue working with everyone for a while to determine what the real issues are and what the best way is to develop this property before an application is filed and that process begins.

Mr. Fisher introduced Mr. Chase Miller, the head of land development for Lifestyle Communities (LC), who is going to give a presentation on the exact plan. Mr. Miller thanked everyone for their

time and for the opportunity to be a part of their community. The plan he presented consisted of a mix use, traditional or village style, walkable plan. Mr. Miller said he was going to give the audience a little bit of background information on LC, the developer, the Worthington Comprehensive Plan, and the plan that LC is proposing which is preliminary in nature.

Mr. Miller said that he first wanted to discuss some background information about LC. LC was started over seventeen years ago in central Ohio by Michael DeAscentis, Sr. & Jr., where they are still headquartered. Since that time they have developed over 10,000 multi-family and single family homes, both for sale and for rent. They are currently developing and operating a portfolio of over 5,000 multi-family units in three states and four markets. They have locations in Columbus, Louisville, Kentucky and Nashville, Tennessee. Mr. Miller said that LC is a build to own developer which means they do not build communities and walk away, they own and operate their properties on a long term basis.

LC has its own in-house development department, construction services, an in-house property management company, The Goat restaurants and fitness facilities. Their success has been largely driven by their development of townhouse style condominiums that were unique to the market at that time in 1998. They are proud to say that they survived the recession with their core values intact and employee over three hundred people. They were named by Columbus Business First as one of the Top 10 places to work, an honor that they have received for three consecutive years. Mr. Miller said they are excited about what they are planning today are mixed use walkable developments that include a full spectrum of housing like the plan that they are proposing tonight.

Mr. Miller said that empty nester housing market is still underdeveloped. Children have left home and homeowners would like to down size. Location is more important than ever and people want to live and invest in integrated communities. Their mission as a developer is to meet those needs with mixed use communities that deliver high quality housing and a high quality way of living. LC believes that the UMCH site is the perfect opportunity for this project.

Mr. Miller continued to discuss the background of the site, and that ten pages were added to the Comprehensive Plan. He reviewed three of the seven goals that are outlined in the plan, and discussed how they have hired professional design consultants to help them achieve those specific goals. Mr. Miller said that this presentation will be available after this meeting on their website.

Mr. Miller began showing the actual plan, and said he would give more detailed information while going forward with the presentation. There are 571 residential units in total shown on the plan. There is also a medical office, mixed use retail and some additional office space, which makes up an urban style of development which will attract young professionals and empty nesters. Mr. Miller also discussed where the three traffic signals would be located, where the connection to Evening Street will be and traffic patterns in great detail in relation to connectivity.

Mr. Miller went on to discuss the breakdown the sight into four zones which is called for in the comprehensive plan. The single family homes near the Worthington Estates edge would be custom built by different builders, subject to the Architectural Review Board, and part of a homeowners association. LC will only be developing the land for those homes, and the lots would sell for between \$150,000 to \$200,000 each. LC will specify to the custom builders that the homes are to

be built on 1/3 to 1/5 acre lots and with 1 ½ to 2 ½ stories. The completed value of the homes will be between \$750,000 to \$950,000 dollars. Mr. Miller presented a rendering of the area to show to the audience.

Mr. Miller next discussed the transition zone of the property, which is in the middle of the development. He said that the comprehensive plan calls for high density in the area with 8 to 14 units per acre, and they are planning for the lower number of units in that area, which would amount to approximately 250 homes in that area. The cottage style of homes would be between 1 ½ and 2 ½ stories, and there would be a set number of floor plans to choose from. One third of those plans would be targeted for empty nesters. These homes will be built as soon as they are purchased they will not be built out ahead of time. He also described the town homes and those would be 2 ½ to 3 ½ stories high.

Mr. Miller reviewed the NDRC report, which was developed with the help of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), which discussed metropolitan area trends. What this plan discussed was the shift in housing demands. The families of the nineties that wanted larger single family homes and accounted for about 78% of that market, will only make up about 22% of that market between now and 2030. There is a trend for more empty nester housing.

The High Street zone was discussed next, which would consist of 350 apartments and a hand full of locations for office space. The headquarters for UMCH church offices would also be located in this area, with 20,000 to 30,000 sq. ft. The apartments will be on the higher end of the price range, anywhere from \$1,100 to \$1,600 dollars per month.

The next slides depicted an area inside Walt Disney World, which Mr. Miller said was the happiest place on earth. What people do not realize is that the main buildings in Disney are just front facades with mechanicals hidden back behind where people cannot see them, which would be similar to the High Street development. The parking garages would be hidden behind the structures that would be built along High Street. Mr. Miller reviewed the commercial guidelines from the comprehensive plan. He also discussed the amenities package that would be available such as a fitness facility and a restaurant called The Goat. The fitness studio will have different types of group fitness classes such as spinning and Pilates.

