

April 29, 2021

Michelle Aniol
Community Development Manager
City of Dexter

Dear Members of the Dexter City Planning Commission:

I am writing in regard to the multi-unit storage facility under consideration within the current Adair building near my home in Cottonwood Condominiums at the end of Hudson Street near 2nd Street. I live on the side of Cottonwood that is closest to the Adair property and oppose the storage facility for several reasons:

-The City of Dexter Master Plan is a comprehensive document that lays out current and future use of land within the city. My primarily residential neighborhood includes homes, a small horseshoe park, and two well kept apartment buildings. I walk 2nd Street many times each week and look forward to the future plan for sidewalk installation.

-It is my understanding that the Master Plan for the City of Dexter designates the Adair property area as moving from "light industrial" to "research and development". With the Adair Company no longer in business, now seems an optimal time to actualize that revised designation. In fact, it may be the ONLY such opportunity for many years.

-Adair was located in an unsightly blue-fronted building that is out of compliance with city rules on distance from the road and more. I am not clear how that occurred, however it was possibly built before the rules were in place. It is an eyesore situated very close to the road. To continue to endorse these violations when the opportunity exists to do otherwise is a huge step back from the Planning Commission's own vision for the future of this area.

-Besides the unsightliness of the Adair building, the choice to allow it to be modified into a multi-unit storage facility raises additional problems for our neighborhood. Such problems include the comings and goings inherent to that type of business, the necessary lighting, perhaps fencing, and noise, just to name a few. Such a decision would eliminate other opportunities for many years to come. It is my understanding that the storage facility decision requires an exception to even the current land use designation, let alone the future plan for a Research and Development designation. The extensive land and space off of Dan Hoey Road seemed a far better location for such a facility than to allow it to exist in a largely residential area.

-Within the last several years, area residents were asked to complete a survey asking about ways to improve the small horseshoe park that is immediately adjacent to the Adair property. It is difficult to imagine how such park improvements/enhancements could be made with a storage facility so close by. Access to the park could also be compromised.

-There are a number of homes on 2nd Street, with many more that can be seen from 2nd, on all of the adjacent streets. 2nd Street is a frequently used route for commuters as well as to two iconic Dexter destinations: the Dexter Mill and the Dexter Cider Mill. It may also be used as part

of the route between Dexter and Hudson Mills. In the near future it will be part of the route to Hudson Street and the new Encore Theater at the top of Hudson Street. Our neighborhood is very much a part of the city of Dexter, deserving of consideration when opportunities arise for improvement.

The Master Plan is an impressive and comprehensive document that brings intentionality to the planning and decision-making process. In Chapter 1, page 12, it reads: *“This area was originally settled in 1824 and was platted in 1830 as the Village of Dexter. After an eight-year process, the village officially became the City of Dexter on November 20, 2014. Historically it has been noted that the Village was laid out in such a way that sun could shine on both sides of each street all day. Even though Dexter was the fastest growing municipality in Michigan during the 2000s, the City has retained its old time charm and hospitality.”*

As I think about Dexter and how it has changed over the 20 years I have lived here, I cannot help but think about the VISION on the part of so many that resulted in such significant positive changes in the city: the dam removal and lovely Mill Pond nature area; the walk/bike pathway extending from the library to the “under-the-bridge” subdivisions and Hudson Mills Metropark; the most recently constructed section of the walk/bike pathway extending front the cemetery area all the way to Baker Road; the safety and aesthetic crosswalk improvements; the fantastic library building and services; the school system improvements including the beautiful Dexter High School, and so many more. The growth in the population is not surprising given the attributes of our city that set it apart from others nearby. It is impressive to note that the Encore Theatre chose to open their doors here, further enriching the community, and attracting more people to come for a visit. All of this is just to say that vision mattered back in 1830 as it has over all of the ensuing years.

In closing, I ask the commission leaders and members, the City Council, and all of the many individuals and groups that hold the well being of the city in their hands to please combine practicality with VISION and take the time to examine all aspects this situation before making an expedient decision that will affect our city and so many residents in my neighborhood and beyond for years to come. I recognize that as planners you must find balance in complicated situations, weighing and considering many factors. You are entrusted with a profound responsibility to the city and its residents. Please do not miss this opportunity to envision what can be done on the Adair property beyond endorsement of a multi-unit storage facility. There are countless alternative possibilities.

I ask that this letter be shared with members of the Planning Commission and City Council.

With sincere thanks,

Stephanie Mienrath
7729 Cottonwood Lane
sminerath@gmail.com
734-649-3691

CC: Michael Auerbach