

Whereas, on February 13, 2010, The Ann Arbor Democratic Party Club adopted a policy: "Resolution Concerning Democratic Process and the Disposition of Public Property Within The City of Ann Arbor Commonly Known as the 'Library Lot,'"* and

Whereas, it is as true now as it was 5 1/2 ago, that the citizens of Ann Arbor would suffer "irreparable harm" that "no sum of money could recompense for the loss of this central place of convivial community engagement," and

Whereas, the 2010 Resolution identified this land as the "center of the city," and

Whereas, City representatives, in the years since, have not responded to the encouragement and support in the 2010 Resolution to develop a "commons or town square in the center of the city for the promotion of civic virtues which are central to all citizen centered democracies," and

Whereas, efforts to "market" this property for private use development have been unsuccessful, as in the failure of Request For Proposals 743 to produce an acceptable proposal, and the failure of the subsequent DDA Connecting William Street Report to be accepted by the City Council, and the failure of the current Offering Memorandum (OM) to produce an innovative private public partnership for the development of public space, and the failure current proposals to satisfy the minimum standards of the Library Green Conservancy, and**

Whereas, in the years of discussion about this public land and the integrated development of the block where it is located, it has become clear that this land is not perceived like other City land, but is seen as the "Center of the City," a natural feature in the aspiration, creation and functioning of community, and

Whereas, surveys, testimony, and petitioning have shown very widely, that people in Ann Arbor, do not want to give up this land, and

Whereas, it has become increasingly evident that the required mass of a successful dense private commercial development sharing the land does not allow significant public space and ambiance to realize the central public focus, and

Whereas, City Council and staff have, until now, declined to address Public Use Development and to hold public hearings on alternative approaches to the development of our center of the City, and

Whereas, Ann Arbor Citizens have formed an Ann Arbor Committee for the Community Commons to promote Public Use Development and have produced a petition to amend the City Charter, proposing to add a new Section 1.4, "The Center of the City," to put the future of this land to public vote at the next City-wide election, and

Whereas, the 5th Ward Democratic Party Club has discussed and approved this campaign, and

Whereas, the past two meetings of the Ann Arbor Democratic Party Club have discussed this question, now,

Therefore, it proper to put full Public Use Development as an option before the people on which to vote,

And therefore, Ann Arbor Democratic Party Club, citywide, resolve to support the petition to put this question on the next election ballot:

"Shall the City owned public land bounded by Fifth Avenue and William, Division, and Liberty Streets be retained in public ownership, in perpetuity, and developed as an urban central park and civic center commons known as the "Center of the City"?"

And therefore, as well, Ann Arbor Democratic Party Club resolves to urge Democratic Party City Council Members, on their initiative as a majority, themselves to put this question on the next ballot, and

And in addition, the Ann Arbor Democratic Party Club resolves to urge all Ann Arbor voters on our lists to sign and to circulate this petition, and to participate in an educational campaign on the best uses of this Center of the City land, in the Best Interest Of Ann Arbor.

Revised 12-15-10
2/10/10

Adopted 2-13-2010

A RESOLUTION CONCERNING DEMOCRATIC PROCESS AND THE DISPOSITION OF PUBLIC PROPERTY WITHIN THE CITY OF ANN ARBOR COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE "LIBRARY LOT".

Whereas, the Administrator of the City of Ann Arbor has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) concerning the disposition of the public land commonly known as the Library Lot and the issuance of this RFP has been approved by the City Council, elected by the citizens of Ann Arbor to represent their interests; and

Whereas, the citizens of Ann Arbor have long held the hope that the Library Lot would one day be reclaimed by the public as a commons or town square because it is recognized that a city needs a physical center and public space for the perpetuation and enhancement of its civic life; and

Whereas, the recent use of the surface of this public land as public parking will change with the construction of an underground parking structure; and

Whereas, the sale or long-term lease of any public land, should be accomplished only with robust involvement of the community in deciding the eventual uses and costs to the community of the loss of the land to the public; and

Whereas, the process for determining that the Library Lot parcel should be sold or leased for purposes of private development has been neither transparent nor responsive to long-standing community concerns for the future of this parcel; and

Whereas, the citizens of Ann Arbor have neither assented to the sale or lease of this property nor indicated that a partnership between our city and a private developer would be beneficial; and

Whereas, most studies on the subject have shown that partnerships of this nature for convention/conference centers, stadiums, and other such projects have not been proven to be financially sound forms of community investments;

Whereas, that the selling or leasing of the Library Lot to any private parties would irreparably harm the citizens of Ann Arbor and that no sum of money could recompense the citizens for the loss of a central place of convivial community engagement;

Now be it Resolved by we, the Democrats assembled here today at this monthly meeting of the Ann Arbor Democratic Party, that the City Council of Ann Arbor institute and support a public process for determining the future use of this property that must include robust public involvement, which has not, to this date been accomplished, and it is further

Resolved that we encourage the city government to support the development of a commons or town square in the center of the city for the promotion of civic virtues which are central to citizen centered democracies; and

Resolved that the selling or leasing of the Library Lot to any private parties should not happen without approval of the voters of Ann Arbor; and it is further

Resolved that the City Council, as our elected representatives, should not approve investment of any public funds in any private development of the Library Lot, and that any private use or development of the Library Lot must be proven sound enough to be financed through private funding.