

Online Survey

University Heights initiated an online survey as a way to receive public input on the potential for Comprehensive Plan Amendments. The survey was launched on January 23, 2010 at 12:30 P.M. and was closed on February 3, 2010 at 10:30 P.M. 153 people visited the online survey site with 40 people completing the survey and 12 people partially completing the survey. Below is a summary of the responses received from the survey.

1) What do you like most about living in UH?

Housing Stock	0	0%
People	1	2%
Proximity to Hospital/Campus	24	46%
Neighborhood Feel	18	35%
Other (See below)	9	17%
Total	52	100%

Other:

- Proximity to IC/Coralville community
- Safety and security of the community
- All of the above, except I don't really know what Housing Stock means, if it means a collection of single family homes, then I agree
- Out of city limits, but make use of area hospital and campus.
- All the above, to make an all around neighborhood
- I think all of the above are great
- Safety + neighborhood feel
- Nice neighborhood that's SAFE
- Our home and yard

2) What do you like least about living in UH?

Traffic	9	18%
Noise	1	2%
Housing Choices	3	6%
Cost of Housing	3	8%
Other	34	68%
Total	50	100%

Other:

- Lack of street lights
- Rentals
- Streets aren't cleaned off terribly well
- Threats from developers
- Absence of long term lifestyle options for aging boomers
- Rude people yelling at public meetings
- Number of rental properties
- Increasing taxes

- NIMBY attitudes
- Lack of a true comprehensive plan that gives residents security in knowing that their neighborhood will not change drastically just because a new development proposal is brought to the UH City Council.
- NA
- Raising taxes to pay for everything that once individual homeowners paid for
- Perhaps that there is nothing to define this as a city
- Non conforming rental property
- Lack of community service i.e. quality road care, sewer
- NIMBY, exclusionary feelings in neighborhood
- Football Saturdays
- The lack of retail within walkable distances.
- Cost of Housing (lots for older stock) + no downtown gathering place (isolation)
- None
- Threat of overdevelopment
- It's just a bunch of houses, no "neighborhood places" for light shopping, coffee, or a place to see your neighbors
- Rentals
- Lack of businesses within walking distance
- Abusive Enforcement of Speeding Violations; lack of businesses and restaurants
- Lack of children in the neighborhood
- Lack of diversity
- Some of the homes are becoming rental property and beginning to not be taken care of.
- Narrow attitude of some community members
- Taxes and police coverage (way too costly)
- Problem of control of rental properties & of Teardown Houses
- It seems to be deteriorating as more houses become rentals
- Would prefer a more direct connection to bike trails (especially for families with young kids). In addition, there are not sidewalks on many streets in UH, which means pedestrians must walk in the road--again, not ideal for young kids. Direct connections to bike trail networks and safe sidewalks are what I miss most about my old neighborhood.
- Want Taste on Melrose to remain open

3) Do you think UH should be concerned with losing or gaining taxable property/tax base? Government and religious owned properties can be exempt from paying property taxes St. Andrew Church is currently tax exempt Redevelopment of the St. Andrew Church property will likely increase the City's tax base

Not Concerned	9	17%
Low	8	15%
Moderate	7	13%
High	28	54%
Total	52	100%

4) If increasing the tax base is a concern, where should UH look first to expand commercial or mixed-use development?

St. Andrew Church Property	32	64%
University Athletic Club Property	4	8%
Swisher tract (wooded area north of Sunset/Golfview)	1	2%
Melrose Ave. across from current business (scenarios 1-3 2006 plan)	3	6%
Other	10	20%
Total	50	100%

Other:

- Nowhere
- None - we do not need commercial development - we are close to downtown, Mormon Trek, etc
- None of these options. The only viable option is to redevelop the current commercial district and possibly add the Moore property to the west of Golfview.
- I don't think UH should expand any commercial or mixed-use development
- ST. Andy's b/c least impact of demolishing others homes
- Both UAC and St Andrew
- Possibly blending Melrose options with St. Andrews
- Must we develop?
- Insufficient information--I am a new resident
- Along Melrose

5) What type of commercial businesses is most appropriate for UH?

