

**From:** Michelle Burks  
**To:** planning  
**Subject:** Re: Development of ACHD property  
**Date:** Thursday, May 7, 2026 2:11:38 PM  
**Attachments:** cid:mouse9n91.png

I forgot to attach the image to convey my email better. Thanks!!



On May 7, 2026, at 10:50 AM, Michelle Burks <michelle.m.burks@gmail.com> wrote:

To whom it may concern at Garden City Planning department:

My name is Michelle Burks and I am the owner and occupant of a townhome at 480 [E Thurman Mill, Garden City, 83714](#). I have lived at this address for over 10 years now and hope to stay for decades more. We love the area and are active in our community and in the surrounding area.

I knew that a time would come when ACHD would vacate the property next to our house, and that the subsequent development would undoubtedly influence our living experience in some way or another, hopefully in a positive or at least neutral way.

As engaged community members, I have both reviewed both the SAPD-02 and the [2015 proposal by the U of I](#), and have developed a few key points of feedback (in order of priority) that I would appreciate you considering.

Before I present these points, I would like to apologize for missing the Community meeting on April 22nd. I only found out about this on April 23rd. Unfortunately, I will also be travelling during the City Council meeting on May 20. I will try to send someone from the community to represent our views at that meeting.

**Point 1: This is my main point of feedback: Strong objection to allowing three-story townhomes to be built directly adjacent to the Live-Work townhomes situated in the Waterfront District.**

I live in one of the LiveWork townhomes. The majority of the windows in these townhomes look out over ACHD. The 2015 proposal by U of I proposes that a row of three story townhomes be built directly across from our alley. This is about 30 ft from my bedroom window. This would have a very significant negative impact on all of the occupants of the existing townhomes, as well as the occupants of the new townhomes. Not only would our view be destroyed, but our privacy would be infringed upon. Significantly, I would like to point out that:

1- It would be an equally unpleasant experience for the occupants of the new townhomes as they would be looking right into my house and into my bedroom window while I look into their house and their bedroom window.

2 - From what I can tell there is no reason to locate these three-story townhomes in the one place where they would be directly adjacent to other three-story townhomes. I suspect that the U of I students were only given an outline to develop and were not aware of what is on the other side of the development boundary. There is a lot of land that is being developed in this plan, and there are alternative locations for these townhomes that seem to have fewer drawbacks. For example, if the proposed Townhomes (circled in red) were moved to anywhere on the blue line, it seems to me that they would be surrounded by single-story homes or industrial/commercial operations and not three-story townhomes looking into their bedroom windows.

I am deeply concerned about this and would sincerely appreciate the opportunity to discuss this in more detail with anybody involved in the project. I believe that this is a bad design choice and an easily avoidable problem that can be solved with a little bit of creativity and effort, without reducing the density of the new development.

**Point 2: The Adams street connection needs to be designed thoughtfully to ensure that neither of these communities are undermined (objection to car traffic).**

Currently, Adams street is blocked off where the ACHD meets the Waterfront District neighborhood. In this quiet corner of our neighborhood, dogs are walked, Easter eggs are hunted, water balloons are tossed, and kids learn to rollerblade and play without parental supervision. The Adams street interconnection offers an opportunity for the Waterfront District to meet the new development and not only share this great vibe but expand on it. If at all possible, it would be a boon to both neighborhoods if this interconnection could be limited to bicycles and pedestrians. This should not be problematic as there is no significant need for car traffic between these areas and the current setup works well. If that is not possible then it is essential that car traffic be adequately slowed and restricted to dissuade all but the most essential traffic from moving through these neighborhoods. Again, I don't believe that there is essential car traffic that needs to pass through here, and I strongly advocate for keeping the intersection closed to cars.

**Point 3: No heavy commercial or big box stores**

This is a community. A neighborhood. We don't want an urban center. We want a quaint little mixed-use area with cute little stores and affordable restaurants and bodegas where we can buy the basics. A few bigger things are fine as long as they don't attract hordes of cars (theater, yoga studio, etc.)... I think you get the idea. The hotel doesn't make sense to me as there are already several boutique hotels in the area, but if it has been decided that this is what the community needs, then I suppose that's fine.

**Point 4: Please promote sustainable design (of houses as well as of the community)**

This development represents a unique opportunity to demonstrate what a thoughtfully designed neighborhood/community can look like. By requiring design practices that will benefit future tenants and reduce environmental impacts, this can be a model for the change that we want to see in the world. As far as possible, please consider:

-Community heating network (perhaps geothermal, [drain water heat recovery](#), or heat pump driven) for low carbon and low cost heating and cooling, no need for gas connections just use heat pumps as needed (look into the future, this is already happening). I would love to provide some ideas around this and would be very happy to donate some of my time to this cause. In the meantime there are many options available online.

-Buildings designed from low-carbon, non-toxic durable materials. Buildings that are designed to be compatible with PV roofs, EV chargers, induction stoves, high quality insulation/airtightness, heat pumps, battery storage, and all of the other amazing innovations that will make future houses more comfortable and cheaper to live in while reducing their impact on the environment.

-Habitat protection and integration with the river and greenbelt, lots of green space and community meeting areas.

Thank you for considering these points. I hope to hear from you and would appreciate the opportunity to discuss these points further.

Michelle Burks  
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