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February 24, 2015

Mayor Stuart Sherman
City of Birmingham
151 Martin
PO Box 3001
Birmingham, MI 48012-3001

RECEIVED BY
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CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
CITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Re: W. Maple

Dear Mayor Sherman:

As a Birmingham resident on Aspen, the duty of government is do what is best for the long term growth and development of Birmingham. To make it more than just an upscale city or one step up from Royal Oak or Ferndale or Berkley. Birmingham is great but it can be so much better. The City has so many opportunities to rise to the challenge of making Birmingham an enriching cultured and truly beautiful city. To make it more functional and aesthetic.

For example, West Maple and Woodward are nothing more than traffic speed lanes to move traffic at a high volume and at high speeds through the city. Maple is being used as the cross cutter for east to west corridor traffic between Telegraph and Woodward, for the middle of Oakland county traffic. Ending high speed pouring traffic into a two lane downtown Birmingham. Cutting north and south Birmingham residential neighborhoods with a high volume, high speed road that is totally ugly . Roads can be so much more. Maple can be so much more. Woodward can be so much more. Making Maple a one lane each with a Blvd with islands with trees in the middle and at the same time slowing traffic down in our residential Birmingham and reducing the noise of Maple. We see what has been done in downtown Birmingham along northern Woodward north of Maple. We noticed Southfield Road is reduced in size and speed as it enters Birmingham from the south from four lanes to two lanes. Would the individuals who object to downsizing Maple Lanes want Southfield Road to be four lanes through Birmingham? The intimacy of Southfield Road is what Maple needs.

I have noticed one of the objections to this change on Maple is a death over many years ago of an individual crossing Maple. I would think that the change would be promoted by these individuals and not objected to it: Less lanes, less traffic, island to cross to, etc. The other objections is it will hurt the Birmingham business district. I also cannot understand this objection either. Downtown Birmingham on Maple is already one lane each way. Booming Santa Barbara has closed all traffic on the main streets. Most of the

traffic just drives through Birmingham onto Woodward; So less speed, less traffic actually makes for a more friendly and inviting city. To me this is a win, win. It makes for a more friendly Birmingham.

Government must do what is best for the long term growth and beauty of a city. Many countries have had Popes and Napoleon and Kings and Emperors to make cities full of life and beauty and boulevards and parks. City government is elected to make the difficult decisions even if many of it's residence want the same as the past.

On another note, outdoor art installations can make a city alive and enriching. Bringing people from within Birmingham, to residences from other cities and States to come to see art throughout a remarkable downtown city Birmingham and improve downtown both for business and beauty. Increased business for downtown retail doesn't come from putting up tent signs in the middle of the sidewalk. It makes retail look desperate for business.

Look at what Grand Rapids is doing with art installations. I have always been amazed that Cranbrook, one of the great art facilities in the world is only two miles from Birmingham and there has been no spinoff from Cranbrook to Birmingham in bringing large art installations to the parks and streets. The art presently in Birmingham is one step up from high school. Where is Richard Serra works in our affluent city. I was on the art board of Birmingham for one day and I quit after I realized they spent a whole meeting discussing the cost of a small art plaque and the art of one of the art board members was actually displayed in our city. Also, when at the same time, they, the city, decided to take City general funds of over $800,000 to build better golf club houses. Please, give me a break.

Let's take the big steps necessary to improve our City. Let us lead and become so much more. Let Birmingham grow to be so much more with Maple as a Blvd with slower and less traffic and more art in our city.

Very truly yours,

RICHARD C. ROLLINS

RCR/dsf

cc: Mayor Pro Tem Rackeline Hoff
Commissioner George Dilgard
Commissioner Tom McDaniel
Commissioner Scott Moore
Commissioner Mark Nickita