

To the Grand Rapids City Commission,

November 2, 2024

I regret that I am unable to attend the November 12 meeting in person to voice my strong objection to the proposed Fulmar Development “3 Towers project” that you will be discussing.

As a social worker and member of Together West Michigan, I have attended many meetings to support housing initiatives and community development. I am aware of the housing shortages and usually support projects that offer increased housing supply. However, this project raises several questions.

1. It is widely known that the low to moderate cost housing needed by most individuals and families is in extremely short supply. Instead of luxury private developments, how are tax breaks and public subsidies being used for projects that benefit the citizens in Grand Rapids?
2. Fulmar seeks to receive a large public subsidy to build this private development. If it is all office, residential (including luxury condos), hotel (also high end), and retail space, what is the public benefit from this project? And, why should the public help to fund it?
3. It is a requirement of the Transformational Brownfield Plan to offer affordable housing or a reasonable subsidy toward affordable housing in an alternate location. Fulmar is proposing an extremely small amount (about 1% of the total project cost) to “satisfy” this requirement. How is this project helping our community? And, how does a project like this qualify for public subsidies at all?

Together West Michigan is a large group of concerned citizens from faith communities, non-profit organizations, and community groups who seek to build relationships and act on issues affecting citizens in our community. If you should choose to move forward with this plan, we are asking that AT MINIMUM, Fulmar invest a 10% “tithe” of the tax subsidies back to the Affordable Housing Fund. This would be \$2.9 million per year (\$58.8 million over 20 years).

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Marcy Emmelkamp, LMSW

1622 Winick SE Grand Rapids