

## Saunders, Richard L. - PDR

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**From:** Tom Thompson <tandkthompson@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 15, 2021 3:27 PM  
**To:** PDR Land Use Admin  
**Subject:** Special Use Permit for 6900 Patterson Avenue

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Mr. Richard Saunders and members of the Richmond Planning Commission,

My name is Louis Thompson. My wife (Kathleen Thompson) and I reside at 6903 Edmonstone Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23226. Our property line abuts 6900 and 6904 Patterson Avenue sharing the north side of that property and our south fence line. We are one of two residential properties that shares a border with 6900 and 6904 Patterson. We bought our house in 2004. It was built in 1902 and is one of the original houses in the area. Our community is known as Duntreath, an old established neighborhood of single family homes.

We have great concern about the proposed change from single family detached zoning to single family attached dwellings (7 three bedroom units is the last count I am aware of on 0.48 acres including a building already on it). Our concerns include the following:

**Increased traffic congestion and proposed on-street parking on Charles Street.** This street is already a busy route between Monument Avenue and Patterson Avenue. Attempting to parallel park cars near the intersection of Charles St. and Patterson Avenue will only increase the congestion and danger to pedestrians and drivers alike. It would be nearly impossible in the morning and evening rush hour. So where do they park in that event? Only someone not from the neighborhood would think this is a good idea.

**A new parking lot in the back of the property that is only about 10 feet behind our back fence.** This is planned for 9 automobiles including a handicapped zone. Given that these 7 units are 3 bedrooms, the minimum number of cars would be in the 10 to 12 range, but it's easy to see 2 per household for 14 cars. If these become rentals, especially to students (University of Richmond is under a mile away), there is the potential for 3 or 4 cars per household. I understand the City code requires only a minimum number of spaces per unit but there is not nearly enough parking planned and will spill into our neighborhood since there is no street parking on this end of Patterson Ave. We also have no sidewalks to speak of in Duntreath. If parking is not available, these tenants will be parking in our neighborhood and walking in our yards or streets to access their residence. Where will visitors to these units park?

**A trash shed large enough for 7 families, students, etc.** We already have a rat and raccoon problem in the area which will only make things worse. I have no wish to smell a large garbage shed less than 30 feet from my fence and my outdoor living space when I am outside.

**Using this development for rental investment.** We are all concerned that these units will be bought not as homes but as rental property investments placing tenants with no personal investment of their own into our community since they are likely to come and go as many rental tenants are temporary residents only. I have been here 17 years and am a relative newcomer compared to my neighbors that have lived in the same home going on 50 years.

**The inevitable mess that will be going on during construction right behind us.** It is difficult to imagine the truck congestion, noise, dust and mud, road closures for months while the building is taking place. We are too close not to be impacted negatively and our backyard will be for all practical purposes unusable for months. Where do the workers park on the job site? Patterson Avenue is already closed to street parking given the proximity to Three Chopt Road and the Village Shopping Center traffic. They will be parking in front of our homes no doubt.

**But the most important concern for us personally is the invasion of privacy given our proximity.** Let me elaborate and please refer to the photo below that Mr. Lanphear provided to me for a clearer perspective on what I am talking about.

We moved to this home primarily for location and the wonderful backyard space which includes a swimming pool and pool house. We raised our two children here and held many family and friends gatherings over the years. We spend a great deal of time outside. What is being proposed will allow the tenants with third floor windows to look directly into our yard and pool space over our existing six foot fence. Mr. Lanphear and I reviewed the proposal some months back and he does not dispute the windows are high enough (around 25 to 28 feet given the 3rd floor ceiling is to be 30 feet) to allow the view we do not want to provide. At present, there is no barrier being proposed to prevent this in the plan. I had side discussions with Mr. Lanphear with suggestions of higher fencing combined with natural barriers should the zoning change be approved. I have not heard anything since.

We are both very upset that people will be able to view our outdoor activities unencumbered. If my wife knows someone can watch her enjoying the pool and deck, it will no longer happen and effectively ruin the primary reason we live where we do and all we have put in to the property for 17 years. There is no other surrounding neighbor that can look into this space in the same manner. This may sound minor to some of you, but discussions have already come up about moving. We are that disturbed by this change to our privacy and neighborhood.

If this is to be approved, we demand a privacy barrier be part of the official plan. Better yet, we feel that reducing the density of housing population by eliminating the third floor living space and bedroom, going back to 2 floors will help address the parking, congestion and privacy concerns.

I know the City is encouraging zoning changes like this and some areas, even nearby, could be appropriate locations for multi-family dwellings. Ours is not. Just because it is allowable under Planning rules does not make it the right move. Please consider this in your decision to issue a special permit.

Respectfully,

Louis and Kathleen Thompson