Retail	4	8%
Grocery	11	22%
Restaurant	18	35%
Other	18	35%
Total	51	100%

Other:

- None
- Mixed use of all of above plus residential
- Coffee shop, professional offices, hair salon, deli shop
- One that will benefit the residents of UH and not create additional problems such as traffic, noise/light/air pollution
- Combination of all of the above
- Mix of small business not grocery
- Anything that serves the surrounding neighborhood
- Businesses that cater to the neighborhood
- All of the above and more.
- Restaurants, groceries, delis, dental, - small space therefore can't be too big
- Mixed use development
- All of the above (small grocery), flower shop, gift shop, coffee place (Java House!) lawyer, accountant
- residential

- Coffee Shop, small grocery
- Coffee shop or restaurant would be nice
- Grocery and/or restaurant not. e.g., law offices
- Combination of any of the above in smaller size
- Anything that can survive

6) What is the most important issues concerning structures with any proposed redevelopment of the St. Andrew Church Property?

Ownership (the University is exempt from zoning restrictions)	18	35%
Layout and aesthetics	11	21%
Mass, height, and scale	11	21%
Other	12	23%
Total	52	100%

Other:

- All of the above, but a true comprehensive plan does not focus on a single development; it is structured on the community as a whole.
- Number of cars
- I think all of the above are concerns
- Tx Expt status = no revenue- with GREAT RECESSION we need to be fiscally prudent
- difficulty to get community to see necessity of such
- The local church leadership do NOT have permission to sell St. Andrew. It has not been approved.
- of these three, ownership
- Keep as church
- I feel the city needs to consider the location for tax base purposes. Also any development should complement the community
- The attempts of the council to over bypass zoning board's recommendation
- Traffic, neighborhood disruption
- The developer

7) What is your primary concern with any proposed redevelopment of the St. Andrew Church property?

Noise	3	6%
Light	6	12%
Odor	1	2%
Signage	4	8%
Other	38	73%
Total	52	100%

Other:

- Increased population density, increased traffic, height of building, noise
- Traffic
- Traffic Flow on Melrose, particularly during construction
- Traffic/ environmental impact

- Scale of project related to existing uses
- Traffic and losing the pedestrian feel
- I support the concepts of the Maxwell proposal but want to make sure the above items and traffic are addressed appropriately
- None, it seems reasonable
- All of the above and also density, parking, rental versus owner-occupied, esthetics, trees, landscaping, etc.
- Both noise and signage
- None of the above
- Traffic increase
- I think it should be aesthetically pleasing
- Concerned it will eventually fall to University control and the town will have no ability to impact how the land is used.
- Traffic
- Doubling the population/sewer load
- All of the above are concerns
- My concern is that the development be high quality and that it contains some affordable housing set aside.
- All of the above + controlled lighting, terrible for neighbors abutting new blg. if flood lights on all night
- High Density and Scale
- It cannot be redeveloped until it has been approve by the membership of the church which at this point it has not.
- Traffic, then noise, light, crime
- Traffic
- Traffic & density of people
- A tax-exempt entity developing it
- Not concerned
- Traffic
- None
- Declining property values
- Traffic
- Overdeveloping in relation to traffic
- Adding more traffic on a narrow road
- Nothing
- The deterioration of surrounding homes as the owners move out. It seems to me this will accelerate the deterioration of our community.
- Traffic congestion and noise (they go together)
- None
- Destroying any legal history that citizens of University Heights have fought to keep zoning low (ie Neuzil Property) and to keep traffic simple (ie. state government interest in widening Melrose and our responsibility in adding to the traffic concern on Melrose)
- Number of renters

8) What is your primary concern regarding transportation issues with any proposed redevelopment of the St. Andrew Church property?

Congestion	25	48%
Parking	7	13%
Noise	2	4%
Other	18	35%
Total	52	100%

Other:

- As presented, the plan has widened Melrose and bus lanes
- None, Melrose and Sunset can handle the traffic
- Parking, Access, Congestion, Noise
- As planned none, as it is paying for street changes
- Flow and management of traffic
- Congestion and noise
- None of these issues concern me.
- Congestion + egress from area by shoppers/owners
- All of the above
- All of the above.
- Not concerned
- None
- Amount of traffic on grand
- Danger of what would be a new intersection
- None
- Ugly parking lots. Who wants to live next to that?
- None
- Neighborhood disruption

9) What public benefits/elements should be captured during a redevelopment of the St. Andrew Church property?

