

Please share with the planning commission.
Thank you.

Sincerely,
Lynda Beaton, Mayor
Second District, City of Manistee
231 383 5945

Begin forwarded message:

From: Geri Helminiak <ghelminiak17@outlook.com>
Date: August 26, 2021 at 2:27:38 PM EDT
To: Lynda Beaton <lbeaton@manisteemi.gov>
Subject: Housing project

Mayor Beaton,
My name is Geri Helminiak. My husband Dale and I own our home at 267 Washington St. I'm writing today with regard to the low income project designated adjacent to our property. There is a chance I may not be available to attend the council meeting on the 2nd, therefore I wanted to contact you prior. As you will see in the content of my email, I feel very strongly about this issue. I don't wish to offend, but I also wish to be heard.

I have heard good things about the work that you do. Should you wish to contact me by means other than email, my cell number is 510-0311.

Thank you.

Please see below:

Logic tells me not to waste my time. Optimism tells me to at least try.

I'd like to ask a question. I realize this affordable housing unit slated to be erected on the corner of Washington and Oak Grove Veterans Drive, is being developed by the city's housing commission, but I'd like to know what the chances are of stopping this development? I also realize there are not many who will be as directly affected by this development as we will at 267 Washington St. Actually I'm not sure there are even many in the neighborhood who are aware of these plans other than the residents on the north side of Quincy Street who received the mandatory letter.

I'd like to give you just a little background so that you can understand why this is so upsetting to me. Our home here at 267 Washington is the house I grew up in. My parents purchased this house in approximately 1965. My father died in 1997. My mother died in 1998. My husband and I purchased the home at that time and have been here since, with the exception of about a year and a half. We raised our son here and our grandchildren now spend a large amount of time here. When I was a child, Washington Street was a dead end at our driveway. There was nothing but sand hills to the north and the west. It was a great place to grow up, and it's been a great place to live, even after the addition of the industrial park which my parents fought valiantly to prevent. Of course they were unable and the slogan at that time was, 'you can't fight City Hall', which is why I feel defeated before I even start in this situation. It's funny how history repeats itself. At the risk of sounding selfish I don't wish to experience approximately 200 people and the addition of 50-100 vehicles directly next door to me, and I can't imagine that you would either. I understand that housing apparently is a problem, and I know everyone is entitled to a place to live. But I don't understand why we keep building these places all over the town. I'm now told, fact or fiction I'm not positive, that Jefferson school is to be torn down with housing units going up. Why can't the current places be adequately maintained? When one gets ruined we just build another? Is that how it works? Why can't the current places be added onto? There's plenty of room for building on Cherry Street, why not add on to Cherry Hill? Why keep disrupting other peoples neighborhoods? I'm jokingly calling this proposed development Century Terrace 2.0. But it's not a joke. We all know the Century Terrace reputation. I see no reason to think this development will be any different. It's a constant stream of police calls and ambulances. The noise, the lights, the cars, the foot traffic. I've felt sick to my stomach since we got the letter. The plan states they see no disruption to traffic. How can they possibly see no disruption to traffic? This is a busy street. When the highway is down this is the route. You're talking about putting approximately 200 people on the corner of two heavily traveled streets. The plan also says, they are not aware of any sewer issues. Isn't that a little like saying we dont know about it therefore it doesnt exist? Shouldnt there be positive confirmation that the sewer system is in fact capable of managing the increase? We are near the lake, I've always assumed the water table to be fairly high.

Several years ago, we owned a home outside of town as well as this one. Basically we swapped with our son, but that's a whole other story. Anyway, we lived there for a little over a year and then my husband begrudgingly complied with my request to move back home here on Washington Street. Now we are both wishing we had stayed outside of town. I fully expect a discussion on the possibility of selling and moving because of this development. This will cause problems for us as you can understand my emotional attachment to the house and property.

I pulled the plans from the website and actually walked the property the other day. Although it looks like there may be a small swath of woods that remains along the property lines further to the east, basically the level of disruption to the earth in the building process will come to within about 6 feet to the north of our garage and the remainder of the entire wooded area will be leveled. I cannot adequately express to you how sad this makes me. The worst part is that I feel completely powerless. We will be adversely affected in this situation and yet we have absolutely no control of the outcome. We are tax paying citizens, we should have a say. Its overwhelming and depressing. No one should be put in this situation. Then there is the issue of property value. What do you suppose will happen to the value of our home, should we choose to sell? Location, location, location, and location next to a low income housing project of an average 200 people on a busy street would not be on the top of my list, nor the list of anyone I know. I know this neighborhood is not in the high rent district, but it's a good neighborhood, and the value of our home is just as important to us as yours is to you.

My parents always taught me to "do unto others as you would have done unto you". Ask yourself honestly, you and the other members in charge, would you want this built in direct proximity to YOUR home? If so, perhaps that could be arranged.

I'm begging you, please do not build this here.

Thank you for your time.
Geri and Dale Helminiak