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Plan Commission says no to two apartment projects

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Chris Russ of Campus Crest Communities speaks at a Muncie-Delaware County Metropolitan Plan Commission meeting that drew a crowd of opponents that couldn't fit into the meeting room on Sept. 1. / Seth Slabaugh / The Star Press



Written by **SETH SLABAUGH**

MUNCIE -- The city-county plan commission on Thursday night voted against two apartment projects proposed near Ball State University by out-of-state developers.

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More than 70 residents of the Layne Crest neighborhood opposed Charlotte, N.C.-based Campus Crest Communities' plans to build a 216-unit, 584-bed apartment complex bordering McGalliard Road between Scheumann Stadium and Oakwood Avenue. Opponents filled the commission's meeting room and spilled into the hallway.

Three commission members voted for, but six voted against, the \$13 million-\$15 million project that would include fire pits, grilling areas, a swimming pool, volleyball and basketball courts, and a clubhouse with a tavern-style game room, an exercise room, a

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coffee bistro with a fireplace and a library. Each apartment would include a washer-dryer.

While that project would cater to college students, a proposed 36-unit apartment complex in the 300 block of North Dill Street would be marketed to low-income service employees of Ball State and of IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital. All eight commission members voted against that project, proposed by Brinshore Development, Northbrook, Ill.

The commission heard about two hours of testimony but did not deliberate before voting. Members Jerry Dishman (a city councilman), Richard McIntire and Tom Parker voted for Campus Crest.

Those three joined Larry Bledsoe (a county commissioner), Andrew Ellis, Belinda Munson, Tom Green and Rickie Sipe in voting against the Dill Street project. Commission chairman Deane Rundell abstained from voting on that case.

The developers are asking the city to rezone the sites from single-family to multiple-family residential zones.

Both rezoning petitions will now advance to city council, which has final jurisdiction. The commission is an advisory body.

Attorney Scott Shockley, representing Homer Bradburn, the owner of the 10.5-acre Campus Crest site, convinced a majority of the 150 or so Layne Crest homeowners to sign agreements to vacate restrictive covenants preventing development of anything but single-family housing on the site. Each owner who signed was paid \$2,000.

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