

From: [Sarah Paladino](#)
To: [Nadia Anderson](#)
Cc: [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council](#); [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Re: Lavender Hill SUP - Please Respond
Date: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 12:30:12 PM

You don't often get email from sarahjpaladino@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hi Nadia,

Thank you for your message and trying to come up with a new management plan in an effort to work with your neighbors.

I do not support any type such plan that allows for outdoor events with amplified music. The zoning of your property doesn't allow this for a reason — it would cause too much of a disturbance to residences adjacent to your property, and I do not see a reason to change that.

I would not however, be opposed to some infrequent, smaller outdoor events. I do not support your current plan of an unlimited number of events of up to 50 people (or any events at all over 50 people). The noise from 50 people talking I think would be too much of a disturbance to neighboring residential properties.

I know other neighbors who live closer to your property than me have views on what is acceptable to them and I would encourage you to continue to work with them to see what they are most comfortable with as your neighbors.

Regards,
Sarah Paladino-Strater

On Oct 21, 2025, at 6:30 PM, Nadia Anderson
<info@experiencelavenderhill.com> wrote:

Good evening Sarah,

I reviewed your email correspondence with city zoning staff and council member Breton. I understand and share your concerns for parking and

noise and its impact on families in the neighborhood.

I seek to address your concerns and provide clarity regarding my plans for the outdoor space at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue.

Parking

I understand that parking is limited on Fitzhugh Avenue and Augusta Avenue because few houses have driveways or garages with dedicated parking and most houses rely solely on street parking for all the cars within the household. I considered this and included a parking plan with the SUP application.

Lavender Hill has six dedicated parking spaces. Typically, these are used for staff or vendors so as not to take away from the parking spaces available to guests. Event patrons are encouraged to park on Commonwealth Avenue, or Shenandoah Street, where there are no residences on the five blocks between West Broad Street and the north side of Monument Avenue. More specifically, the 1700 block of Commonwealth Avenue between West Broad Street and Fitzhugh Avenue has enough space to park at least 20 cars. The same is true for the 1700 block of Shenandoah Avenue. This provides 40 parking spaces on the two parallel streets within on block of Lavender Hill, in addition to the six dedicated spaces.

Additionally, I have established relationships with three of the commercial property neighbors. The American Legion across the street at 1708 Commonwealth Avenue has 54 parking spaces, Karina's Salon next door at 1707 Commonwealth Avenue has 15 parking spaces and Elephant Thai, that faces West Broad Street, has a rear parking lot just steps away from the rear of Lavender Hill with more than 20 parking spaces. These neighbors have made their parking lots available for Lavender Hill guests and have allowed us to make arrangements to use their parking lots for overflow parking if an event is scheduled and they have open parking spaces. Currently, Karina's Salon is open Tuesday through Friday, and the American Legion is open Monday – Friday, 8am – 4pm. Primary

outdoor event usage would be outside of the operating hours of these two neighbors, making nearly 69 parking spaces available to Lavender Hill patrons. Elephant Thai is open until 10pm most days, yet their back parking lot is rarely full. Access to even 50% of the 40 parking spaces on the street and 95 parking spaces in dedicated lots all within one block of Lavender Hill is sufficient for the small events that occur from week to week and the limited number of larger events that may occur during the year.

Finally, parking instructions are sent to guests for each event, large or small. Large events where more than 50 cars are anticipated will have a staff member to serve as a parking attendant to ensure that guests know where to park. This is a sample of the parking email that goes out to guests prior to events:

Parking & Transportation

You may park on either side of the street on Commonwealth Avenue or Shenandoah Avenue. There is no time limit or fee to park. You may also park in the American Legion parking lot for this event.

Please *do not park* on any of the streets that intersect with Commonwealth Avenue. We respect our neighbors and want to reserve prime parking in front of the houses for them.

NEAREST PULSE STATION

Staples Mill (10 min walk)

Walk .4 miles East on West Broad Street. Turn right on Commonwealth Avenue. Lavender Hill is on your left, behind the Valero gas station, immediately next door to Karina's Salon.

Noise

No music or concert venue is proposed for the outdoor space. Therefore,

any music that is played, is intended to be background music and is kept at a conversational level such that guests are able to maintain conversations without screaming while sitting next to one another. The Sound Meter app is used to monitor the decibels of amplified sound to stay within the limits of the city noise ordinance.

Large events require a tent. The tent better defines the space inside the fence, creating a room outdoors. This helps to specify capacity for events. It also muffles sound and keeps amplified sound from carrying into the neighborhood.

I understand there is concern for a commercial wedding venue so close to your house or potentially in your backyard. My intent is to offer space for couples seeking a microwedding experience. Microweddings are intimate celebrations with fewer than 50 guests. As an alternative to an elopement or a wedding in a public park, [Lavender Hill offers packages](#) for couples who wish to have 25 guests or fewer. There may be occasions where larger celebrations rent the space, however, these would be limited.

In the Spring of 2024 there were three events where the music volume was disruptive. Two neighbors expressed discontent at that time and I spoke with them about their concerns and considered options to reduce the impact of the amplified sound. That event series offered live music for two 45 minute sets and a 90 minute movie after sunset. That was a test concept that was developed in an attempt to earn revenue while navigating the permit process that will allow for regular event usage.

I learned the limits of the property and confirmed that the placement of the band and the speakers had a great impact on how the sound carries into homes and into the neighborhood. I apologize for the inconvenience caused by the learning curve with those events.

I'm interested to hear of other dates when noise created a disturbance for you and especially for events after July 2024. Please share those with me.

[Adjustments to the Ordinance](#)

As originally written, the management plan submitted with the SUP application separated outdoor events into two categories, public and private. Zoning officials asked questions about event capacity, timing, and sound amplification, and asked that I adjust the management plan to include those details. The city attorney then wrote the ordinance to include the maximum limits for all those categories. Since the draft ordinance became public, my intentions and requests have been misunderstood, miscommunicated, and misrepresented.

To be clear, I do not seek to create a music venue. It is not my desire to have music playing outdoors every day of the week or every weekend. However, I would like to have the flexibility to reschedule outdoor events that may be postponed due to inclement weather. After considering all the feedback received from the zoning officials, city council representatives, homeowners on Fitzhugh, neighbors in Sauer Garden, and the conditions of special use for similar businesses, I am proposing these adjustments to the management plan included with the ordinance.

1. Management Plan

a. Outdoor Events

- i. No Event shall involve more than 150 attendees.
- ii. No more than 5 Events per year shall involve between 100 – 150 guests.
- iii. No more than 15 Events per year shall involve more than 50 guests.
- iv. There shall be no limitation on the number of Events per year involving fewer than 50 guests.
- v. No event shall extend beyond 10:00pm. No personnel associated with the event shall work on the Property beyond 11:00pm.
- vi. Outdoor speakers shall not face Fitzhugh Avenue.

b. Staffing – one staff per 50 attendees

c. Hours of operation – office staff is onsite Monday – Friday 9am – 6pm. Events may occur Sunday – Wednesday between 8am – 8pm and Thursday – Saturday between 8am – 10pm.

If you would like to learn more about me and my plans for the space or the facts surrounding neighborhood outreach, compliance with zoning regulations, or details of the SUP application that was submitted, please read the two email attachments.

Moving Forward

1. I'm interested to hear from you!
 - a. Might you be able to recall the dates (month/ year) that you were able to hear music?
 - b. Have you experienced a parking issues on the days that events were held? If so, could you describe those issues?
2. What questions can I answer to provide further clarification of my planned use of the outdoor space at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue?
3. Are you amenable to the adjusted ordinance as detailed above?
 - a. If not, what additional adjustments do you suggest? More specifically, please suggest what it would take for you to be in support of the use of the outdoor space at Lavender Hill.

Thanks,
Nadia

Pronouns: She/Her

<image001[23].jpg>

Nadia S. Anderson, CPA, CWEP

Certified Wedding and Event Planner

Certified Public Accountant

Visit [ExperienceLavenderHill.com](https://www.experiencelavenderhill.com)

Email: info@experiencelavenderhill.com

Instagram: [@meetnadiaanderson](https://www.instagram.com/meetnadiaanderson) | [@experiencelavenderhill](https://www.instagram.com/experiencelavenderhill)

Learn about our event planning service, [Virginia Grace Event Management](#)

<image002.jpg>

Intimate Gathering Space and Garden Venue

Office Hours

Tuesday - Thursday: 10am – 5pm

Friday: 10am - 3pm

Checking email at 4pm

Upcoming Out of Office

October 30 - 31 - Social Rest

-----Original Message-----

From: Sarah Paladino <sarahjpaladino@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 8:43 PM

To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>; PDR Land Use Admin
<dcdLandUseAdm@rva.gov>

Cc: Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office <Whitney.Brown@rva.gov>

Subject: SUP opposition - 1705 Commonwealth Ave

[You don't often get email from sarahjpaladino@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hi,

I live at 4307 Augusta Avenue and am writing out of concern about the proposed SUP for 1705 Commonwealth Ave.

I am opposed to permitting this SUP as proposed because of allowing outdoor music up to 52 times a year, and the number of people (150) allowed at events.

Sauers Garden is a quiet residential neighborhood with a lot of young families. Allowing a house in this neighborhood to host large outdoor parties with music so frequently would be a major disruption to people living nearby. This business has had outdoor events in the past and I've been able to hear their music from a block and a half and an Avenue over. I imagine it's even worse for people who live closer.

Secondly, 150 people is way too large of a crowd for a moderate-sized house with small a backyard and no parking. Even if half the people took public transportation and didn't park, that's still a significant number of people needing to park throughout the neighborhood where everyone who lives here has to street park.

Out of consideration for the families that live in this quiet neighborhood, please don't allow

this SUP for 1705 Commonwealth.

Thank you,
Sarah Paladino-Strater
4307 Augusta Avenue

<Lavender Hill SUP - supplemental information.pdf>
<v1 Lavender Hill - SUP applicant report v.2.pdf>

From: Sidney Bragg <sjbragg42@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 4:05 PM
To: Nadia Anderson
Cc: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council; PDR Land Use Admin; Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office; Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: Re: Lavender Hill SUP - Please Respond

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Nadia, I appreciate you wanting to have your business and it is a good setting for the indoor portion of your operation. The house at 1705 Commonwealth has long been used as an office type business and that is how it is zoned. It is not zoned for the type of large event business you want and that you advertise because it is too close to our residential neighborhood. The zoning is intended to be protective of our neighborhood. At a very gut level your events have a very negative impact on your neighbors and their wellbeing. The thought of having to look forward to something like this on a regular basis is painful.

