

November 1, 2017

Dear Fellow Clarkston Voters,

I am sending this letter at my own expense because of my concern regarding an unprecedented threat to the character of our community. I have lived in downtown Clarkston for 47 years and during that time witnessed continuing improvements in both the Village's historic neighborhoods and our downtown commercial district. Against all odds, we are now a historic community which is the envy of many others because we have managed to achieve the illusive goal of preserving our historic homes and character while also supporting a highly successful commercial district.

However, this has given rise to a threat from those seeking to "cash in" on this success. The owners of the Clarkston Mills, Ed Adler and Robert Roth, already have an extensive downtown commercial property. Nonetheless, they purchased the home at 42 W. Washington and requested it be rezoned from single-family residential to commercial. Their "vision" for Clarkston may include a hotel which would irrevocably alter the Village's character and further add to the City's existing traffic congestion.

Our City Planner and Planning Commission both recommended denial of this request as our Master Plan calls for strengthening and protecting "the viability of residential neighborhoods by prohibiting non-residential intrusion into residential areas". A petition filed by 15 nearby homeowners also opposed it.

Despite these recommendations and the homeowners' opposition, our current Mayor voted in favor of rezoning the home for these developers. Incumbents Haven, Kneise and Marsh, and the other councilpersons present, voted to deny the request. Subsequently, Mr. Adler and Mr. Roth applied to demolish this perfectly fine large 50s' family home. Fortunately, this request was turned down by the Historic District Commission, but Mr. Adler has stated they are appealing that decision.

You may have noticed that there are 5 signs for Council candidate Scott Reynolds on the Clarkston Mills property and 42 W. Washington St. combined. Per the pre-election campaign report, signed by Mr. Reynolds and viewable on line from Oakland County, his campaign had already spent \$1,077 as of 10/19/2017. Over 40% of the total contributions listed were from Robert Roth and the Mayor.

The report also lists a campaign donation from Susan Bisio, who filed an ongoing FOIA lawsuit against the City. The City won in Circuit Court, but she has chosen to appeal and thus extend this litigation. A recent letter to the Clarkston News, questioning our City Attorney's actions, distorts many of the facts and issues involved and what is at stake for the City in the case. These are too complex to address in this letter, but you should be aware that the Michigan Municipal League Legal Defense Fund, whose Board includes 10 City Attorneys*, concurs that our City Attorney acted properly and, due to the case's "extreme importance" for all Michigan municipalities, is assisting in the City's defense on appeal.

Thus, Mr. Reynolds has accepted support from someone who has a lawsuit against the City and also from developers who, for their own financial benefit, seek to rezone and destroy a home in our Historic District. Draw your own conclusions from these facts, but if you value the assurance that those you elect will always put your and the City's best interests first and protect our historic buildings and neighborhoods, I urge you to vote for Council incumbents Haven, Kneise and Marsh on Tuesday.

Sincerely,

William K. Basinger
8 E. Washington St.
Clarkston, Michigan, 48346

*Kalamazoo, Muskegon, Troy, Big Rapids, Boyne City, Petoskey, Menominee, Farmington, Novi, Traverse City, Oak Park and Milan). The Legal Defense Fund has 478 member municipalities and represents them in "litigation of statewide significance."