
Ordinance approved for student apartment company

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Muncie is one step closer to seeing a new apartment complex on a 10-acre stretch of land on McGalliard Road after an ordinance was approved Monday night.

Cardinal Crest, a North Carolina-based company, would make a \$15 million investment in order to build the apartments. The complex would be 216 units and would hold roughly 580 students near Oakwood Avenue.

The ordinance rezoned the area to allow the land to be used for the apartment complexes. It passed with five council members voting yes and three council members voting no.

The residents of the Layne Crest neighborhood, which would be most affected by the development, were mostly opposed to the ordinance. They are represented by Jerry Dishman of District 5, who voted yes to pass the ordinance.

Misty King, president of the Homeowners' Association and a resident of Layne Crest, couldn't believe Dishman ignored their concerns.

"We're really disappointed that our own council person has decided our area is not worth his consideration, that he is not looking out for his constituents," she said.

Local attorney Scott Shockley of DeFur Voran LLP represented Campus Crest. He said Muncie needs this development.

"I think that what Muncie wants and seeks and needs is out-of-state investment like this," Shockley said.

Joyce Weaver, a Muncie resident who owns rentals near campus, said she doesn't think an out-of-state-investment is what is needed.

"The money collected for rent will exceed \$3 million a year, and that \$3 million a year is going to North Carolina," Weaver said. "It will be taking \$3 million a year out of the community [and] the local landlords here in Muncie."

Shockley said he believes it will not only bring more money into Muncie, but also it will also bring more

"The economic impact is profound," he said. "It will generate construction jobs ... it will generate jobs over the long term. New money will be circulated into our economy."

King said he doesn't believe it will bring that much more money. She said she thinks it will drop the property value of other complexes.

"Not only does the student want to go to the newer, better place to live, but it leaves empty spots in these other buildings," she said. "That will drop the property value of these complexes."

Shockley said he is not worried about complexes having empty spots. He referenced the Ball State Fact Book and showed that according to the trend, Ball State will continue to grow approximately 300 students a year.

He said new apartments close to campus are something that is not offered in Muncie. Shockley said the competition will drive landlords to take better care of their properties, which will lead to nicer houses and apartment complexes across Muncie.

"One reason that we have houses in the condition they are now is because they know the students who want to live close to campus will rent from them because they don't have another option," he said. "Campus Crest will give them an alternative."

King said the major issues the residents are concerned about are density, traffic, noise, decreased property values and drainage issues.

Campus Crest has mapped out plans for traffic and drainage in the hopes of calming resident's fears. It also plans to have quiet hours to stop noise pollution and a 6-foot fence along the perimeter to decrease the number of students in Layne Crest.

The fight to stop the apartments from being built is not over, according to King. It will go back to the planning commission, which will have to pass a height variance, density variance and a parking variance.

"We plan on fighting them every step of the way," King said. "This is our neighborhood too. It's not fair that we're going to get run out of our own neighborhood."