

November 6, 2003
Letter to the Editor

Contact: Ms. Terry Pastika
Executive Director, Citizen Advocacy Center
630-833-4080

Hatchet Editorial Misses the Point

The editorial printed by Pamela Lannom, opining the quick sell of all of the Phase One Block 300 condos settled the dust about the viability of the development, missed the point. The issue was not whether or not units would sell on the property. In fact, more than once during public comment, opponents clearly stated that development of the property was not the issue. Block 300 was about one development, and much more. It was about: 1) the type of development proposed did not reflect citizen desire, 2) whether or not public officials were responsive to their constituents and 3) the failure of the City to follow their own ordinances and State TIF statutes in approving the Block 300 development.

How fast condo units sell does nothing to justify the faulty process that occurred to approve the development. If anything, it makes a stronger case for illustrating the problems. The lightening fast sale of the 65 units of the Phase One building undeniably confirms the absurdity of the \$1.2 million TIF gift. Furthermore, neighbors having different viewpoints on city policy, citizens contacting public officials to air criticism for lack of constituent responsiveness, and disagreement among public officials is called a healthy democracy.

The solution is not for citizens to monitor the developer to ensure he does not deviate from the approved plan and turnoff being involved in what is happening at City Hall until it is time to cast a vote for alderman. The solution is to broaden civic attention beyond Block 300 and monitor City Hall. Now that Block 300 has provided the opportunity for citizens to learn how local government function, why stop now? Continue to attend public meetings, inform public officials about opinions before votes are taken and debate policy decisions.