Your proposed SUP would radically change the neighborhood and our lives. As proposed the noise, traffic, parking, and general mess from large events would ruin quite a few of our days and evenings. The traffic and parking will create hazards within our neighborhood with many small children, and negatively impact our property values. It would destroy any peaceful enjoyment of our homes. You have had several events in the past with many people, loud music and PA systems, and the congestion caused by the setup and takedown of tents, porta potties, etc. None of this has benefited us or the community. You had an event on May 30 2025 that involved a tent, porta potties, many guests, and even though it was in a tent I could hear everything that was going on from within my house, I heard the singing and the PA system announcing various aspects of the event. When a thunderstorm came up it became very dangerous as people attempted to exit your yard and access their cars. People were in the streets, they didn't know where to go, some people and cars blocked several of the local intersections because they didn't know what to do. This event is an example of why the area is inappropriate for a large event space. This event was disruptive to the neighborhood and dangerous for the event attendees.

I provide this feedback with the intent of helping you understand the impact your events and proposed SUP have on the humans that live here.

With that said, it might be possible to work through some issues to allow for small events that would not be too disruptive to the community. There are several things that would need to be resolved, I list them out below:

- Any conditions would require a clear and legally binding enforcement mechanism tied back to having future events. Any future events would be subject to compliance with the conditions. The neighbors do not want to be the enforcement mechanism, there would need to be an independent process established that works,

- The safety and wellbeing of the neighbors and neighborhood must be maintained with regard to noise, traffic, parking, congestion, sanitation, and numbers of people,
 - no more than 12 events per year, no more than 1 per week, 30 or less attendees, noise levels that do not impact the neighbors ability to enjoy their homes and backyards, no amplified music or PA systems, a legally binding parking and traffic management process that does not impact the neighborhood, events limited to the hours of 12pm to 6pm, no events on major holidays(Christmas eve, Christmas Day, New Years Eve, New Years Day, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Easter, Halloween, and possibly others), sufficient security to enforce conditions and help attendees as needed.
 - These conditions reflect that it is not possible to have an event in your space with us just across the 25' alley with more than 30 people that would not disrupt the neighbors and neighborhood, it's just too small of an area. Any conditions established would be impossible to enforce with large events, especially if alcohol is served.
- An annual renewal of the SUP contingent on a review with the neighbors. This is intended to minimize and resolve any problems and provide a simplified mechanism for revoking the SUP if conditions are not followed.

I request that there be a continuance of the SUP until these issues can be discussed and resolved.

Thanks, Sidney and Debbie Bragg, 4408 Fitzhugh

On Tue, Oct 21, 2025 at 2:18 PM Nadia Anderson <info@experiencelavenderhill.com> wrote:

Good afternoon Sidney,

I reviewed your email correspondence with city zoning staff and council member Breton. I understand and share your concerns for noise, parking, traffic, and general mess.

I seek to address your concerns and provide clarity regarding my plans for the outdoor space at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue.

Parking

I understand that parking is limited on Fitzhugh Avenue and Augusta Avenue because few houses have driveways or garages with dedicated parking and most houses rely solely on street parking for all the cars within the household. I considered this and included a parking plan with the SUP application.

Lavender Hill has six dedicated parking spaces. Typically, these are used for staff or vendors so as not to take away from the parking spaces available to guests. Event patrons are encouraged to park on Commonwealth Avenue, or Shenandoah Street, where there are no residences on the five blocks between West Broad Street and the north side of Monument Avenue. More specifically, the 1700 block of Commonwealth Avenue between West Broad Street and Fitzhugh Avenue has enough space to park at least 20 cars. The same is true for the 1700 block of Shenandoah Avenue. This

provides 40 parking spaces on the two parallel streets within on block of Lavender Hill, in addition to the six dedicated spaces.

Additionally, I have established relationships with three of the commercial property neighbors. The American Legion across the street at 1708 Commonwealth Avenue has 54 parking spaces, Karina's Salon next door at 1707 Commonwealth Avenue has 15 parking spaces and Elephant Thai, that faces West Broad Street, has a rear parking lot just steps away from the rear of Lavender Hill with more than 20 parking spaces. These neighbors have made their parking lots available for Lavender Hill guests and have allowed us to make arrangements to use their parking lots for overflow parking if an event is scheduled and they have open parking spaces. Currently, Karina's Salon is open Tuesday through Friday, and the American Legion is open Monday – Friday, 8am – 4pm. Primary outdoor event usage would be outside of the operating hours of these two neighbors, making nearly 69 parking spaces available to Lavender Hill patrons. Elephant Thai is open until 10pm most days, yet their back parking lot is rarely full. Access to even 50% of the 40 parking spaces on the street and 95 parking spaces in dedicated lots all within one block of Lavender Hill is sufficient for the small events that occur from week to week and the limited number of larger events that may occur during the year.

Finally, parking instructions are sent to guests for each event, large or small. Large events where more than 50 cars are anticipated will have a staff member to serve as a parking attendant to ensure that guests know where to park. This is a sample of the parking email that goes out to guests prior to events:

Parking & Transportation

You may park on either side of the street on Commonwealth Avenue or Shenandoah Avenue. There is no time limit or fee to park. You may also park in the American Legion parking lot for this event.

Please *do not park* on any of the streets that intersect with Commonwealth Avenue. We respect our neighbors and want to reserve prime parking in front of the houses for them.

NEAREST PULSE STATION

Staples Mill (10 min walk)

Walk .4 miles East on West Broad Street. Turn right on Commonwealth Avenue. Lavender Hill is on your left, behind the Valero gas station, immediately next door to Karina's Salon.

Noise

No music or concert venue is proposed for the outdoor space. Therefore, any music that is played, is intended to be background music and is kept at a conversational level such that guests are able to maintain conversations without screaming while sitting

next to one another. The Sound Meter app is used to monitor the decibels of amplified sound to stay within the limits of the city noise ordinance.

Large events require a tent. The tent better defines the space inside the fence, creating a room outdoors. This helps to specify capacity for events. It also muffles sound and keeps amplified sound from carrying into the neighborhood.

I understand there is concern for a commercial wedding venue so close to your house or potentially in your backyard. My intent is to offer space for couples seeking a microwedding experience. Microweddings are intimate celebrations with fewer than 50 guests. As an alternative to an elopement or a wedding in a public park, [Lavender Hill offers packages](#) for couples who wish to have 25 guests or fewer. There may be occasions where larger celebrations rent the space, however, these would be limited.

In the Spring of 2024 there were three events where the music volume was disruptive. You expressed your discontent at that time when you came over and we met. That event series offered live music for two 45 minute sets and a 90 minute movie after sunset. That was a test concept that was developed in an attempt to earn revenue while navigating the permit process that will allow for regular event usage.

I learned the limits of the property and confirmed that the placement of the band and the speakers had a great impact on how the sound carries into homes and into the neighborhood. I apologize for the inconvenience caused by the learning curve with those events.

Adjustments to the Ordinance

As originally written, the management plan submitted with the SUP application separated outdoor events into two categories, public and private. Zoning officials asked questions about event capacity, timing, and sound amplification, and asked that I adjust the management plan to include those details. The city attorney then wrote the ordinance to include the maximum limits for all those categories. Since the draft ordinance became public, my intentions and requests have been misunderstood, miscommunicated, and misrepresented.

To be clear, I do not seek to create a music venue or a major event space. It is not my desire to have music playing outdoors every day of the week or every weekend. However, I would like to have the flexibility to reschedule outdoor events that may be postponed due to inclement weather. After considering all the feedback received from the zoning officials, city council representatives, homeowners on Fitzhugh, neighbors in Sauer Garden, and the conditions of special use for similar businesses, I am proposing these adjustments to the management plan included with the ordinance.

1. Management Plan
 - a. Outdoor Events
 - i. No Event shall involve more than 150 attendees.

- ii. No more than 5 Events per year shall involve between 100 – 150 guests.
- iii. No more than 15 Events per year shall involve more than 50 guests.
- iv. There shall be no limitation on the number of Events per year involving fewer than 50 guests.
- v. No event shall extend beyond 10:00pm. No personnel associated with the event shall work on the Property beyond 11:00pm.
- vi. Outdoor speakers shall not face Fitzhugh Avenue.
- b. Staffing – one staff per 50 attendees
- c. Hours of operation – office staff is onsite Monday – Friday 9am – 6pm. Events may occur Sunday – Wednesday between 8am – 8pm and Thursday – Saturday between 8am – 10pm.

If you would like to learn more about me and my plans for the space or the facts surrounding neighborhood outreach, compliance with zoning regulations, or details of the SUP application that was submitted, please read the two email attachments.

Moving Forward

1. I'm interested to hear from you!
 - a. Have you experienced pictures rattling on your wall since July 2024?
 - b. Have you had any challenges parking when Lavender Hill hosted an event?
 - c. If so, can you recall the dates of those disturbances?
- a.
2. What questions can I answer to provide further clarification of my planned use of the outdoor space at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue?
- 3.
4. Are you amenable to the adjusted ordinance as detailed above?
 - a. If not, what additional adjustments do you suggest? More specifically, please suggest what it would take for you to be in support of the use of the outdoor space at Lavender Hill.

Thanks,
Nadia
[Pronouns:](#) She/Her



Nadia S. Anderson, CPA, CWEP

Certified Wedding and Event Planner

Certified Public Accountant

Visit [ExperienceLavenderHill.com](https://www.experiencelavenderhill.com)

Email: info@experiencelavenderhill.com

Instagram: [@meetnadiaanderson](https://www.instagram.com/meetnadiaanderson) | [@experiencelavenderhill](https://www.instagram.com/experiencelavenderhill)

Learn about our event planning service, [Virginia Grace Event Management](#)



Intimate Gathering Space and Garden Venue

Office Hours

Tuesday - Thursday: 10am – 5pm

Friday: 10am - 3pm

Checking email at 4pm

Upcoming Out of Office

October 30 - 31 - Social Rest

-----Original Message-----

From: Sidney Bragg <sjbragg42@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, October 6, 2025 9:09 PM

To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>

Cc: Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office <Whitney.Brown@rva.gov>; Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR <Jonathan.Brown@rva.gov>

Subject: Lavender Hill, Objective Comments

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Andrew, please don't dismiss this as just another objection. I spent some time today reviewing the Public Comment letters regarding Lavender Hill posted on the city calendar, I also reviewed the other SUPs under consideration and I have several observations: 1) none of the letters in support of Lavender Hill discuss major outdoor events, they talk about meetings or dining and other small events or they speak in generalities, but none appears to endorse Lavender Hill as a major event space, and I'm not sure they appreciate what their endorsing, 2) none of these entities have to deal with the noise, traffic, frequency and general mess associated with the events, 3) most of the letters are in opposition and they speak from the heart, these people are happy here and they see the major events at Lavender Hill as a threat to what they hold dear, 4) I don't see any other SUP that is asking for something so out of character for the neighborhood, there is no precedent for this and plenty of opposition. Why do it here?

Please consider that the current zoning of Lavender Hill provides for them to be the type of meeting space these supporting letters discuss. The reason they want the SUP is to expand into major events, weddings, etc. Their website is pushing these events even without the SUP. This also means that they will want to maximize the number of events to get the revenue. This goes way beyond the idea of a gathering or community space. It is not the proper use of the space. It's pure business. Please don't let this happen here. This is not about community, it's about destroying our community for another's benefit.