Transit stop	4	8%
City plaza/open space	26	52%
Trails/sidewalks	4	8%
Landscaping	6	12%
Other	10	20%
Total	50	100%

Other:

- Something like Birkdale
- All of above
- Preserve neighborhood feel
- I not in favor of the St Andrew development in the current proposal at all
- City offices, plaza, town hall, DOWNTOWN leisurely meeting place
- All of the above
- We already have these if needed. It would be repetitive
- Meeting room w/kitchen, and a city plaza
- Single family home sites, gives more taxes than now
- Leave as open space/park

10) What other input regarding the Athletic Club and St. Andrew Church properties would you like to provide that has not yet been discussed?

- I think if done thoughtfully development of the St. Andrew's site could be a great addition to UH.
- There will pass at least five years until the proposed redevelopment is finished, the apartments sold, and the tax gains tangible for UH. No one can predict what the financial situation of UH will be in five years. So, I don't see why we should take the risk of irreversibly change our low-height, quiet residential neighborhood into high-rise urbanized suburb now? There has never been shortage of revenue matching the needs of UH, which are small and easily satisfiable. Acting out of greed should not be condoned, as far as I'm concerned.
- I think it would be wonderful to have a communal area for our neighborhood to enjoy. Speaking as a younger family, we love the small town feel UH has. Change comes with the passing of time. Developing a city plaza would be a fantastic way to "run into" your neighbors more often.
- I really liked the retail/grocery concept.
- Integrity of person wanting to develop property. He knew we would turn down his original plan, so he submitted it anyway and then tried to look like Mr. Nice Guy by minimally downsizing. There should be more than profit motive by anyone outside the community who wants to develop here.
- UH needs to figure out who it is and how it will pay for services after 2020. CP process needs to deal with realities of UAC and SAPC not being fixed points around which the community is organized. Do we: 1) embrace centrally located property owners (UAC and SAPC) who want to redevelop their properties; or 2) do we plan to consume 15-20 residential properties in order to have a commercial development on the east side of town near the UIHC (or elsewhere on Melrose); or 3) do we do nothing about commercial development and watch our 80 year old streets and cracker box housing stock turn 100 years old in 2020 without having developed a plan to supplement the flat line revenue produced after 2020 by a relatively fixed century old property tax base.
- Environmentally sensitive land should be preserved
- There needs to be a better understanding of how losing Athletic Club tax payments will affect the U Heights budget in the next 15 years. In addition if St. Andrew Church property is developed what will be its impact on revenues for the city.
- We need to do the Maxwell project if St. Andrew Church decides to move.
- I think that these properties should be carefully developed as multi-use areas, including relatively high-density condos.
- Why is this survey designed to specifically ask questions about the Athletic Club and St. Andrew? If this were a true comprehensive plan, it would focus on the neighborhood, the needs of the residents and not a specific development proposal. Start with the recommendations of the UH Zoning Commission regarding specific development proposals and focus on designing a comprehensive plan that allows UH to retain its community and neighborhoods, not focus on development. The proposals that have been brought before UH in the past few years have been thoughtfully and carefully addressed by the UH Zoning Committee. The majority of the current council is only interested in \$\$\$, not the UH community.
- Important not to be too big, but have the right mix of business.
- A reasonable upper scale condo (as in not students) plus small business mix will add to the flavor of our community and relieve tax burden at the same time.

