

Paul Vlahakis to/from Alice Dreger (for East Lansing Info)  
January 10, 2019

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On Jan 10, 2019, at 12:55 AM, Paul Vlahakis wrote:

Hi Alice,

Sorry for the delay in getting you this information. Attached is the updated submittal to ParkPlace. The changes to the December 17<sup>th</sup> submittal were as follows;

- Corrected the height from 166' to 160'.
- Show a better connectivity between the ParkPlace plaza and the Theater Plaza across the alley. We used similar color stamped concrete material across the alley. The hope will be to actually have bollards that automatically close off the alley after early morning deliveries so pedestrians can enjoy the entire area without the fear of vehicular traffic in the alley. Our recommendation would be to allow for early morning services and then close off access around mid-morning.
- We lightened the color of the architectural metal panel system on ParkPlace West building facade
- We added 2 more condominiums to ParkPlace East by increasing efficiency in layout
- We added 1 level of parking in each building to increase the parking spaces to 615 which will help relieve any shortage of parking coming from the new hotel and Park District building. Having available parking close to the Park District development will be much more convenient, especially for the hotel residents.
- We added a patio area above the movie theater entrance which will be utilized for theaters food service and gathering while waiting for a movie or after the show. The patio will have a backdrop glass wall that will provide a view of the automated parking system garage.
- Floor plans were better labeled to make them easier to read and understand
- More detailed building sections were added
- We added the pedestrian walk way which will take the place of Evergreen Ave. which will serve as a connector to the neighborhood. We also added a better view of the surrounding landscape to the first floor of each building plan.
- We made some column adjustments to accommodate the parking system.

You also asked me to comment on the City Council discussion to amend the Master Plan to increase building height in the downtown area. Since I am proposing a project with increased building height, it would be obvious that regardless of right or wrong I would argue for its success. However that is not entirely true, as a graduate of MSU Urban Planning program, I fully believe as I learned, that increase density in the downtown area or critical mass is a recipe to success for not only residential but retail as well. It is difficult for example for retailers to survive without other retailers around them, again critical mass, without this critical mass retailers suffer a higher chance of closure as we have witnessed in our downtown. There are also many arguments to support increase height: first, we end up with a more urban scale city. Studies have shown taller buildings don't feel like tall buildings at street level, for example a 16 story building doesn't look any different than an 8 story building at street level. Plus these high-rise buildings are usually designed with street retail and public places for pedestrians to enjoy. With the increased height we will also be able to attract more residents living in the downtown. East Lansing, or the Greater Lansing area, has never offered residential for sale product like the ParkPlace

condominiums. Anyone can buy a condominium in a 2, 3 or 4 story building, but having a view of the entire city landscape at 100 to 160 feet up will be a very attractive selling point for people making the decision to re-locate into our downtown. Residents will finally be able to enjoy a true live, work, and play environment. Having 2 additional floors from the increased height will allow us to add 40 more residents or families to the downtown and these residents like you and I are people we want downtown to support our local downtown businesses. I would also add that the height makes our downtown look impressive to visitors of our city and the University, which is a movement that is long overdue for our city and I am happy to see our City Council approving these developments. This change will finally allow East Lansing to be added to the ranks of impressive city's anchored by major Universities. I understand fully that sometime change is difficult for residents but once these projects are completed, I am confident those same residents will 100% enjoy the amenities these tall buildings and re-developed downtown will provide.

I will keep you updated as we progress so you can keep your readers updated. Below is a google drive link to the project. Please call me if you have any questions.

[Available at:

[https://eastlansinginfo.org/sites/default/files/park\\_place\\_updated\\_plans\\_on\\_january\\_10\\_2019\\_from\\_paul\\_vlahakis.pdf](https://eastlansinginfo.org/sites/default/files/park_place_updated_plans_on_january_10_2019_from_paul_vlahakis.pdf) ]

Thank you



Paul Vlahakis  
President

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**From:** Alice Dreger  
**Date:** Thursday, January 10, 2019 at 10:11 AM  
**To:** Paul Vlahakis  
**Subject:** Re: ParkPlace Development

Hi, Paul,

Do you have a rendering of the project from the west?

Thanks.

Alice

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On Jan 10, 2019, at 6:04 PM, Paul Vlahakis wrote:

Alice,

I will email them to you on Friday.

Just a clarification the West building is 10 floors on the west side or Park side and 12 floors on the east side.

Just a comment on the Dublin building or former post office. As I explained to the Historic Commission, the building would not qualify to be historic when I purchased it. There had been many alterations from the previous owners Evergreen Grill and Pantry as well as an addition. In 2006 I demo'd the building inside and out, including the flooring, windows and roof, then rebuilt it for Dublin Square. Anything that remained at that time with historic significance was removed. The time for the Historic Commission to take this issue up would have been well before I was even in the picture.

As for moving the building, I doubt very much the structure could withstand the process, not to mention the only "original" thing left of the building is the brick which would certainly crumble with the way the building was built. Not to mention where exactly would it be moved to and what will people look at? Look I can appreciate historic preservation but this conversation should have happened years ago before I even purchased the site. As I explained to the Historic Commission we will preserve parts of the building that are original such as the door frame, cornerstone, flag pole and mail boxes and try to design them into the new building, which we have done at the entrance of the Plaza and it turned out very nice. (which I have attached)

Just a quick mention about the storm water discussed in your article. The majority of the site is already impervious in fact I would guess that 80% is impervious, so we are adding very little additional water into the city storm water system. I have attached a diagram showing the impervious are on the site.

Look for those other elevations tomorrow afternoon.

Thank you

Paul Vlahakis  
President

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On Jan 10, 2019, at 7:08 PM, Alice Dreger wrote:

Hi, Paul,

Thanks for all this. I am still confused.

The new designs you sent me (page 15) still show a building with 15 levels above ground for Park Place East. But it is 12 floors?

Also, the same page shows the ground level starting at 100 feet (street level) and the roof level topping off at 269 feet, which makes the building 169 feet tall, no?

I understand the project may not cover that much more ground than is currently covered (although there is significant open land in front of the houses on Evergreen Avenue), but the issue raised by our reader is that all other development projects have dealt with storm water on their own properties. So the question is — why not this one?

Thanks again.

Alice

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On Jan 10, 2019, at 9:27 PM, Paul Vlahakis wrote:

Hi Alice,

I hope this helps with some of your questions;

- The 100 ft at level 1 is a normal benchmark that surveyors use. Just take 100 off the above ground elevation.
- The East building is 14 floors plus the rooftop, which has no residential / living space.
- The West building is 10 floors on the park side (west side) or 112 feet and 12 floors on the east side or 135 feet, plus the roof top which has no residential or living space.
- The Storm Water Treatment area is still being engineered and location has not been decided. However it is not uncommon storm water retention/detention is located off site but regardless of its location, it will be an aesthetically pleasing improvement.
- My only point was that the impervious area is currently the majority of the site, it will still require a storm water treatment area.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you

<image001.png>

Paul Vlahakis

President