Respectfully, Sidney Bragg

From: Sidney Bragg <sjbragg42@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2025 8:10:36 PM

To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>

Cc: Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office <Whitney.Brown@rva.gov>; Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR <Jonathan.Brown@rva.gov>

Subject: Re: 1705 Commonwealth Special Use Permit, Councilman

Some people who received this message don't often get email from sjbragg42@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear CM Breton, we are following up with you regarding SUP-152014-2024 for Lavender Hill at 1705 Commonwealth Ave. The SUP will allow up to 150 people, 52 times per year, to use the facility for outdoor events. These events would include amplified outdoor music till 10pm and could be on any day from 8am -10pm. Our guess is that these events will occur mostly on the nice days in the spring and fall when the residents will also want to enjoy their outdoors areas. This would be a completely inappropriate business model for a residential neighborhood, **it would legalize a nuisance**. Our understanding is that the SUP is currently awaiting approval from the City Attorney's Office and could be scheduled for the June 23th City Council Meeting. We hope that you will oppose the SUP and get other CMs to oppose as well.

We would like to meet with you regarding this matter and possibly show you the layout, it becomes clear how impactful this will be to the local residents. We have also discussed this with other local residents and they are also opposed, we have asked them to contact your office as well.

I hope to be able to discuss this issue with you soon.

Thanks, Sidney & Debbie Bragg, 4408 Fitzhugh Ave, 804-356-8004

From: Sidney Bragg <sjbragg42@gmail.com>

Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 12:13 PM

To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>

Subject: 1705 Commonwealth Special Use Permit, Councilman

You don't often get email from sjbragg42@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Councilmember Breton,

I'm sorry to throw this at you as you begin your term, however this issue has a near term timeline. My name is Sidney Bragg, my wife Debbie and I live in the 1st District at 4408 Fitzhugh Ave. Debbie has lived here since 1983, I have been here since 2003. There is a business in our community named Lavender Hill, located at 1705 Commonwealth Ave, that is proposing a Special Use Permit(SUP) that will allow up to 150 people, 125 times per year, to use the facility for outdoor events. This business is across the alley from us and resembles the typical house and yard in Sauers Garden community. These events could include outdoor music till 9pm. My guess is that these events will occur mostly on the nice days in the spring and fall when the local residents will also want to enjoy their outdoor areas. I have attached the proposed draft ordinance and management plan. Several of the residences near Lavender Hill have already had experience with music coming from Lavender Hill's backyard. It was so loud you could not get away from it, I had pictures vibrating on my walls. The parking was also a problem, with no place available on Commonwealth or Fitzhugh near Commonwealth. These were parties with maybe 50-60 people, I can't imagine how it would work with 150 people. I spoke with the owner after the event and she didn't see it as a problem. There can be no quiet enjoyment of our property with these events taking place across the alley from us. All of the houses along the even side of the 4400/4500 block of Fitzhugh will be significantly impacted, other houses in the area will also get tired of it as more events take place. The current zoning of the property is designed for use as an office or small business. The following rules apply for a good reason:

"Recreation and entertainment uses, including theaters, except that if such use is situated within 100 feet of any property in any R district, such use shall be located within a completely enclosed building.

No deck, patio, terrace or other area outside a completely enclosed building and used for the service or accommodation of patrons shall be situated within 100 feet of any property in any R district."

The current zoning is designed to restrict large numbers of people and loud events in residential areas as is appropriate.

To be clear, we are not against Lavender Hill having a business or hosting events as long as they abide by the current zoning requirements. We are not in favor of any events which disturb the general peace of the community. As advertised on their website they are "adjacent to a quiet neighborhood" and we would like to keep it that way.

Debbie and I have spoken with most of the folks on the 4400 block of Fitzhugh and all have expressed opposition. I plan to oppose the SUP at any Planning or City Council meetings. I would like to ask you to oppose this SUP. This SUP represents a complete lack of respect for the local residents and is an inappropriate use of property close to residential areas.

I would be happy to discuss this with you, my contact info is shown below.

Thanks for your consideration,

Sidney and Debbie Bragg, 804-356-8004, sjbragg42@gmail.com

Sidney Bragg <sjbragg42@gmail.com> Tuesday, December 3, 2024 10:15 AM Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
1705 Commonwealth Ave, Lavender Hill

[You don't often get email from sjbragg42@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr Brown, my name is Sidney Bragg and I live at 4408 Fitzhugh Ave, across the alley from 1705 Commonwealth Ave, Richmond. I understand that a special use permit allowing the property to have events 125 days per year with up to 150 people is being considered. Based on what past events that Lavender Hill has held I can tell you that this will be very disruptive to our lives. I have literally had pictures vibrating on my wall from the music, there is no way to enjoy the evening with loud events almost in our backyard. I have spoken with my neighbors regarding this and they are universally opposed. There are 7 houses directly exposed to the noise, with the rest of the neighborhood catching the noise that gets through our houses. No-one is going to be happy about this.

I would like to understand the process for opposing this permit. Please feel free to call me or respond with direction on how to proceed.

Thanks for your consideration, Sidney Bragg, 804-356-8004

From: mmagee0801@gmail.com
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 6:02 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin; Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Cc: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council; Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office
Subject: FW: Opposition to Ord. No. 2025-215-(SUP for Lavender Hill, 1705 Commonwealth Avenue).
Attachments: RE: Opposition to Ord. No. 2025-215-Lavender Hill, 1705 Commonwealth Avenue

You don't often get email from mmagee0801@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Good Afternoon,

I live in the Sauer's Gardens neighborhood and oppose Ord. No. 2025-215 (SUP for Lavender Hill, 1705 Commonwealth Avenue). This afternoon, I sent an email to Nadia Anderson explaining my opposition to the SUP, but also suggesting some changes to her proposal that may make it more acceptable to the neighbors. That communication follows. Please include my comments along with all other comments regarding this matter.

We would also like to request a continuance so that we have adequate time to consider any changes to the proposal.

Thank you,

Margaret and Tim Magee

From: mmagee0801@gmail.com <mmagee0801@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 5:37 PM
To: info@experiencelavenderhill.com
Cc: 'Tim Magee' <tmagee11@verizon.net>
Subject: RE: Opposition to Ord. No. 2025-215-(SUP for Lavender Hill, 1705 Commonwealth Avenue).

Good Afternoon, Nadia,

My name is Margaret Magee and my husband, Tim and I live in the Sauer's Gardens neighborhood at 4416 Monument Avenue. Our house is at the intersection of Monument and Commonwealth Avenues. I did not receive a letter from you directly addressing the concerns that I have regarding Ord. No. 2025-215 and so I am responding to the letter that you sent to Sidney Bragg. I have attached the letter that I sent to Andrew Breton and the Planning Commission for reference.

I oppose Ord. No. 2025-215 (SUP for Lavender Hill, 1705 Commonwealth Avenue). As mentioned in my letter of opposition, the use of Lavender Hill for an outdoor event venue is not appropriate for this neighborhood. Sauer's Gardens is a quiet neighborhood where many families and children live, walk and play. The proposal that you have presented will create additional traffic, parking problems and noise that will keep many of the neighbors from being able to enjoy their property.

I do have some ideas that may make your proposal more acceptable to those in our neighborhood:

- Limiting your outdoor events to a maximum of 30 attendees
- Limiting the number of outdoor events to 12 per year with an additional limit of 1 event per 30 day period
- Limiting the times for outdoor events between the hours of 12 noon and 6 p.m.
- No events will be scheduled on major holidays (Christmas, the day before Christmas, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Easter, Halloween, etc.)
- Obtain contractual agreements with businesses that will provide parking during all outdoor events and employ a valet during each event to ensure that each car is parked in the appropriate location per those contractual agreements
- Provide security personnel at each outdoor event to ensure that attendees stay within the parameters of the event space and enforce other contract requirements
- No amplified sound, loudspeakers or microphones. Outside noise must be in compliance with the noise ordinance and not disturb the residential neighbors or prevent the residential neighbors from the quiet enjoyment of their property.
- Immediately after each event, pick up all trash and other remnants from the events that have been left in the neighborhood and place in the trash receptacles owned by Lavender Hill
- Propose a detailed plan for enforcing all of the conditions of the contract (e.g. limit on number of attendees, limit on number and times of events, etc.), including the personnel responsible for enforcing the contract and the contact information for that person and the owner.
- Have your statement of use renewable annually based on compliance with the conditions of the contract

Thanks very much for considering our comments. We would like to have a continuance with regard to the SUP to have adequate time to consider any modifications to your proposal.

Margaret and Tim Magee

From: Nadia Anderson <info@experiencelavenderhill.com>

Date: October 21, 2025 at 2:18:03 PM EDT

To: sjbragg42@gmail.com

Subject: Lavender Hill SUP - Please Respond

Good afternoon Sidney,

I reviewed your email correspondence with city zoning staff and council member Breton. I understand and share your concerns for noise, parking, traffic, and general mess.

I seek to address your concerns and provide clarity regarding my plans for the outdoor space at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue.

Parking

I understand that parking is limited on Fitzhugh Avenue and Augusta Avenue because few houses have driveways or garages with dedicated parking and most houses rely solely on street parking for all the cars within the household. I considered this and included a parking plan with the SUP application.

Lavender Hill has six dedicated parking spaces. Typically, these are used for staff or vendors so as not to take away from the parking spaces available to guests. Event patrons are encouraged to park on Commonwealth Avenue, or Shenandoah Street, where there are no residences on the five blocks between West Broad Street and the north side of Monument Avenue. More specifically, the 1700 block of Commonwealth Avenue between West Broad Street and Fitzhugh Avenue has enough space to park at least 20 cars. The same is true for the 1700 block of Shenandoah Avenue. This provides 40 parking spaces on the two parallel streets within on block of Lavender Hill, in addition to the six dedicated spaces.

Additionally, I have established relationships with three of the commercial property neighbors. The American Legion across the street at 1708 Commonwealth Avenue has 54 parking spaces, Karina's Salon next door

at 1707 Commonwealth Avenue has 15 parking spaces and Elephant Thai, that faces West Broad Street, has a rear parking lot just steps away from the rear of Lavender Hill with more than 20 parking spaces. These neighbors have made their parking lots available for Lavender Hill guests and have allowed us to make arrangements to use their parking lots for overflow parking if an event is scheduled and they have open parking spaces. Currently, Karina's Salon is open Tuesday through Friday, and the American Legion is open Monday – Friday, 8am – 4pm. Primary outdoor event usage would be outside of the operating hours of these two neighbors, making nearly 69 parking spaces available to Lavender Hill patrons. Elephant Thai is open until 10pm most days, yet their back parking lot is rarely full. Access to even 50% of the 40 parking spaces on the street and 95 parking spaces in dedicated lots all within one block of Lavender Hill is sufficient for the small events that occur from week to week and the limited number of larger events that may occur during the year.