Mr. Miller also discussed the four park areas that would be located throughout the site. He mentioned a non-profit organization that works on projects for public spaces and they have concluded that in order to do place making, there are four qualities that great parks must have. Parks must be accessible, people are engaged in activities there, the place is comfortable and has a good image, and it's a sociable place, where people come together and visit. All of these components will be available in their park spaces. He further discussed the importance of walkability within the development. Mr. Miller discussed a book called "Walkable City", written by Jeff Speck, who describes his theory of walkability. Walkable cities are much more sustainable, more successful economically, and better for us in terms of our health. In order for walkability to exist there are four key components that must exist. The walk must be useful, safe, comfortable and interesting. Mr. Miller described how each component fit into their project and demonstrated examples. Mr. Miller thanked everyone for their time and listening to the presentation.

Mr. Hunter explained that the question and comment portion of the meeting would be next.

Ms. Beth Mitchell of 58 Larrimer Ave., Worthington, Ohio. I am representing the WARD planning group who greatly appreciates UMCH, LC, and the City for hosting this meeting to share potential development plans of the UMCH property. WARD is a citizens group that was formed in 2012. Their mission statement identifies their goal as to ensure that the development of the UMCH property is done responsibly, with the consideration of benefits to the citizens. Over the past three years, WARD has been actively engaged in the process of the development of the property. WARD understands the need of UMCH to sell the property, and WARD believes that there is an obligation to the community regarding the development of the property. WARD's request is that the developer and UMCH consider what is developed and how it will affect the community long term even after UMCH and the developer are less engaged than they are today. They continue to believe the importance of open communication between the citizens of Worthington, UMCH, LC, and the City. This is a legacy piece of property in the main section of Worthington, forty-two acres which is mostly green space. Once asphalt or concrete is poured there is no turning back. WARD has previously expressed concern over the lack of proposed green space, the housing density, and the traffic to be generated by the proposed streets. The City previously hired MKSK as a consultant for the development and they stated that a growing and surviving city needs to attract young professionals who want to live in rental properties instead of owning a home. Therefore, there is a believed demand for apartments, which is hot right now, as witnessed by all of the apartment projects popping up all over Columbus, but what about long term. We believe that there are a lot of young professionals or millennials, those born after 1983, who strongly disagree that millennials want to live in apartments in Worthington. Columbus Dispatch, on June 7th, 2015, referenced a new study that indicated 82% of adult millennials said that it is important to have an opportunity to own a home with a backyard. WARD believes a re-evaluation of what is needed for Worthington is necessary, does Worthington really need 350 new apartments. There is a lack of housing in Worthington for empty nesters who want to down size. A WARD survey indicated that most Worthington residents, 86%, were in favor of green space and other types of public uses. Citizens have spoken at City Council meetings and many residents have commented on WARD's Facebook page to voice their desire for more green space. WARD does not believe that it is appropriate for Tucker Creek acreage to be included in the count of green space on the UMCH property. It is very misleading to include that land as part of the green space. WARD is in favor of there being a larger amount of green space. If anyone would like more information about WARD please check out our website at www.wardworthington.org.

Ms. Susie Kneedler of 263 Weydon Rd., Worthington, Ohio. I would like to echo Ms. Mitchell's comments and would like to see more consultations with experts in urban forestry, and experts that have designed the parks in London, England, since LC spoke about examples of the parks in London, and how to have low density, more greenery, and one story senior housing. I believe that this will change Worthington forever and the city will not be able to handle the increased amount of traffic, smog, noise and pollution. I believe that more research is needed.

Mr. Benjamin Coifman of 625 Seabury Dr., Worthington, Ohio. This development will increase Worthington's population by 10% and increase the number of voting age adults by even more than

that. The 571 housing units would increase the number of houses in Worthington by even more than 10%. The LC development will consist of 60% rental units compared to Worthington's current housing stock which is under 20%. The density of the proposed rental units would be about ten times the current average of Worthington.