- needs to be a good mix of residential, retail and green space
- I would hate for this to become part of the U of I property.
- I think any development on either property needs to be cognizant of the Birkdale properties and their needs.
- I think development of either or both properties is fine, including ownership by UI, a church or a private business.
- University Heights is a small community. I don't think adding commercial development helps UH. The one good business we have now, Taste on Melrose, is closing.
- Medium density development at this location will change the character of University Heights for the better. Our community needs more retail and housing options, and we should take advantage of our strategic location to build housing that nudges our town toward greater environmental sustainability--adding units to UH full of 100-300 people who are more likely to walk places, to bicycle to work at the University of Iowa, or to use conveniently located public transportation is an opportunity we pass up at our peril. University Heights needs to stop thinking of itself as a glorified subdivision that happens to have a city charter and embrace inevitable change that will happen regardless. Our real choice is whether to plan for it or have it happen after more of our community becomes owned by absentee landlords. (and if you can't tell that this was written by Donald Baxter, it was).
- 1. Tax Revenue - I'm concerned about local budget revenue + rainy day fund. We need to plan with the best of intentions and not our emotions and nostalgic memories. The UH needs to operate with a budget to maintain, upgrade and keep our neighborhoods beautified (e.g., tougher control on rentals). 2. UHs Needs A Downtown. We need a central place (beyond Dental office, Taste of Melrose) for UH residents solidifies community feel. We need some downtown type options. Someone from the Jan. 26, 2010 focus groups said SUPER WALMART would be here soon and we'd get everything from there. That's not an acceptable downtown. 3. Senior Alternatives. Many longtime residents have left UH kicking and screaming b/c they need to down-size. Why not create a residential opportunity for down-sizing folks with mix-use blg. 4. DON'T PAY TAXES, NO UHs 4 U. I'd rather see a tax paying entity than a 503(c) take up land, congest the streets, and make us pay for their sidewalk repairs. Sure St. Andy's is a church, but it doesn't help us pay our bills.
- I will submit letter before Feb 3.
- You must understand that the membership of the church has not voted to sell the church. IT DOES HAVE TO GO THROUGH ANOTHER VOTE BY MEMBERSHIP AGAIN. CURRENTLY THE CHURCH IS NOT MAKING BUDGET THEY HAVE NO BUSINESS STICKING THEIR NECK OUT MORE. MORE AND MORE MEMBERS ARE FIGURING THIS OUT. LOCAL LEADERSHIP OF ST ANDREW DOES NOT HAVE AUTHORITY TO DISPOSE OF THE CURRENT STRUCTURE. IN FACT THERE IS NOW MORE DISCUSSION ABOUT REMODEL ESPECIALLY IN THESE DIFFICULT ECONOMIC TIMES.
- If the St. Andrew property is re-zoned, we'd prefer that it be multi-family, but also that height restrictions be included so that any new development is less than 3 or 4 stories so as to remain within the character of UH as a residential community. We'd also request a better explanation of the city budget from the mayor and council members--i.e., a justification (based on the city's budget) as to why commercial development is necessary. We don't feel our city leaders have done an adequate job of justifying the size/scope of a proposal like the Maxwell proposal. If the rationale is that a development the size of the Maxwell proposal would lead to a reduction in UH residents' property taxes, we'd would like to see an analysis/breakdown as to how much this savings would

be, especially when the cost of additional police and other expenses are factored into the equation. Favoring a commercial or mixed-use development such as the Maxwell proposal primarily so that people can walk to get a gallon of milk or eat at a restaurant is not enough to warrant a zoning change of the St. Andrew property to commercial/mixed use. We'd much rather see commercial development, if necessary, on Melrose at or near the current commercial businesses. The Taste of Melrose location, which reportedly is closing soon, would make a great place for a grocery (one with a coffee bar), and the surrounding district would make for a fine city 'center.'

- What are the intentions for the Athletic Club property
- Keep single family development. enforce rental ordinance
- I believe that in order for this town to not be considered the town "that you can't speed in" or the town where young professionals like myself feel unwelcome we must develop a space that makes our town attractive to all types of residents. A modern shopping center with restaurants, coffee shops, shopping, and living spaces would really make our town a better place to live.
- University Heights needs some businesses!! There's nowhere to walk to where you can get food, relax, study, etc. besides the Taste on Melrose restaurant.
- Although we live on Grand Ave and have some concerns about increased traffic, overall we are very supportive of a development at St Andrews site and would love to see a small grocery, coffee shop and/or restaurant go in there.
- As a long time resident of UH, I would like to see the spaced used for sustainable, and useful economic purposes that provide commerce and boost a sense of community,
- Why is the council trying so hard to get a development? Why does the council want to over-ride the zoning board? I would be against anything that is primarily for raising money to pass through to unneeded activities of the council.
- Nothing at this time
- For #9: We also think City Plaza/ open space as important. In addition, we need to continue City support for IC Public Library.
- I was comfortable with Maxwell's last plan.
- I think it is preferable to have non-University ownership of the properties (or at least, St. Andrew's). However, that being said, I think that the aesthetics and overall size are extremely important to maintaining the neighborhood feel, and the planned uses need to be carefully explored to avoid increased traffic congestion, etc. It would be nice to have some businesses within walking distance that were useful to UH residents: restaurant, coffee shop/bakery, bookstore, small market, etc. Professionals like dentists, optometrists, etc. would be another possibility.
- Make that location the commercial area and delete the Melrose/Olive Ct/Leamer Ct commercial areas from ALL 1, 2, 3 scenarios from 2006 Comp Plan. NO TEAR DOWNS!!!
- I thought this issue was resolved last fall when city council voted it down. Why are we doing this again?