Finally, parking instructions are sent to guests for each event, large or small. Large events where more than 50 cars are anticipated will have a staff member to serve as a parking attendant to ensure that guests know where to park. This is a sample of the parking email that goes out to guests prior to events:

Parking & Transportation

You may park on either side of the street on Commonwealth Avenue or Shenandoah Avenue. There is no time limit or fee to park. You may also park in the American Legion parking lot for this event.

Please *do not park* on any of the streets that intersect with Commonwealth Avenue. We respect our neighbors and want to reserve prime parking in front of the houses for them.

NEAREST PULSE STATION

Staples Mill (10 min walk)

Walk .4 miles East on West Broad Street. Turn right on Commonwealth Avenue. Lavender Hill is on your left, behind the Valero gas station, immediately next door to Karina's Salon.

Noise

No music or concert venue is proposed for the outdoor space. Therefore, any music that is played, is intended to be background music and is kept at a conversational level such that guests are able to maintain conversations without screaming while sitting next to one another. The Sound Meter app is used to monitor the decibels of amplified sound to stay within the limits of the city noise ordinance.

Large events require a tent. The tent better defines the space inside the fence, creating a room outdoors. This helps to specify capacity for events. It also muffles sound and keeps amplified sound from carrying into the neighborhood.

I understand there is concern for a commercial wedding venue so close to your house or potentially in your backyard. My intent is to offer space for couples seeking a microwedding experience. Microweddings are intimate celebrations with fewer than 50 guests. As an alternative to an elopement or a wedding in a public park, [Lavender Hill offers packages](#) for couples who wish to have 25 guests or fewer. There may be occasions where larger celebrations rent the space, however, these would be limited.

In the Spring of 2024 there were three events where the music volume was disruptive. You expressed your discontent at that time when you came over and we met. That event series offered live music for two 45 minute sets and a 90 minute movie after sunset. That was a test concept that was developed in an attempt to earn revenue while navigating the permit process that will allow for regular event usage.

I learned the limits of the property and confirmed that the placement of the band and the speakers had a great impact on how the sound carries into homes and into the neighborhood. I apologize for the inconvenience caused by the learning curve with those events.

Adjustments to the Ordinance

As originally written, the management plan submitted with the SUP application separated outdoor events into two categories, public and private. Zoning officials asked questions about event capacity, timing, and sound amplification, and asked that I adjust the management plan to include those details. The city attorney then wrote the ordinance to include the maximum limits for all those categories. Since the draft ordinance became public, my intentions and requests have been misunderstood, miscommunicated, and misrepresented.

To be clear, I do not seek to create a music venue or a major event space. It is not my desire to have music playing outdoors every day of the week or every weekend. However, I would like to have the flexibility to reschedule outdoor events that may be postponed due to inclement weather. After considering all the feedback received from the zoning officials, city council representatives, homeowners on Fitzhugh, neighbors in Sauer Garden, and the conditions of special use for similar businesses, I am proposing these adjustments to the management plan included with the ordinance.

1. Management Plan

- a. Outdoor Events

- i. No Event shall involve more than 150 attendees.
 - ii. No more than 5 Events per year shall involve between 100 – 150 guests.
 - iii. No more than 15 Events per year shall involve more than 50 guests.
 - iv. There shall be no limitation on the number of Events per year involving fewer than 50 guests.
 - v. No event shall extend beyond 10:00pm. No personnel associated with the event shall work on the Property beyond 11:00pm.
 - vi. Outdoor speakers shall not face Fitzhugh Avenue.

- b. Staffing – one staff per 50 attendees

- c. Hours of operation – office staff is onsite Monday – Friday 9am – 6pm. Events may occur Sunday – Wednesday between 8am – 8pm and Thursday – Saturday between 8am – 10pm.

If you would like to learn more about me and my plans for the space or the facts surrounding neighborhood outreach, compliance with zoning regulations, or details of the SUP application that was submitted, please read the two email attachments.

Moving Forward

1. I'm interested to hear from you!
 - a. Have you experienced pictures rattling on your wall since July 2024?
 - b. Have you had any challenges parking when Lavender Hill hosted an event?
 - c. If so, can you recall the dates of those disturbances?
- a.
2. What questions can I answer to provide further clarification of my planned use of the outdoor space at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue?
- 3.
4. Are you amenable to the adjusted ordinance as detailed above?
 - a. If not, what additional adjustments do you suggest? More specifically, please suggest what it would take for you to be in support of the use of the outdoor space at Lavender Hill.

Thanks,
Nadia

[Pronouns:](#) She/Her

<image001[39].jpg>

Nadia S. Anderson, CPA, CWEP

Certified Wedding and Event Planner

Certified Public Accountant

Visit [ExperienceLavenderHill.com](https://www.experiencelavenderhill.com)

Email: info@experiencelavenderhill.com

Instagram: [@meetnadiaanderson](#) | [@experiencelavenderhill](#)

Learn about our event planning service, [Virginia Grace Event Management](#)

<image002.jpg>

Intimate Gathering Space and Garden Venue

Office Hours

Tuesday - Thursday: 10am – 5pm

Friday: 10am - 3pm

Checking email at 4pm

Upcoming Out of Office

October 30 - 31 - Social Rest

-----Original Message-----

From: Sidney Bragg <sjbragg42@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, October 6, 2025 9:09 PM

To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>

Cc: Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office <Whitney.Brown@rva.gov>; Brown,

Jonathan W. - PDR <Jonathan.Brown@rva.gov>

Subject: Lavender Hill, Objective Comments

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Andrew, please don't dismiss this as just another objection. I spent some time today reviewing the Public Comment letters regarding Lavender Hill posted on the city calendar, I also reviewed the other SUPs under consideration and I have several observations: 1) none of the letters in support of Lavender Hill discuss major outdoor events, they talk about meetings or dining and other small events or they speak in generalities, but none appears to endorse Lavender Hill as a major event space, and I'm not sure they appreciate what their endorsing, 2) none of these entities have to deal with the noise, traffic, frequency and general mess associated with the events, 3) most of the letters are in opposition and they speak from the heart, these people are happy here and they see the major events at Lavender Hill as a threat to what they hold dear, 4) I don't see any other SUP that is asking for something so out of character

for the neighborhood, there is no precedent for this and plenty of opposition. Why do it here?

Please consider that the current zoning of Lavender Hill provides for them to be the type of meeting space these supporting letters discuss. The reason they want the SUP is to expand into major events, weddings, etc. Their website is pushing these events even without the SUP. This also means that they will want to maximize the number of events to get the revenue. This goes way beyond the idea of a gathering or community space. It is not the proper use of the space. It's pure business. Please don't let this happen here. This is not about community, it's about destroying our community for another's benefit.

Respectfully, Sidney Bragg

From: Sidney Bragg <sjbragg42@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2025 8:10:36 PM
To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>
Cc: Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office <Whitney.Brown@rva.gov>; Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR <Jonathan.Brown@rva.gov>
Subject: Re: 1705 Commonwealth Special Use Permit, Councilman

Some people who received this message don't often get email from sjbragg42@gmail.com.
[important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear CM Breton, we are following up with you regarding SUP-152014-2024 for Lavender Hill at 1705 Commonwealth Ave. The SUP will allow up to 150 people, 52 times per year, to use the facility for outdoor events. These events would include amplified outdoor music till 10pm and could be on any day from 8am -10pm. Our guess is that these events will occur mostly on the nice days in the spring and fall when the residents will also want to enjoy their outdoors areas. This would be a completely inappropriate business model for a residential neighborhood, **it would legalize a nuisance**. Our understanding is that the SUP is currently awaiting approval from the City Attorney's Office and could be scheduled for the June 23th City Council Meeting. We hope that you will oppose the SUP and get other CMs to oppose as well.

We would like to meet with you regarding this matter and possibly show you the layout, it becomes clear how impactful this will be to the local residents. We have also discussed this with other local residents and

they are also opposed, we have asked them to contact your office as well.

I hope to be able to discuss this issue with you soon.

Thanks, Sidney & Debbie Bragg, 4408 Fitzhugh Ave, 804-356-8004

From: Sidney Bragg <sjbragg42@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 12:13 PM
To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>
Subject: 1705 Commonwealth Special Use Permit, Councilman

You don't often get email from sjbragg42@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Councilmember Breton,

I'm sorry to throw this at you as you begin your term, however this issue has a near term timeline. My name is Sidney Bragg, my wife Debbie and I live in the 1st District at 4408 Fitzhugh Ave. Debbie has lived here since 1983, I have been here since 2003. There is a business in our community named Lavender Hill, located at 1705 Commonwealth Ave, that is proposing a Special Use Permit(SUP) that will allow up to 150 people, 125 times per year, to use the facility for outdoor events. This business is across the alley from us and resembles the typical house and yard in Sauers Garden community. These events could include outdoor music till 9pm. My guess is that these events will occur mostly on the nice days in the spring and fall when the local residents will also want to enjoy their outdoor areas. I have attached the proposed draft ordinance and management plan.

Several of the residences near Lavender Hill have already had experience with music coming from Lavender Hill's backyard. It was so loud you could not get away from it, I had pictures vibrating on my walls. The parking was also a problem, with no place available on Commonwealth or Fitzhugh near Commonwealth. These were parties with maybe 50-60 people, I can't imagine how it would work with 150 people. I spoke with the owner after the event and she didn't see it as a problem. There can be no quiet enjoyment of our property with these events taking place across the alley from us. All of the houses along the even side of the 4400/4500 block of Fitzhugh will be significantly impacted, other houses in the area will also get tired of it as more events take place.

The current zoning of the property is designed for use as an office or small business.

The following rules apply for a good reason:

"Recreation and entertainment uses, including theaters, except that if such use is situated within 100 feet of any property in any R district, such use shall be located within a completely enclosed building.

No deck, patio, terrace or other area outside a completely enclosed building and used for the service or accommodation of patrons shall be situated within 100 feet of any property in any R district."

The current zoning is designed to restrict large numbers of people and loud events in residential areas as is appropriate.

To be clear, we are not against Lavender Hill having a business or hosting events as long as they abide by the current zoning requirements. We are not in favor of any events which disturb the general peace of the community. As advertised on their website they are "adjacent to a quiet neighborhood" and we would like to keep it that way.

Debbie and I have spoken with most of the folks on the 4400 block of Fitzhugh and all have expressed opposition. I plan to oppose the SUP at any Planning or City Council meetings. I would like to ask you to oppose this SUP. This SUP represents a complete lack of respect for the local residents and is an inappropriate use of property close to residential areas.

I would be happy to discuss this with you, my contact info is shown below.