I am concerned that LC would only be developing the higher density units while the rest of the structures would be built by a third party developer. I am also concerned that the price of the new housing units would be double or triple the amount of the current homes in nearby neighborhoods, and if those housing units did not sell well, would LC then convert that area to high density rental units. Worthington has reason to be cautious with developers because there are several recent examples of speculated real estate developments that have fallen far short of the promise. Some of the planned condominiums became rental units and in another case only half of the buildings were actually built leaving prime real estate sitting vacant. These problems are not related to LC, they did a good job of maximizing the number of units according to the comprehensive plan. I believe the comprehensive plan is the problem, not the developer. I am also concerned about the amount of traffic that will be generated and spoke about the example of the Dublin-Granville Road area and how congested the area is near St. Rt. 315. How can a city attract young professionals with an area so congested with traffic? The UMCH property is not right for large developers. In LC response to WARD, they said that they would need to build a minimum of 570 units for the development to be viable. At a lower density, this area would be attractive to smaller developers offering fewer houses at a time. In the comments from LC responses to WARD they said that the values of the 21 1/3 acre undeveloped lots would sell for between \$150,000 to \$250,000 dollars apiece. If that developer cannot offer the type of development that the community wants then we need to figure out what kind of incentives are needed to attract the right developers to deliver what is appropriate for Worthington. I strongly suggest maintaining the existing ratio of rental to owner housing which is about 20%. One thing a large developer can bring is a large infrastructure, but that does not have to come from the developer. UMCH could pursue a special improvement district or similar that Worthington could use the additional income to pay for the roads and infrastructure as portions of the site are developed. Instead of having an abrupt change in the retail and office density the plan should provide retail and commercial space along High Street at a high density. The success of the retail development should not be dependent on having 550 high density housing units within a three block area.

Ms. Kathy Hamer of 160 Longfellow Ave., Worthington, Ohio. I would like to echo my concerns about the high density and number of apartments. I am also concerned about the three or four story structures that would be located near Larrimer Ave. There is only one building near Caren Ave. that is three stories high. I feel that this area will be overbuilt and too large. I do like the plan for community space and would like to see more of that, such as something similar to Schiller Park in German Village that would promote good weather outdoor activities.

Ms. Ellen Scherer of 112 E. New England Ave., Worthington, Ohio. I would like to echo the comments of the previous speakers.

Mr. Roger Beck of 6695 Hayhurst St., Worthington, Ohio. I would like to echo the comments of the previous speakers. I also want to thank the WARD organization for their information. I have a spoiler alert for Mr. Miller of LC though, Worthington is already a walkable community. I grew

up in Worthington and graduated from Worthington Schools. I was also a teacher in the district for twenty-four out of thirty six years, and still live in Worthington. I have a comment about the discussion about Easton Town Center being a great place to relax, Worthington already has that too at the Graeter Ice Cream Store in downtown Worthington. We do not need Disney like designs in the neighborhood. I feel that the density is too high, and the amount of traffic that would be generated would be too heavy. I understand that the city gets its money from income tax, but why are so many apartments being built, and such a small amount of commercial and office space. I've also heard that apartments and single family homes do not pay their way through the schools. I am very concerned about what will happen to the schools. What happens when people do not want to pay more taxes? How much money does UMCH want for the land? I want to know if there is a magic number of how much that land would cost, and if would people be willing to pay for the land through a millage.

Sean Demaree of 313 Highland Ave., Worthington, Ohio. I am also concerned about the density and the amount of traffic. Building 350 apartments would make this more of a transient community where people move in and out year after year, and why would Worthington want that kind of population that doesn't care about establishing roots? I believe an increase of that type of population will increase the crime rate. If I paid a million dollars for a house I definitely would not want to be looking at an apartment building. I also want to make a point about LC. LC engages in a practice called sub metering. They install their own electric meters and they allow no natural gas, so it is an all-electric community. Then, they take an eighty dollar electric bill and make it a one hundred and sixty dollar electric bill, which is perfectly legal in the state of Ohio, but that is an underhanded and unfair practice. I am also concerned about losing the soccer field, and would like to see a green space that includes a soccer field.

Ms. Kay Keller of 670 Morning St., Worthington, Ohio. I would like to support and applaud that speakers that have spoken already. I agree the density of the number of housing units is too high. Why is the least favorite of the different types of housing units (apartments) the greatest percentage of this development? LC says that they may or may not have estate style housing and maybe a third party would build those, but what if they do not build those houses? A traffic study is not necessary to know how congested traffic will be with additional housing units. The traffic is already congested. How will this project affect future development and re-development along North High Street? What will the impact of this development have on the schools? How many more teachers will be needed? Will the schools have to redistrict to accommodate the new students? This developer has already built several kinds of these apartments all over Columbus, so where is the uniqueness for Worthington? The most important aspects of the new urbanism are the diversity, and the community interaction that it is designed to encourage and in differentiating places that we care so much about so that we don't feel that it is like every other place. I believe that this will set the tone for future development. I seriously question if this is in Worthington's best interest to have this site developed on such a large scale. I feel that this is designed to maximize the value of the land for the seller and to maximize the profit for the developer. What will this project do for the quality of life in Worthington? Worthington is a two hundred year old town that does not need a Disney like Main Street.

