

To: Chair Pat Bianconi and Planning Board members
Chair Jim Burkett and CPP members

Concerning: Proposed project to demolish McGordon House
Joint Public Hearing April 5, 2023

Aurora is extremely lucky to have a developer with long-term knowledge of the Village, and significant funds, as well as with interest in development that complements the Village's current commercial activity. The only proposed project, as the applicant states in the application, is to demolish a single-family house on the Wells Campus and replace it with two residences.

My concern is that, before these two regulatory boards make their decisions, they have the opportunity to understand the developer's vision – not the specific architectural drawings – but the conceptual vision. Similarly, the applicant should have the opportunity to understand how the complete vision will affect the Village and, in turn, be affected by Village regulations. What will the developer run into as the project unfolds.

A simple demolition certainly seems like a reasonable place to start, just the way remodeling the Aurora Inn and tearing down the IGA seemed reasonable. Not to throw the Inns of Aurora under the bus, but if Aurora had been aware that the Inns' business model needed 50 rooms, not 10, to be profitable, that a hotel would include large weddings, that a maintenance building might have a fleet of vehicles, the Village might have worked sooner and more efficiently to help the developer mitigate whatever issues arose from the development.

Please look to the future. Please, here at the beginning and with this opportunity, take into consideration what we learned from the past. Ask for a conceptual master plan, set conditions on any decision, let the developer know you need a traffic study if a threshold is reached, make him aware that the zoning law is being revised and how it might impact the project. The Village needs to stand up for its interests NOW so that we're not fighting against development that has not been anticipated, has negatively affected village life, and should have been a win-win.

Thank you, Bonnie Bennett 363 Main Street, Aurora