Thanks for your consideration,

Sidney and Debbie Bragg, 804-356-8004, sjbragg42@gmail.com

Sidney Bragg <sjbragg42@gmail.com> Tuesday, December 3, 2024 10:15 AM Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
1705 Commonwealth Ave, Lavender Hill

[You don't often get email from sjbragg42@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr Brown, my name is Sidney Bragg and I live at 4408 Fitzhugh Ave, across the alley from 1705 Commonwealth Ave, Richmond. I understand that a special use permit allowing the property to have events 125 days per year with up to 150 people is being considered. Based on what past events that Lavender Hill has held I can tell you that this will be very disruptive to our lives. I have literally had pictures vibrating on my wall from the music, there is no way to enjoy the evening with loud events almost in our backyard. I have spoken with my neighbors regarding this and they are universally opposed. There are 7 houses directly exposed to the noise, with the rest of the neighborhood catching the noise that gets through our houses. No-one is going to be happy about this.

I would like to understand the process for opposing this permit. Please feel free to call me or respond with direction on how to proceed.

Thanks for your consideration, Sidney Bragg, 804-356-8004

<Lavender Hill SUP - supplemental information.pdf>
<v1 Lavender Hill - SUP applicant report v.2.pdf>

From: Tyler Johnson <tsjohnson517@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, October 27, 2025 11:06 AM

To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>; Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office <Whitney.Brown@rva.gov>; PDR Land Use Admin <dcdLandUseAdm@rva.gov>; Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR <Jonathan.Brown@rva.gov>

Subject: Ordinance No. 2025-215

You don't often get email from tsjohnson517@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Sirs and Madams,

I am a nearby resident and am writing to oppose the creation of an amplified music venue at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue. Noise pollution can infect a neighborhood just as fully as air or water pollution. In choosing to live in a neighborhood, we give up certain freedoms to live in harmony with others. If I blasted amplified music from my own house to the same degree as the proposed venue, I would be cited as creating a public nuisance, and rightly so! It would be discourteous to my neighbors and impose upon their enjoyment of their own property.

Why should the rules change for a proposed commercial development, just because they are charging people to hear it?

There is no shortage of places to hear amplified music, please do not allow another one to be disrespectfully placed in the middle of our neighborhood.

Best regards,

Tyler

--

Tyler S. Johnson, Esq.

From: [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council](#)
To: [Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR](#)
Cc: [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: FW: Continuance for Ordinance 2025-215
Date: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 11:51:49 PM

A proposal of restrictions written by an adjacent neighbor. Making sure you have it in the files

From: Kathryn Weakley <weakleykathryn@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 27, 2025 10:14 PM
To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>; Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office <Whitney.Brown@rva.gov>
Subject: Continuance for Ordinance 2025-215

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear councilman Breton and liaison Brown,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide additional feedback regarding the Lavender Hill Special Use Permit application. I have reviewed the applicant's most recent correspondence, including their parking plan, event management plan, and proposed revisions to the ordinance. I appreciate the applicant's willingness to engage with the community and to clarify the intended scope of operations.

While these clarifications are helpful, the proposed intensity and frequency of events remain inconsistent with the surrounding residential character and continue to raise serious concerns regarding noise, parking, access, and safety. As a homeowner who lives directly beside the property, I have personally experienced many of the operational challenges that arise from event use at this site—including blocked alley access, trespassing, late-night noise, and improper waste disposal. These are not isolated inconveniences but recurring problems that directly impact our ability to enjoy our homes.

I shared the following recommendations with the applicant and I ask that you encourage the applicant to request a continuance and respectfully submit the following recommendations for inclusion in the Special Use Permit should it be approved:

Event Frequency and Size

Limit outdoor events to no more than 50 attendees.

Permit no more than 12 outdoor events per year, and no more than two events in a continuous 30 day period.

Noise and Hours of Operation

No amplified music, DJs, or loudspeakers permitted outdoors.

All activities must remain within city noise ordinance limits.

Event hours limited to 12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. to maintain neighborhood quiet hours and reduce evening disruption.

Staff may remain on site until 8:00 p.m. to allow adequate time for safe and orderly clean-up, breakdown, and closure of the venue.

No events on specified holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas, New Years Eve, New Years Day, Hanukkah, Easter, July 4th, Labor Day, and Memorial Day.

Neighborhood Impact and Access

Alley access must remain clear at all times for residents, emergency vehicles, and service access.

Restroom rentals shall limit restroom drop off to no sooner than 48 hours prior to the start of the event and restroom pickup shall occur no later than 48 hours after the end of the event to prevent portable restrooms from becoming a permanent feature of the shared alley.

Vendors and event staff must be instructed on responsible trash and waste disposal to prevent accumulation or overflow before, during and after all events.

The property owner must ensure no on-street parking for event guests; binding arrangements with local parking facilities should be made in advance.

Valet parking services should be required to ensure patrons use designated off-street parking areas and to minimize neighborhood congestion.

Guests should be educated about traveling through the neighborhood, including reminders about speed limits, pedestrian safety, and children at play.

To promote the City's environmental sustainability goals and reduce noise intrusion, plant and maintain no fewer than four (4) Leyland cypress trees along the interior south side of the rear fence and no fewer than three (3) Leyland cypress trees along the interior east side of the rear fence. These trees shall serve as a natural sound barrier and contribute to Richmond's urban tree canopy. Replace any dead or damaged trees within 90 days to ensure continuous coverage.

Safety and Oversight

A designated staff member or professional security personnel must be on site during all events to monitor compliance and respond to any issues.

Event organizers must provide onsite oversight before, during, and after events to ensure caterers and vendors dispose of waste responsibly and that the area is restored to pre-event condition.

Professional security should be present during events to enforce rules and monitor noise and parking compliance.

The Special Use Permit should require annual renewal contingent on demonstrated compliance with these conditions.

These conditions are consistent with the scale of activity appropriate for a residential area and reflect a fair balance between supporting local small business and protecting neighborhood integrity. Without enforceable limits, the potential impact of up to 20 large events and unlimited smaller ones would overwhelm our community. These changes will support the applicant's desire to provide a location for micro-weddings as mentioned during our discussion.

I appreciate the City's attention to this matter and urge adoption of conditions that protect residents' safety, peace, and access.

Warmest regards,
Kathryn Weakley, PharmD, MBA
4412 Fitzhugh Ave
Richmond, VA 23230

From: Alfred Pollard <alpollard67@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 3:28 PM
To: Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office; asksgca@gmail.com; Breton, Andrew S. - City Council; PDR Land Use Admin; Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: :Special Use Permit Ordinance No. 2025-215

You don't often get email from alpollard67@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

WE ARE COUNTING ON YOU TO VOTE "NO" AND SAVE OUR SAUERS GARDEN NEIGHBORHOOD FROM A VENUE THAT DOES NOT BELONG IN OR NEAR ANY RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD. NOR, DOES THE HOUSE AND PROPERTY APPEAR TO MEET THE BUILDING CODE COMPLIANCE NECESSARY FOR AN ASSEMBLY OCCUPATION.

Thank you.
Alfred and Linda Pollard

From: [Jeffrey Plassman](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#); [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Ordinance No. 2025-215
Date: Monday, October 20, 2025 5:16:44 PM

You don't often get email from jsplassman@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I would like to make a comment as a resident of the Monument Ave Park neighborhood regarding the proposals outlined in Ordinance No. 2025-215

I would like to comment that I am OPPOSED to the special use permit that would authorize a special use permit for the property at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue to be used for outdoor events.

This property is in a residential neighborhood and not an appropriate location for an outdoor events space with amplified music and large amounts of visitors. We live in a residential neighborhood and the loud music is a disturbance to the residents of the neighborhood. Additionally, this neighborhood is not equipped to accommodate the influx of parking needed for events.

I urge the city to respect the residential residents and their properties from a business that is trying to introduce an outdoor event and concert venue in a neighborhood where it should not exist. I am a longtime resident and property owner about 2 blocks from the property that is requesting the special use permit. I support my neighbors and fellow residents in the Sauer's Gardens that have also voiced opposition to Ordinance No. 2025-215.

Sincerely,

Jeff Plassman
4618 Augusta Ave
Richmond, VA 23230

From: [Bobby Welk](#)
To: andrew.breton@rva.gov; [Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office](#); [PDR Land Use Admin](#); jonathon.brown@rva.gov
Subject: NO TO ORDINANCE 2025-215
Date: Monday, October 20, 2025 9:59:02 PM

You don't often get email from bobbywelk@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

It has come to my attention that an event venue is requesting to be built at Broad and Commonwealth. I am concerned about the noise as I have two young children and value the peace and quiet of the neighborhood. I am requesting you to vote no for this permit, ordinance number 2025-215.

Louis Welk
213 Commonwealth Ave.
804-516-5940

From: [ALICE LYNCH](#)
To: [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Opposition to Ordinance No. 2025-215
Date: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 7:29:22 AM

You don't often get email from malynch1963@verizon.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

As required by the Planning Commission, I affirm that I do not have an economic interest nor a professional interest/association with any parties to this ordinance request.

Commissioner Poole and members of the Planning Commission:

As a citizenry, we collectively hope that young families will live in and thrive in our city limits; to ensure this, we must do all we can to provide reasonably quiet communities so their children can sleep at night. While living in the city brings noise - emergency vehicles, occasional drag racing through the city streets, illegal fireworks, barking dogs, and loud car stereos that are difficult to anticipate or mitigate - there are reasonable and firm limits attached to properties and through ordinances to control noise levels and timing of noise to maximize citizens' enjoyment of their personal spaces.

Small, indoor meetings and gatherings can continue be held with relatively few neighborhood disruptions, but Lavender Hill's **request to expand into outdoor evening events with amplified music any night of the week up until 10 a.m. is not in keeping with neighborhood character** and will be disruptive to all residents, particularly our youngest ones. **It's astonishing that anyone would express support for a change in a property's use that would knowingly and purposely keep children awake long past their bedtimes**, with little if any benefit to the entire community. **Private weddings and birthday parties are not for public benefit by any measure**, and to claim otherwise is disingenuous.