Mr. Tom Carter, of 2178 Castle Crest Dr., Worthington, Ohio. There are some facts that people need to face. Columbus is growing and is expecting the population to grow by another half million people by the year 2050. There is a trend of people wanting to live inside the outer belt loop. People want to live in denser, walkable communities. I believe that this developer has come up with a pretty good overall plan. Good planning takes time, and quality materials will age well. There is not going to be a park here unless people want to pony up the money like Mr. Beck suggested, so there is going to be development in this location. Worthington is going to see density, this is just a fact of life. The closer you live to downtown, the more you are going to be subject to density. It is important to work with the developer to see if we can come up with a mix of uses and solutions that can work. They have a talented group of world class designers, the developer is local, and UMCH has been here for over one hundred years. This is a great team they have put together. Let's take the time and effort and go through the process without being cynical, and make this the best it can be. Density will be coming to Worthington at some point in time and that is called progress. This developer has a vested interest in this property so let's give this a shot, and see what this developer can do to meet everyone's needs.

Ms. Paula Ryan, of 1044 Firth Ave., Worthington, Ohio. I am a 57 year resident of Worthington, and I have driven past the UMCH property almost every day of my life. I agree with what Mr. Carter said, there is going to be development here, and there needs to be development here. We need to work with whoever the developer is to make it the right thing. I do question the density, but believes the plan is adjustable. This is progress for the City of Worthington. For me personally, I have two grown children that I would like to see live here. My son is 24 years old, and works as a city planner. He would like to live in a walkable community. I look at this like a step to the future.

Mr. Doug Foust, 276 Highgate Ave., Worthington, Ohio. I am also a lifelong resident of Worthington. Commercial property along High Street is not a bad thing. I have been scratching my head over the UMCH project process over the past couple of years and I cannot reconcile why there is this disconnect between what so many neighbors have said and this succession of plans, conceptual or otherwise, of what it looks like. While several of those in city management seem incredulous when I say this, but there is a great sense on the part of so many that residents are not being heard. It finally hit me that the problem is the comprehensive plan. The plan has several basic fundamental flaws.

First, the plan embraces the notion that more single family housing is a bad thing, and that there is little or no room for it, and that is to be avoided. The plan states that only high density housing is logical. Single family homes are what attracted people to Worthington in the first place. Worthington cannot compete with the Short North. Worthington would like to stay as it is. Secondly, the plan is built around some demographic data. I found the sources for the pie charts on the plan which shows income, or one two or three residents, and he has come to realize that that data was edited and fails to present the complete picture. Specifically the plan refers repeatedly to underserved twenty something young professionals, ages 21 to 34, who are already the largest group in 43085. Third and finally, despite the assertions of the city manager and others, this is not a consensus document. The consensus means a majority, and you cannot call it a consensus until you run it past the residents at large. The UMCH speaker quoted that there has to be some trust

on the part of city management, but that trust has to be earned. Before entertaining this or any other plan you need to reevaluate portions of the comprehensive plan in the face of public input.

Ms. Wanda Davis, 6635 Masfield St., Worthington, Ohio. The definition of progress includes maybe not doing something to the land. I understand that the property development needs to be seen from not only from a financial point of view but from a holistic point of view. The development should not adversely impact the environment land, air, water, or people who live there presently. If you speak to FEMA, or if you read anything about the environment itself, the land, and how the particular property works, she would like to read a short response to that: "Development studies with FEMA will tell you that 90% of the rain water, ice and snow will create added runoff. Add that to the low permeability of the clay soil and glacial terrain makeup that slows ground water absorption rates, capacity is already a water drainage issue at the closest neighborhood. Added volume of water combined with current levels will also create further erosion in the neighborhood gullies, and along the Olentangy River banks due to new water velocity levels. It is unknown whether the existing culverts are large enough in diameter to accommodate more runoff. Consider the herbicides, pesticides, pathogens and other toxins, gas, oil, etc., road salt and debris that will be picked up and enter the ground water and street drains that exhaust into the Olentangy. This water fills our watershed. Nitrates in nearby watersheds are already an alarming red flag."

