

Mary Lou Terrien

From: Jena Stacey <jlstacey@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2016 10:30 AM
To: Mary Lou Terrien; senvgregory@senate.michigan.gov; Rep. Christine Greig (District 37)
Subject: Comment from Jennifer Stacey re: HB5232

I strongly urge members of the Michigan House of Representatives and Michigan Senate to oppose House Bill 5232 and Senate Bill 0720. The proposed bills to amend Public Act 169 of 1970 are driven by the interests of a few individuals rather than the interests of the citizenry at large.

If It Ain't Broke, Don't Fix It

PA 169 has served its purpose for many years successfully. As written, the Local Historic Districts Act allows for public input and public involvement in the creation of a local historic district. As a former Farmington Historical Commission member, I can relate from my own experience that if the members of a community do not support the creation of a historic district it won't come to fruition.

In the early 1970s Farmington formed a committee to create a residential local historic district. The original proposed ordinance created a district compliant to PA 169 of 1970. Due to public disagreement, the local historic district was created, however the commission put in place was only advisory. Over the years, many attempts have been made to alter the ordinance so that it is compliant with PA 169 of 1970 as amended. The most recent attempt was made while I was on the Farmington Historical Commission. Council members did not support starting the process, and exercised their right to not appoint a study committee. While I completely disagree with the Farmington City Council's actions regarding engaging in the study process to make the local historic district compliant with PA 169 of 1970, it is an example of the fact that the current legislation works and does not hinder property owners' rights, a major concern for the bill's supporters.

Historic Designation = Good for the Pocketbook

Local historic districts carry a caché which benefits the property owner. Properties located in a historic district are assessed at a higher value than properties not designated as historic. They also appreciate at faster rate than non-designated properties.

LHD versus HOA

Although local historic district ordinances do limit some modifications to the exterior of properties within the district, all cities carry ordinances which limit what property owners can do to structures. Homeowners' Associations often limit house modifications to a much greater degree than local historic district ordinances. When a purchaser buys a property in a neighborhood with an HOA, the covenant and restrictions are conveyed to a homeowner. Similarly, a local historic district ordinance is available for public view so that buyers can see what limitations an ordinance enforces. New and old, all homes come with restrictions.

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