The former single-family home and law office at 1705 Commonwealth Ave, which is feet from numerous homes, was NEVER designed to be an event venue. Specific concerns include:

- Red Flag 1: The fact that this building does not have adequate toilets for their proposed activities, underscores that this building was never intended to be an event venue and is certainly not suited for large events. One toilet likely isn't even sufficient for the activities that are currently being held at the site based on the Uniform Building Code followed by the city.
- Red Flag 2: No Parking for Guests. With the required porta-potties for events of more than 50 persons, there are only TWO parking spaces designated for this venue. Two. Nearby lots are owned by adjacent businesses that may or may not want others using their parking lots - which would supplant their own use of the lots and possibly cause liability concerns if others were to park in their private lots. So that leaves street parking which would cause nearly every guest to park for hours in front of nearby homes. As an event planner, I can tell you that an event that would attract 150 guests, with an average vehicle occupancy of two persons, would mean 75 vehicles, on average, would require parking. Since the venue has parking for two vehicles (accommodating just a portion of the staff required to supervise any event) and no parking for catering trucks, entertainment, and their accompanying staff vehicles, well more than 75 vehicles would take over the neighborhood streets during a large event.
- Red Flag 3 which is more accurately described as a Flashing Red Light: Noise - **Amplified music until 10 p.m. on school nights should stop any city leaders from approving this SUP.** Approving this sweeping ability for this property to host in perpetuity outdoor parties with an 800-watt speaker system (stated in owner's request), is **proclaiming to all that the kids living nearby do not matter**, period. Should the business that bought this property with the prohibition in place for outdoor amplification suddenly have more rights than the children who live nearby? An 800-

watt speaker system can produce more than 120 decibels of sound which is equivalent to a chainsaw or rock concert. Exposure to this level of sound for any period is detrimental to healthy hearing. According to the city noise ordinance, 65 is the allowed decibel limit for outdoor events which is a conversation. For every 10-point increase in decibels, there is a doubling of the perceived loudness of the noise. That means that 120 decibels is more than five times louder than 65 decibels. Imagine that in your backyard for hours while you're trying to sleep.

Don't all families who have purchased homes in this neighborhood deserve the peaceful enjoyment of their houses in the evening? Don't we all have some expectation to not hear someone else's music after dark in our own living rooms and bedrooms? Lavender Hill can continue to serve their stated purpose to bring persons and small groups together (50 or fewer) to meet the need for "third spaces" according to the property restrictions in place when the house was purchased. This SUP to allow large, for-profit weddings and other similar gatherings represents a permanent alteration that will stay with the property long after this owner has moved on. I hope that you will do all your power to ensure that while balancing the needs of businesses with the rights of citizens, that a thumb is put on the scale in favor of citizens, especially the little ones and their parents, who just want a decent night's sleep on a school/work night. Please respect the limitations that have long been attached to this property.

I concur with the recommendation of staff of the City Department of Planning & Development Review and urge the denial of Ordinance No. 2025-215.

Mary Alice Lynch

4109 Park Avenue

Richmond, VA 23221

From: [Sarah Paladino](#)
To: [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council](#); [Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office](#)
Cc: [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Fwd: SUP opposition - 1705 Commonwealth Ave
Date: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 7:36:25 AM

You don't often get email from sarahjpaladino@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

CM Breton,

I wanted to make sure you saw my below email prior to the meeting tonight. I did not see it included in the public record.

Also I would like to emphasize—in my review of the public record, there is overwhelming opposition from neighbors living in Sauer's Garden. I don't think I was able to find even one neighbor writing in support. The only letters of support are from businesses who likely have used her space for small, intimate events in the past. I don't doubt that Nadia does a great job hosting these types of smaller events. That's what the house is zoned for (sitting right within a residential neighborhood) and that's what should continue. NOT large outdoor events with amplified music.

Thank you,
Sarah Paladino-Strater

Begin forwarded message:

From: Sarah Paladino-Strater <SarahJpaladino@gmail.com>
Date: October 5, 2025 at 4:49:10 PM EDT
To: "Breton, Andrew S. - City Council" <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>, "Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office" <whitney.brown@rva.gov>
Subject: Re: SUP opposition - 1705 Commonwealth Ave

Thanks for the update. I know I had previously responded that I thought your proposal for small and large events was more reasonable than Nadia's application. But I wanted to let you know that this has still been on my mind and I did have some further thoughts I wanted to share.

While I appreciate the need for community groups to have spaces to gather I do not think it should at all be at the expense of residents' right to peace and to live in their homes freely. I also know that Lavender Hill is largely used as a co-working space (which I do not have an issue with), but I am concerned that with the request to host large, loud, frequent outdoor parties the intent of the applicant is to change the purpose of Lavender Hill in the future. I would encourage you to

look at the Lavender Hill website. It currently advertises the ability to host outdoor events up to 120 people (is that even currently allowed - why is that being advertised?), and boasts both about being next to a quiet residential neighborhood (which these events would disturb), and the “ample, free street parking. Never worry about parking or parking tickets for your guests.” Which is true to a certain extent but not for 150 guests!

I know that you mentioned that their outdoor music would have to be within the city noise ordinance of 65db for amplified music. 65db is the noise level of a normal conversation. In the past, when Lavender Hill has hosted events with outdoor music I have been able to hear it from my house a block and a half away, and I know their neighbors who live closer than me have had picture frames vibrating on their walls because of the noise, so I don't have great confidence in Lavender Hill's ability or desire to monitor or enforce these noise levels. And Nadia I'm sure as part of this application process will offer all of the assurances, but I think the stronger evidence to go off of is actual history.

I understand that community groups and even some residents of Sauer's Garden may have voiced their support for Nadia's application. But I doubt they live within a block's radius of Lavender Hill, and I really hope that you are listening the MOST to your constituents who are the most impacted, those who live within a block of Lavender Hill.

Thank you,
Sarah Paladino-Strater

On Sun, Oct 5, 2025 at 4:07 PM Breton, Andrew S. - City Council

<Andrew.Breton@rva.gov> wrote:

Quick update: The hearing for this Permit will NO LONGER be on the October 7 agenda. It is postponed.

I asked Nadia (the applicant) to request a “Continuance” which postpones the hearing. The hearing will be rescheduled to either Tuesday October 21st or Monday November 3rd. I am using the additional time to get feedback from Zoning Enforcement about the feasibility of the various reductions/compromise parameters being discussed, and to hear more from residents.

I would value hearing from residents who have had personal experience with this venue, either attending an event or living near one. Residents can email me at andrew.breton@rva.gov with their experience.

-----Original Message-----

From: Sarah Paladino <sarahjpaladino@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 7:43 AM

To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>

Cc: Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office <Whitney.Brown@rva.gov>

Subject: Re: SUP opposition - 1705 Commonwealth Ave

[You don't often get email from sarahjpaladino@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Thank you for your response. I think your proposal is much more reasonable than the current application.

> On Sep 28, 2025, at 10:53 PM, Breton, Andrew S. - City Council
<Andrew.Breton@rva.gov> wrote:

>

> The Lavender Hill application is scheduled to be heard at the Planning Commission on Tuesday October 7th. I am hoping to get the application amended significantly in order to create an application the neighbors can support.

>

> I have heard from residents who have experienced disturbances from large events, particularly related to noise levels. As I understand, residents are especially concerned about the prospect of a high frequency of such events. I myself could not imagine the prospect of a wedding band in my back yard late into each weekend.

>

> I have also received letters of support from many community groups that value the importance of shared gathering spaces such as Lavender Hill to meet and create fellowship and community. This is something I also believe in, as people find it more and more difficult to foster relationships and connections in modern life. Shared community spaces are a vital resource.

>

> The city has to find a balance between protecting the health and wellness of residents, and cultivating an environment in which groups of people can gather to strengthen our community.

>

> In order to achieve that balance, I propose something like the below set of restrictions. Essentially, I propose that the special parcel zoning allow for two types of outdoor events – small and large. Small events are intended to be quiet enough that there should be no limit on how often they can occur. Large events can be larger and louder but would be infrequent, and would still be subject to the city's 65 dB noise ordinance limits.

>

> I would like to know your feedback on a proposal like this. The applicant has not yet agreed to these particular conditions, but she is open to some reasonable guardrails in order to protect the neighbors.

>

> Small events (minimal disruption):

- > • No frequency limit
- > • No outdoor amplified sound

- > • Acoustic and/or vocal non-amplified music permitted until 8pm
- > • Up to 50 guests
- > • Outdoor use permitted 8am to 10pm (9pm on weeknights)
- > • Outdoor restrooms optional
- > • Staff onsite at all times with contact info

>

> Large Events (infrequent):

- > • No more than two large events per calendar month
- > • Live music and sound amplification allowed
- > • Still subject to city noise ordinance limit of 65 dB, measured from any point on a residential parcel
- > • Up to 100 guests
- > • Outdoor use permitted 8am to 10pm (9pm on weeknights)
- > • Outdoor restroom required
- > • Staff onsite at all times with contact info
- > • Off-street parking plan required for at least 30 cars
- > • 14-day advance notice to neighbors required

>

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Sarah Paladino <sarahjpaladino@gmail.com>

> Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 8:43 PM

> To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>; PDR
Land Use Admin <dcdLandUseAdm@rva.gov>

> Cc: Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office <Whitney.Brown@rva.gov>

> Subject: SUP opposition - 1705 Commonwealth Ave

>

> [You don't often get email from sarahjpaladino@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

>

> CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

>

>

>

> Hi,

>

> I live at 4307 Augusta Avenue and am writing out of concern about the proposed SUP for 1705 Commonwealth Ave.

>

> I am opposed to permitting this SUP as proposed because of allowing outdoor music up to 52 times a year, and the number of people (150) allowed at events.

>

> Sauers Garden is a quiet residential neighborhood with a lot of young families. Allowing a house in this neighborhood to host large outdoor parties with music so frequently would be a major disruption to people living nearby. This business has had outdoor events in the past and I've been able to hear their music from a block and a half and an Avenue over. I imagine it's even worse for people who live closer.

>

> Secondly, 150 people is way too large of a crowd for a moderate-sized house with small a backyard and no parking. Even if half the people took public transportation and didn't park, that's still a significant number of people needing to park throughout the neighborhood where everyone who lives here has to street park.

>

> Out of consideration for the families that live in this quiet neighborhood, please don't allow this SUP for 1705 Commonwealth.

>

> Thank you,

> Sarah Paladino-Strater

> 4307 Augusta Avenue

>

From: [Pauline. M](#)
To: [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Fwd: Delivery Status Notification (Failure)
Date: Monday, October 20, 2025 1:58:38 PM
Attachments: [icon.png](#)

You don't often get email from pauline.m1717@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Please vote no to outdoor music venue!

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Mail Delivery Subsystem <mailer-daemon@googlemail.com>
Date: Mon, Oct 20, 2025 at 1:56 PM
Subject: Delivery Status Notification (Failure)
To: <pauline.m1717@gmail.com>



Address not found

Your message wasn't delivered to **PDLRandUseAdmin@rva.go** because the domain rva.go couldn't be found. Check for typos or unnecessary spaces and try again.

[LEARN MORE](#)

The response was:

DNS Error: DNS type 'mx' lookup of rva.go responded with code NXDOMAIN Domain name not found: rva.go For more information, go to <https://support.google.com/mail/?p=BadRcptDomain>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Pauline. M" <pauline.m1717@gmail.com>

To: andrew.breton@rva.gov, whitney.brown@rva.gov, PDLRandUseAdmin@rva.go,
jonathan.brown@rva.gov

Cc:

Bcc:

Date: Mon, 20 Oct 2025 13:55:49 -0400

Subject: Vote no to the outdoor music venue!