People have already spoken about the traffic on Evening Street, but it is very important to note that Evening Street School and the entrance to the high school is along that street and I think that there is a risk of danger to our children in this area. Heavier car and truck traffic on High and these streets would also impact and perhaps interfere with police, fire, municipal and nursing businesses. Revenue is necessary but the primary development should be to create a central park with building development to be determined. There should be no housing construction. The younger family generation faces the heaviest burden and they do not have the advantages we had of a rising economy, which is no longer. This group is straddled with national debt that earlier generations have created, a difficult employment market and ever increasing global impacts on our livelihoods. For ethical reasons, we should develop this central piece of land to help them raise their families and give them a place of well-being and healthy development and educational opportunities for their children, but a place benefiting and used by the entire community as well. Plans like this would not only avert an environmental disaster, vehicle frustrations at the crisis created by people in a high density situations and management problems but if this is a legacy property, has been said, then creating a space that carries on the earlier work of caring about each other should continue on that space. The Worthington City Council should investigate buying the property, they should consult a municipal financial advisor or seek other models and find an underwriter for Municipal long term bonds.

Mrs. Jo Rodgers, of 575 Evening St., Worthington, Ohio. I have been involved in the whole process over the past two years and the result in the chosen direction regarding the UMCH property as it is currently laid out in the comprehensive plan. It was an exhaustive process. It was fully open to the public, broadly publicized, written about in the Worthington News, published on the city's website, and communicated to WARD members by the city and more broadly by the WARD and city email list. This involved public meetings, public input, public tours, and then more

meetings and more input. Once done our best hope was that we would find a developer who would buy into our vision for the property, and from what I see, we have one. I am grateful and thrilled that there was someone out there that had the same vision for what the property could be that we the city itself had. I applaud the efforts that our plans are taken to heart. The plan isn't perfect but what I have seen so far this developer is willing to work with us. I share the concerns of many that the traffic will be more than just problematic, but I am encouraged that two separate studies are being done to examine the issue. The results of the studies will be the very best guide in how we move forward. Beyond saying that there will be more traffic, it is certainly a given, but I am content to wait for that result before making an uneducated guess on an overall impact. Tied to the traffic issue is density. If as many are speculating traffic issues do loom with the proposed density then ways to reduce proposed density will need to be found. There will always be those that are in disagreement with development but however, the comprehensive plan is our guidebook, built by our input to guide us as we change and grow. I would encourage the Board, Commission and Council to keep this guidebook firmly in mind as this process moves forward. We spent a great deal of time and energy creating our plan and now we are at the implementation stage. I encourage the Board and Commission to stick with the plan and work to make the end product the best it can be.

Mr. William Brown, of 60 W. North St., Worthington, Ohio. Listening to the first two speakers reminded me about a Mark Twain story about going to church. The preacher started off really well and Mark thought he was going to put twenty-five dollars on the plate and the preacher kept going so he thought he would cut that down a little bit. The preacher kept on going so he decided to knock the amount down a little more to five dollars. When the plate finally came around he took five dollars off the plate. All I know is what I read in the papers. This one paragraph in a particular mailing of LC includes a large portion that needs zoning changes in order to construct the apartments. I have heard nothing tonight about what those zoning changes are and that is just a knit picking thing. I second the person that asked would we be willing to tax ourselves to own this land. I believe paying what I pay on North Street that I could stand paying a little more taxes if I liked what they were going for and I suspect a lot of other people would feel the same way.

Ms. Susan Jones, of 6506 Masfield St., Worthington, Ohio. I went to a couple of those comprehensive plan meetings and I would just like to say that I never heard anybody say once that they a three story apartment buildings or homes and cottage homes that could be 2 ½ to 3 stories. I just wanted to be on record that I object to that height and I am also not happy with the building so close up to the street. This is a historic town not an urban setting.

Mr. Chet Ridenour, of 398 Highgate Ave., Worthington, Ohio. First of all I want to give a big thank you to everybody here who is coming to express their opinion. We need to hear everybody's opinion, even Mr. Carter's. In an effort not to repeat everybody's position, I would like say whatever plan you decide on, I think a lot of people in the community have felt a little bit sucker punched by the Planning & Zoning Committee in that I have referred to the CF Bank that was originally approved for a one story, 4000 sq. ft. building. It is actually a two story, 8000 sq. ft. building. Also the Hoying development at the mall was originally supposed to be a 4 story residential facility and now is higher than that because Mr. Hoying came back and said that in order to make this economically viable we need a variance for two more stories for commercial.

My concern is that what is LC comes in here and go, whatever plan is approved, are you guys going to go into a much smaller gathering and say, oh yeah, we will approve a zoning ordinance instead of 350 apartments, we will now have 550 apartments to make it economically viable. I would just ask the planning and zoning whatever they approve will they tell us what you are approving, and make that the final plan. Don't put a variance in there so that we are getting something in the end that we are not expecting.

