

April 28, 2021

Board of Directors

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RE: UDO IS NOT READY FOR FORMAL REVIEW

Dear Mayor and Commissioners,

At your May 4 Council meeting, you are scheduled to vote on a motion to accept the UDO Draft #3 for “merit” and to begin the formal review process. We urge you to reject that motion.

Sustainable Saratoga believes the city needs to pause this process and the UDO’s advancement toward a Council vote until more citizens have weighed in on it.

The UDO is a complex document. The City has not done enough to make it understandable. For example:

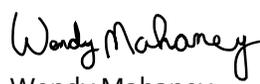
1. Many have asked the City to prepare a list of the UDO’s substantive land use changes. The City Council and the citizens of Saratoga Springs need to understand what changes are in the UDO compared to the city’s current Zoning Ordinance. This could be provided as a chart, a detailed list, or an analysis. Without organized, clear, and understandable information and facts about all of the new policies and provisions in UDO drafts, a public review process cannot be meaningful.
2. While most people in our community have been too consumed by the pandemic to be part of the UDO review process in the way they normally would, a number of organizations and individuals devoted substantial time and energy to review the document and offer thoughtful comments. However, the City has not responded in writing to the recommendations and questions it received on Draft #2. Before a meaningful review of Draft #3 can begin, community members need to understand why so many of their comments on Draft #2 were ignored or rejected.

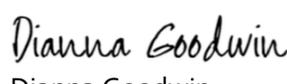
Despite the City’s best efforts, very few citizens attended recent UDO workshops and presentations. Most citizens have not had the chance to read, let alone digest, these lengthy and complicated draft documents, and few have taken the opportunity to make their voices heard.

We believe the UDO does contain substantive changes in land use policy for the city. We are concerned that, in its current form, the UDO will change the character of the city and the way it is developed far into the future.

We ask that you do not yet initiate the formal review process for Draft #3 of the UDO. Please take the time to prepare the necessary educational materials and set a revised time schedule to make the review process is more accessible and meaningful to the community’s citizens.

Sincerely,


Wendy Mahaney
Executive Director


Dianna Goodwin
Co-Chair, Board of Directors


Laura Rappaport
Co-Chair, Board of Directors