Ordinance No. 2025-215

From: [Terry Pattillo](#)
To: [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council](#); [Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office](#); [PDR Land Use Admin](#); [Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR](#)
Subject: ORDINANCE 2025-215
Date: Monday, October 20, 2025 3:27:16 PM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

You don't often get email from tp59mail@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Good day,

As a neighbor of this property, I agree with the staff report:

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed number and scale of weekly events would not be enforceable by the City's Zoning Administration.

Staff finds that the applicant has not agreed to the enforceable conditions from the Zoning Administration that would allow for a positive recommendation to the Commission. These included:

- *A maximum of 52 outdoor event days per year, not to exceed one (1) event per week.*
- *Events limited to the hours of 9:00am through 10:00pm, Monday through Sunday.*
- *Any outdoor, amplified music concluding before 9:00pm, Monday through Sunday.*

Staff finds that with the ordinance conditions the safeguards contained within the City Charter, relative to the granting of Special Use Permits, are not met. Specifically, staff finds that the proposed use would adversely affect or interfere with the public requirements of the Department of Planning and Development Review by putting undue burden on the enforcement division of the department.

Therefore, staff recommends **denial** of the Special Use Permit request.

In reading the ordinance itself, it appears that this space could easily be used on a constant basis. The management plan states for the intent of the owner to engage in using the space potentially on a weekly routine. In addition, it suggests that other tenants would have the opportunity to have weekly or monthly gatherings.

Furthermore, Ms. Anderson would like to lease out this space for private events. With all of this potential demand on the outdoor area it is clear that it would exceed the stated limit of 52 days a year.

With gatherings of up to 150 people, this would have a tremendous impact on street parking for the surrounding residential community. The ordinance also indicates that when this space is in use the expectation is that everyone will be using bathroom facilities on a trailer in the alley beyond the fence of the event space. Again, the suggestion of 150 people attending an event with this limited amount of facilities does not even meet the code minimums.

Finally, Ms. Anderson states that an 800 watt sound system would be used up to the 10pm hour. This system would clearly be heard on Monument Boulevard. This seems extremely excessive in terms of dB volume that this system will produce for such a limited space and is also inconsiderate of residents in close proximity with children having bedtimes long before the 10 o'clock hour.

I strongly encourage you to DENY this ordinance.

Respectfully,

Terry Pattillo

From: mmagee0801@gmail.com
To: [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council](#); [Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office](#); [PDR Land Use Admin](#); [Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR](#); ["Tim Magee"](#)
Subject: RE: Opposition to Ord. No. 2025-215-Lavender Hill, 1705 Commonwealth Avenue
Date: Monday, October 20, 2025 11:25:04 PM

You don't often get email from mmagee0801@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Good Evening,

I am a resident of Sauer's Gardens neighborhood, residing at 4416 Monument Avenue. My house is at the corner of Monument and Commonwealth Avenues. I would like to voice my opposition to Ord. No. 2025-215 which would allow for large outdoor events at the Lavender Hill location at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue. The proposed special use permit would allow outdoor events including amplified music to occur at this location up to 52 times per year for up to 150 people between the hours of 8 a.m. and 10 p.m.

Please vote against Ord. No. 2025-215 as it would be very disruptive to our neighborhood. First, it would increase the traffic on Commonwealth Avenue. We have seen many accidents at our intersection and more traffic will surely make this worse. Second, I am aware from speaking to my neighbors on Fitzhugh Avenue that some of the events that have been held at Lavender Hill have been extremely noisy, so noisy in fact that it can be heard inside their homes. Finally, most of the homes in this neighborhood rely upon street parking. My understanding is that the attendees at these large events would be parking in our neighborhood which I don't think can accommodate up to 150 additional cars. Residents should be able to park at their homes and not have to search for parking.

Using Lavender Hill for large events is not well suited for our neighborhood. Please vote against Ord. No. 2025-215.

Thank you for your consideration,

Margaret and Tim Magee

From: [Pauline. M](#)
To: [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Fwd: Delivery Status Notification (Failure)
Date: Monday, October 20, 2025 1:58:38 PM
Attachments: [icon.png](#)

You don't often get email from pauline.m1717@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Please vote no to outdoor music venue!

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Mail Delivery Subsystem <mailer-daemon@googlemail.com>
Date: Mon, Oct 20, 2025 at 1:56 PM
Subject: Delivery Status Notification (Failure)
To: <pauline.m1717@gmail.com>



Address not found

Your message wasn't delivered to **PDLRandUseAdmin@rva.go** because the domain rva.go couldn't be found. Check for typos or unnecessary spaces and try again.

[LEARN MORE](#)

The response was:

DNS Error: DNS type 'mx' lookup of rva.go responded with code NXDOMAIN Domain name not found: rva.go For more information, go to <https://support.google.com/mail/?p=BadRcptDomain>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Pauline. M" <pauline.m1717@gmail.com>

To: andrew.breton@rva.gov, whitney.brown@rva.gov, PDLRandUseAdmin@rva.go,
jonathan.brown@rva.gov

Cc:

Bcc:

Date: Mon, 20 Oct 2025 13:55:49 -0400

Subject: Vote no to the outdoor music venue!

Ordinance No. 2025-215

From: [Terry Pattillo](#)
To: [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council](#); [Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office](#); [PDR Land Use Admin](#); [Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR](#)
Subject: ORDINANCE 2025-215
Date: Monday, October 20, 2025 3:27:16 PM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

You don't often get email from tp59mail@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Good day,

As a neighbor of this property, I agree with the staff report:

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed number and scale of weekly events would not be enforceable by the City's Zoning Administration.

Staff finds that the applicant has not agreed to the enforceable conditions from the Zoning Administration that would allow for a positive recommendation to the Commission. These included:

- *A maximum of 52 outdoor event days per year, not to exceed one (1) event per week.*
- *Events limited to the hours of 9:00am through 10:00pm, Monday through Sunday.*
- *Any outdoor, amplified music concluding before 9:00pm, Monday through Sunday.*

Staff finds that with the ordinance conditions the safeguards contained within the City Charter, relative to the granting of Special Use Permits, are not met. Specifically, staff finds that the proposed use would adversely affect or interfere with the public requirements of the Department of Planning and Development Review by putting undue burden on the enforcement division of the department.

Therefore, staff recommends **denial** of the Special Use Permit request.

In reading the ordinance itself, it appears that this space could easily be used on a constant basis. The management plan states for the intent of the owner to engage in using the space potentially on a weekly routine. In addition, it suggests that other tenants would have the opportunity to have weekly or monthly gatherings.

Furthermore, Ms. Anderson would like to lease out this space for private events. With all of this potential demand on the outdoor area it is clear that it would exceed the stated limit of 52 days a year.

With gatherings of up to 150 people, this would have a tremendous impact on street parking for the surrounding residential community. The ordinance also indicates that when this space is in use the expectation is that everyone will be using bathroom facilities on a trailer in the alley beyond the fence of the event space. Again, the suggestion of 150 people attending an event with this limited amount of facilities does not even meet the code minimums.

Finally, Ms. Anderson states that an 800 watt sound system would be used up to the 10pm hour. This system would clearly be heard on Monument Boulevard. This seems extremely excessive in terms of dB volume that this system will produce for such a limited space and is also inconsiderate of residents in close proximity with children having bedtimes long before the 10 o'clock hour.

I strongly encourage you to DENY this ordinance.

Respectfully,

Terry Pattillo

From: [Jeffrey Plassman](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#); [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Ordinance No. 2025-215
Date: Monday, October 20, 2025 5:16:44 PM

You don't often get email from jsplassman@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I would like to make a comment as a resident of the Monument Ave Park neighborhood regarding the proposals outlined in Ordinance No. 2025-215

I would like to comment that I am OPPOSED to the special use permit that would authorize a special use permit for the property at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue to be used for outdoor events.

This property is in a residential neighborhood and not an appropriate location for an outdoor events space with amplified music and large amounts of visitors. We live in a residential neighborhood and the loud music is a disturbance to the residents of the neighborhood. Additionally, this neighborhood is not equipped to accommodate the influx of parking needed for events.

I urge the city to respect the residential residents and their properties from a business that is trying to introduce an outdoor event and concert venue in a neighborhood where it should not exist. I am a longtime resident and property owner about 2 blocks from the property that is requesting the special use permit. I support my neighbors and fellow residents in the Sauer's Gardens that have also voiced opposition to Ordinance No. 2025-215.

Sincerely,

Jeff Plassman
4618 Augusta Ave
Richmond, VA 23230

From: [Bobby Welk](#)
To: andrew.breton@rva.gov; [Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office](#); [PDR Land Use Admin](#); jonathon.brown@rva.gov
Subject: NO TO ORDINANCE 2025-215
Date: Monday, October 20, 2025 9:59:02 PM

You don't often get email from bobbywelk@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

It has come to my attention that an event venue is requesting to be built at Broad and Commonwealth. I am concerned about the noise as I have two young children and value the peace and quiet of the neighborhood. I am requesting you to vote no for this permit, ordinance number 2025-215.

Louis Welk
213 Commonwealth Ave.
804-516-5940

From: mmagee0801@gmail.com
To: [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council](#); [Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office](#); [PDR Land Use Admin](#); [Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR](#); ["Tim Magee"](#)
Subject: RE: Opposition to Ord. No. 2025-215-Lavender Hill, 1705 Commonwealth Avenue
Date: Monday, October 20, 2025 11:25:04 PM

You don't often get email from mmagee0801@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Good Evening,

I am a resident of Sauer's Gardens neighborhood, residing at 4416 Monument Avenue. My house is at the corner of Monument and Commonwealth Avenues. I would like to voice my opposition to Ord. No. 2025-215 which would allow for large outdoor events at the Lavender Hill location at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue. The proposed special use permit would allow outdoor events including amplified music to occur at this location up to 52 times per year for up to 150 people between the hours of 8 a.m. and 10 p.m.

Please vote against Ord. No. 2025-215 as it would be very disruptive to our neighborhood. First, it would increase the traffic on Commonwealth Avenue. We have seen many accidents at our intersection and more traffic will surely make this worse. Second, I am aware from speaking to my neighbors on Fitzhugh Avenue that some of the events that have been held at Lavender Hill have been extremely noisy, so noisy in fact that it can be heard inside their homes. Finally, most of the homes in this neighborhood rely upon street parking. My understanding is that the attendees at these large events would be parking in our neighborhood which I don't think can accommodate up to 150 additional cars. Residents should be able to park at their homes and not have to search for parking.

Using Lavender Hill for large events is not well suited for our neighborhood. Please vote against Ord. No. 2025-215.

Thank you for your consideration,

Margaret and Tim Magee

From: [ALICE LYNCH](#)
To: [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Opposition to Ordinance No. 2025-215
Date: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 7:29:22 AM

You don't often get email from malynch1963@verizon.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

As required by the Planning Commission, I affirm that I do not have an economic interest nor a professional interest/association with any parties to this ordinance request.