Mr. Justin Taylor, of 6510 Evening St., Worthington, Ohio. This project is literally in my backyard. I am like the new kid on the block, I have only lived in Worthington for 11 years. My kids go to Evening Street Elementary so we are hear for the long haul and I plan to die in that house. People have already made a lot of great points. I think I am going to go against the flow a little bit, but I think the comprehensive plan is actually directionally correct. There are concerns, I think the guardrails may be a little too wide, and density is a proxy for all of the things we worry about. Do we really need million dollar homes backing up to \$200,000 homes? What do you think about that? Think about the Giant Eagle, we are getting there. I just want to make one other point here, someone said that consensus is about majority, but consensus is also about the veto. This process is really important and so is the input. It is important to hold our city leaders accountable to managing this plan. Nobody is going to get what they draw up at home. Consensus is not about getting everything we want and please keep that in mind.

Mr. Adam Gibson, 306 Weydon Rd., Worthington, Ohio. I have talked with Matt Greeson and Doug Foust and I genuinely believe that there are no back room deals. I do believe something may be greasing the axel to make the needle lean to one side to either benefit the developer or to city income tax revenue. I am looking at this from a real estate perspective. I am an agent with Keller Williams. I look at this by the price point factor of the estate homes and the availability of the estate homes. So far this year Worthington has seen 380 homes come to market and are closing or pending. Currently now there are 30 active homes on the market. In Worthington Corporation limit proper, that number was only about 10 back in March. We have seen the effect of look what the Jones' got for their house, I'm going to hit the market, but what it also tells us is that there are 25 homes sitting on the market that are not meeting the needs of residents out looking for homes. An interesting point about that is that the price median is \$320,000 dollars, the average is \$383,000 dollars, so as we move the needle towards a million dollar mark I think you are pushing a price point that I don't think can be supported by a community like this. It can't be supporting old Worthington either. We don't sell million dollar houses in Worthington yet, but we are moving there. National Association of Realtors just published a study from 2011 to 2013, Worthington has the benefit of being the 3rd rated highest appreciating neighborhood in all of central Ohio behind Granville, and Galena. Look what Upper Arlington does, look what New Albany does, we are inside the 270 loop and we have seen an appreciation over that two year period of about \$12,000 dollars. Whoever is doing the studies can make the numbers look as good as they want. Depending what side of the table I am on am I going to be advantageous to my seller or advantageous to my buyer, and I don't necessarily have to be 100%. The last point I was thinking about looking at the renderings, there is about 100 feet from the tree line to the next dwelling. There is a strong fabric in the Worthingway neighborhood, and people may call this the Worthington Estates edge, but see a tremendous amount of demand, and I don't want to see lots sit there. \$150,000 to \$250,000 for the lots is double the market value. I got into the process a

little bit late. I did not see this meeting publicized in the Worthington News this week, I did not see the meeting publicized in Sunday edition of the Dispatch. With full honest communication we can revisit a plan of this nature after we really start studying the numbers and the traffic impact studies but I would like to continue the conversations forward.

Mr. Jim Cheney, of 579 Blandford Dr., Worthington, Ohio. I have been a resident for 45 years, and I wanted to give you an idea of what brought me to Worthington. What brought me to Worthington years and year ago was that I was doing a survey to find a new home for our business. I went all up and down the east coast, back and forth from the Chicago area, and somebody told me that there was a place for sale in Worthington, Ohio. I said, you have got to be kidding me General Electric is a pretty big corporation so we took a very serious look at this community. We like the plant, and the plant is still here employing many people, and I am still here too because I like it. Forty-two acres is not going to make a new town out of this place, but it can do something about making this a lesser town out of this place. The plan with all of the apartments tends to degrade what I consider Worthington to be. As we look at this again, I think that the developer has done a very good job of planning but there is almost too much that they are trying to put into that amount of acreage. One thing that I object to more than anything is moving the apartments closer to the center of town. I was not too happy when they built the apartments near the mall, I think they look terrible, but that is alright because people like them. I also do not think that what we do with this area is going to change the pie charts on the demographics. I'd like to see us keep thinking about the project and make sure we do something good.

Mr. Nathan Palmer, of 410 Pittsfield Dr., Worthington, Ohio. I have lived in Worthington for six years with my wife and two sons. My seven year old will be a first grader at Wilson Hill Elementary School and I am extremely concerned about density. This plan will put a serious burden on our schools. I am also a high school social studies teacher and I know that a development like this is going to place a burden on our schools. One of the things that makes Worthington great is that we have a neighborhood school system. My kids can walk to their school, but what I was recently concerned about was a quote from Vickie Gnezda, who is the Communications Director for Worthington Schools, and she was quoted saying, in regards to this development and where these kids would go to school, "While we currently have space in the elementary schools throughout the district we cannot guarantee student placement in the nearest school. I think that is a concern. I know you can't always get your kids into the nearest school but this shows that these kids, who I believe are currently slated to go to Evening Street Elementary, according to the district's boundary map, the school district understands that that might not happen. So, where are those kids going to go? There has apparently been some preliminary discussion about sending these kids to Wilson Hill Elementary School. I do not know how we are going to accommodate that level of students. I don't think all of the people who move into this area are going to be simply young professionals without children or people who are empty nesters. We have a great school system, and people like myself moved into this community for the schools. I can't envision how we are going to accommodate and adequately support the students that will go to those schools. The other concern that I have is that many of us feel that the leaders that we have elected are not really voicing what we are concerned about. We are concerned about density and we are concerned that this is going to be too much. I would recommend that we revisit this comprehensive plan. Maybe we need a new survey. I know the

City had some type of survey that I filled out online but there was no quantitative data with that survey. It was just qualitative where you could just comment on different things that you liked and didn't like about particular plans. Maybe we need to do something like WARD did. That was the most comprehensive survey that I think has been done so far. In that particular survey there were 750 residents that responded. Over eighty percent of those that responded were opposed to the three story apartments and density proposed by LC. Maybe we need a third party to come in and do a new study and find out what parts of this plan, or something like it, that people are opposed to or in support of.

Ms. Barbara Patrick, of 334 Crandall Dr., Worthington, Ohio. I just had one thing to say. I think we should use our intellect to think things through, and in my own personal opinion, you have to trust your gut. I think what bothers me is the word progress. What defines progress, and progress is inevitable. It is coming, but we should all agree as to what that means. There is something disturbing about it to me that hasn't been answered.

Ms. Angela Strous, of 58 E. North St., Worthington, Ohio. I can't tell you the number of times that I had conversations with other people about getting a single family house in Worthington. I recently received a letter asking me if I wanted to sell my house, and they don't even know me. I also have a friend that canvassed the area around Worthingway and Worthington Estates and gave every person on that street a letter asking them if they would like to sell their home. Recently, I have friends on W. North Street who purchased a house next to a home that was for sale and sold the same day that it went on the market. They were talking to the person next door and that person said, I'm interested in selling. So, I think this is a good first step, but we definitely need more single family homes.

Mrs. Suzanne Seals, of 123 E. New England Ave., Worthington, Ohio. I would just like to say that many of us moved to Worthington because of its history and historic buildings to provide us with a sense of place. We don't have to create an urban village to feel like we have a sense of place. I have begun to wonder if the problem may be that this is the city's vision and not the resident's vision. Mr. Fisher mentioned that he is very frustrated about the process, as is LC. I feel that the residents are frustrated with this process, and I would like to make a few comments about the process. I am recalling the 2013 envisioning process of UMCH that done by MKSK and this does not look very different to me, from that, not considerably different, in spite of the fact that we have been saying there is too much density, too little green space, traffic, safety, and congestion and we are concerned about the schools. All of these concerns compromise the quality of life for those of us that are living here right now, and that doesn't mention the fact that our taxes will go up too to provide services for these residences, that will be a drain on the city rather than bringing in money. What has happened to the WARD findings? They seem to have been ignored. Another question when will residents input, concerns, and ideas be factored in, or is this meeting just another opportunity for all comments to be heard and to simply become part of the public record. I certainly hope not, but based on the presentation, it seems to me that our public sediments and concerns still have not been addressed. The firm that did the envisioning process in 2013 and also created the initial vision and also wrote the comprehensive plan and we are told that that will be the measure of this proposed plan. Again, the process has mostly ignored public sediment and it seems to be following the city's own plan since day one. We are told that the developer has to

have the density to do the project, but perhaps it is the wrong developer. We have been reminded repeatedly by the city that they don't own the property, however, the city can control the development that would be permitted here. In closing, I heard some really disturbing comments from residents. One resident that I was speaking to said we are invited to speak and share our comments but our comments are ignored, and then he says, seems a little bit like Russia doesn't it. Perhaps extreme, but that is his perspective. Another comment someone shared with me, what do we have to do to get Council to stop thinking about Worthington as their own private fiefdom. These perceptions don't speak well for Worthington's residents' satisfaction with the direction of development that is being promoted by our city government and our leaders. Finally, trust and good will has been mentioned. I think the city, UMCH, and the developer need to earn our trust and our good will by honoring with their actions some of the concerns of residents who live here right now.

Mr. John Huntington, of 435 Highgate Ave., Worthington, Ohio. The problem that I see is manifold. When you multiply the number of housing units by the number of cars for each resident you will come up with about 1000+ cars, and there will be some residents that have more, and probably not many with less. That is a lot of cars going in and out of a 42 acres of land. I am going to say something really rude, but I see a ghetto, a bad ghetto in the making. This is too dense. People were worried about the crime from a few break-ins by the residents of the UMCH, which I believe were not major crimes, but when you start with a series of small apartments, and in a few years there gets to be a rapid turnover, you are creating a place where things will not be best. We have several instances such as the apartments on the east side of Worthington that have attracted police attention and I really think that that kind of density, right in the heart of Worthington, is a bad thing socially. What I hear from the community is a discomfort with the idea of this large of population moving into the center of a low density population. They assume that it is not going to be good, but I tend to agree with them. The smaller communities in Ohio have a luxury of peace and quiet and ease of living that is going to be disrupted by the density of this particular development. I think the developer said he needed 500 units to make this project viable. That is an economic concern of the developer. It is not the concern of the population of Worthington that they are economically successful. Our concern is for the quality of life that affects us here. I have lived here for 47 years and I am not intending to leave. The point of this is that we are dealing with something that is uncomfortable for a working, successful, popular and viable community, and we are throwing a very large monkey wrench into the works. We have talked about a lot of problems and I think that all of them are more or less true. One of the most interesting problems was discussed by the female that talked about drainage and water pollution. That is serious business. My opinion of this is not only back to the drawing board but back to the drawing board with some very specific limitations. We need a welcome useful greenspace that would allow for sporting events, and public gatherings. That is what I would like to see.

Mr. Rob Vodinelic, of 458 Highgate Ave., Worthington, Ohio. I am familiar with the quality of work that LC does around town but I believe there is a strong need for more single family housing. The cottage homes are probably a good idea, but I am really concerned about school density. Classroom size keeps increasing year after year after year. What I would like to see is maybe taking some of the tax money and expanding or modernizing the schools and not busing kids all

over town. Maybe the tennis courts on Evening Street can be moved to expand the elementary school.

Mr. Rick Trippel, of 6695 W. Schreiner St., Worthington, Ohio. I agree with the comments that I heard about disparity about the density, traffic concerns, but one concern I have is the look and character of this new development as compared to what is already there now. This will substantially change what Worthington looks like in another ten or twenty years even if it is successful. I'm not sure how traffic studies will help the flow of traffic on the side streets. I believe that the opening of Fresh Thyme will also greatly affect our traffic.

Mr. Dan Kowalski, of 200 Franklin Ave., Worthington, Ohio. I am a little bit younger than most of the people that have spoken tonight, so hopefully I will capture that demographic that they said was 30% of Worthington. I looked at this plan before I came to the meeting tonight, and I am excited about it. I understand other people's concerns, traffic does seem like it will be an issue. Currently, we don't have any kids, but the schooling does seem like an issue as well. My biggest take away is that there does seem to be a need for those things, but if we look at this piece of property it is just sitting there doing nothing right now. I do feel that something needs to be done with it. I feel like people my age either want to live in the city, but I don't feel that most want to live in a traditional suburb. I grew up in the Columbus area, and I am from Dublin originally. Before I lived here, I never knew what Worthington had to offer. I think it does have a lot of things to offer to people my age. My wife and I love the ability to be able to walk to old Worthington, go to the Farmer's Market on Saturday, and I think that you see a lot of people my age drawn to those facts. I think the concerns about the types of individuals that would move into the apartments isn't as big as an issue as they think. People that are younger want less commitment. We see that through a lot of social issues today. A lot of people don't want the responsibility of taking care of a home. These seem like viable options for people my age. I can't speak for everyone, and I won't, but those are the things that I observe about other people my age. I know a lot of people that like the Worthington area. I don't think that there is a big concern about the types of people that can afford to move into a \$1,600.00 apartment. Maybe if the prices go down because people cannot afford to live there. I guess I dream to be able to afford one of the houses in the back. After seeing the \$750,000.00 price tag, I don't see that in my foreseeable future. The pricing of the housing does seem too high. Thank you for putting this meeting together to hear what the people have to say about the matter, and hopefully there will be something meaningful that comes out of these meetings.

Ms. Judy Haager, of 306 E. New England Ave., Worthington, Ohio. When and where can we get further information about future meetings and update? Mr. Hunter explained that there are websites available to check for updates: www.umchdevelopment.com and www.worthington.org. This has been a good meeting, and probably not the last one. Thank you all for your commentary this evening. As we move forward with this process you will see a lot of changes and I look forward to further communication and dialogue between the Boards, the developer, the City, and the residents. Thank you very much for your time. Meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.