Commissioner Poole and members of the Planning Commission:

As a citizenry, we collectively hope that young families will live in and thrive in our city limits; to ensure this, we must do all we can to provide reasonably quiet communities so their children can sleep at night. While living in the city brings noise - emergency vehicles, occasional drag racing through the city streets, illegal fireworks, barking dogs, and loud car stereos that are difficult to anticipate or mitigate - there are reasonable and firm limits attached to properties and through ordinances to control noise levels and timing of noise to maximize citizens' enjoyment of their personal spaces.

Small, indoor meetings and gatherings can continue be held with relatively few neighborhood disruptions, but Lavender Hill's **request to expand into outdoor evening events with amplified music any night of the week up until 10 a.m. is not in keeping with neighborhood character** and will be disruptive to all residents, particularly our youngest ones. **It's astonishing that anyone would express support for a change in a property's use that would knowingly and purposely keep children awake long past their bedtimes**, with little if any benefit to the entire community. **Private weddings and birthday parties are not for public benefit by any measure**, and to claim otherwise is disingenuous.

The former single-family home and law office at 1705 Commonwealth Ave, which is feet from numerous homes, was NEVER designed to be an event venue. Specific concerns include:

- Red Flag 1: The fact that this building does not have adequate toilets for their proposed activities, underscores that this building was never intended to be an event venue and is certainly not suited for large events. One toilet likely isn't even sufficient for the activities that are currently being held at the site based on the Uniform Building Code followed by the city.
- Red Flag 2: No Parking for Guests. With the required porta-potties for events of more than 50 persons, there are only TWO parking spaces designated for this venue. Two. Nearby lots are owned by adjacent businesses that may or may not want others using their parking lots - which would supplant their own use of the lots and possibly cause liability concerns if others were to park in their private lots. So that leaves street parking which would cause nearly every guest to park for hours in front of nearby homes. As an event planner, I can tell you that an event that would attract 150 guests, with an average vehicle occupancy of two persons, would mean 75 vehicles, on average, would require parking. Since the venue has parking for two vehicles (accommodating just a portion of the staff required to supervise any event) and no parking for catering trucks, entertainment, and their accompanying staff vehicles, well more than 75 vehicles would take over the neighborhood streets during a large event.
- Red Flag 3 which is more accurately described as a Flashing Red Light: Noise - **Amplified music until 10 p.m. on school nights should stop any city leaders from approving this SUP.** Approving this sweeping ability for this property to host in perpetuity outdoor parties with an 800-watt speaker system (stated in owner's request), is **proclaiming to all that the kids living nearby do not matter**, period. Should the business that bought this property with the prohibition in place for outdoor amplification suddenly have more rights than the children who live nearby? An 800-

watt speaker system can produce more than 120 decibels of sound which is equivalent to a chainsaw or rock concert. Exposure to this level of sound for any period is detrimental to healthy hearing. According to the city noise ordinance, 65 is the allowed decibel limit for outdoor events which is a conversation. For every 10-point increase in decibels, there is a doubling of the perceived loudness of the noise. That means that 120 decibels is more than five times louder than 65 decibels. Imagine that in your backyard for hours while you're trying to sleep.

Don't all families who have purchased homes in this neighborhood deserve the peaceful enjoyment of their houses in the evening? Don't we all have some expectation to not hear someone else's music after dark in our own living rooms and bedrooms? Lavender Hill can continue to serve their stated purpose to bring persons and small groups together (50 or fewer) to meet the need for "third spaces" according to the property restrictions in place when the house was purchased. This SUP to allow large, for-profit weddings and other similar gatherings represents a permanent alteration that will stay with the property long after this owner has moved on. I hope that you will do all your power to ensure that while balancing the needs of businesses with the rights of citizens, that a thumb is put on the scale in favor of citizens, especially the little ones and their parents, who just want a decent night's sleep on a school/work night. Please respect the limitations that have long been attached to this property.

I concur with the recommendation of staff of the City Department of Planning & Development Review and urge the denial of Ordinance No. 2025-215.

Mary Alice Lynch

4109 Park Avenue

Richmond, VA 23221

From: [Sarah Paladino](#)
To: [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council](#); [Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office](#)
Cc: [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Fwd: SUP opposition - 1705 Commonwealth Ave
Date: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 7:36:25 AM

You don't often get email from sarahjpaladino@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

CM Breton,

I wanted to make sure you saw my below email prior to the meeting tonight. I did not see it included in the public record.

Also I would like to emphasize—in my review of the public record, there is overwhelming opposition from neighbors living in Sauer's Garden. I don't think I was able to find even one neighbor writing in support. The only letters of support are from businesses who likely have used her space for small, intimate events in the past. I don't doubt that Nadia does a great job hosting these types of smaller events. That's what the house is zoned for (sitting right within a residential neighborhood) and that's what should continue. NOT large outdoor events with amplified music.

Thank you,
Sarah Paladino-Strater

Begin forwarded message:

From: Sarah Paladino-Strater <SarahJpaladino@gmail.com>
Date: October 5, 2025 at 4:49:10 PM EDT
To: "Breton, Andrew S. - City Council" <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>, "Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office" <whitney.brown@rva.gov>
Subject: Re: SUP opposition - 1705 Commonwealth Ave

Thanks for the update. I know I had previously responded that I thought your proposal for small and large events was more reasonable than Nadia's application. But I wanted to let you know that this has still been on my mind and I did have some further thoughts I wanted to share.

While I appreciate the need for community groups to have spaces to gather I do not think it should at all be at the expense of residents' right to peace and to live in their homes freely. I also know that Lavender Hill is largely used as a co-working space (which I do not have an issue with), but I am concerned that with the request to host large, loud, frequent outdoor parties the intent of the applicant is to change the purpose of Lavender Hill in the future. I would encourage you to

look at the Lavender Hill website. It currently advertises the ability to host outdoor events up to 120 people (is that even currently allowed - why is that being advertised?), and boasts both about being next to a quiet residential neighborhood (which these events would disturb), and the “ample, free street parking. Never worry about parking or parking tickets for your guests.” Which is true to a certain extent but not for 150 guests!

I know that you mentioned that their outdoor music would have to be within the city noise ordinance of 65db for amplified music. 65db is the noise level of a normal conversation. In the past, when Lavender Hill has hosted events with outdoor music I have been able to hear it from my house a block and a half away, and I know their neighbors who live closer than me have had picture frames vibrating on their walls because of the noise, so I don't have great confidence in Lavender Hill's ability or desire to monitor or enforce these noise levels. And Nadia I'm sure as part of this application process will offer all of the assurances, but I think the stronger evidence to go off of is actual history.

I understand that community groups and even some residents of Sauer's Garden may have voiced their support for Nadia's application. But I doubt they live within a block's radius of Lavender Hill, and I really hope that you are listening the MOST to your constituents who are the most impacted, those who live within a block of Lavender Hill.

Thank you,
Sarah Paladino-Strater

On Sun, Oct 5, 2025 at 4:07 PM Breton, Andrew S. - City Council

<Andrew.Breton@rva.gov> wrote:

Quick update: The hearing for this Permit will NO LONGER be on the October 7 agenda. It is postponed.

I asked Nadia (the applicant) to request a “Continuance” which postpones the hearing. The hearing will be rescheduled to either Tuesday October 21st or Monday November 3rd. I am using the additional time to get feedback from Zoning Enforcement about the feasibility of the various reductions/compromise parameters being discussed, and to hear more from residents.

I would value hearing from residents who have had personal experience with this venue, either attending an event or living near one. Residents can email me at andrew.breton@rva.gov with their experience.

-----Original Message-----

From: Sarah Paladino <sarahjpaladino@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 7:43 AM

To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>

Cc: Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office <Whitney.Brown@rva.gov>

Subject: Re: SUP opposition - 1705 Commonwealth Ave

[You don't often get email from sarahjpaladino@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Thank you for your response. I think your proposal is much more reasonable than the current application.

> On Sep 28, 2025, at 10:53 PM, Breton, Andrew S. - City Council
<Andrew.Breton@rva.gov> wrote:

>

> The Lavender Hill application is scheduled to be heard at the Planning Commission on Tuesday October 7th. I am hoping to get the application amended significantly in order to create an application the neighbors can support.

>

> I have heard from residents who have experienced disturbances from large events, particularly related to noise levels. As I understand, residents are especially concerned about the prospect of a high frequency of such events. I myself could not imagine the prospect of a wedding band in my back yard late into each weekend.

>

> I have also received letters of support from many community groups that value the importance of shared gathering spaces such as Lavender Hill to meet and create fellowship and community. This is something I also believe in, as people find it more and more difficult to foster relationships and connections in modern life. Shared community spaces are a vital resource.

>

> The city has to find a balance between protecting the health and wellness of residents, and cultivating an environment in which groups of people can gather to strengthen our community.

>

> In order to achieve that balance, I propose something like the below set of restrictions. Essentially, I propose that the special parcel zoning allow for two types of outdoor events – small and large. Small events are intended to be quiet enough that there should be no limit on how often they can occur. Large events can be larger and louder but would be infrequent, and would still be subject to the city's 65 dB noise ordinance limits.

>

> I would like to know your feedback on a proposal like this. The applicant has not yet agreed to these particular conditions, but she is open to some reasonable guardrails in order to protect the neighbors.

>

> Small events (minimal disruption):

- > • No frequency limit
- > • No outdoor amplified sound

- > • Acoustic and/or vocal non-amplified music permitted until 8pm
- > • Up to 50 guests
- > • Outdoor use permitted 8am to 10pm (9pm on weeknights)
- > • Outdoor restrooms optional
- > • Staff onsite at all times with contact info

>

> Large Events (infrequent):

- > • No more than two large events per calendar month
- > • Live music and sound amplification allowed
- > • Still subject to city noise ordinance limit of 65 dB, measured from any point on a residential parcel
- > • Up to 100 guests
- > • Outdoor use permitted 8am to 10pm (9pm on weeknights)
- > • Outdoor restroom required
- > • Staff onsite at all times with contact info
- > • Off-street parking plan required for at least 30 cars
- > • 14-day advance notice to neighbors required

>

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Sarah Paladino <sarahjpaladino@gmail.com>

> Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 8:43 PM

> To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>; PDR
Land Use Admin <dcdLandUseAdm@rva.gov>

> Cc: Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office <Whitney.Brown@rva.gov>

> Subject: SUP opposition - 1705 Commonwealth Ave

>

> [You don't often get email from sarahjpaladino@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

>

> CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

>

>

>

> Hi,

>

> I live at 4307 Augusta Avenue and am writing out of concern about the proposed SUP for 1705 Commonwealth Ave.

>

> I am opposed to permitting this SUP as proposed because of allowing outdoor music up to 52 times a year, and the number of people (150) allowed at events.

>

> Sauers Garden is a quiet residential neighborhood with a lot of young families. Allowing a house in this neighborhood to host large outdoor parties with music so frequently would be a major disruption to people living nearby. This business has had outdoor events in the past and I've been able to hear their music from a block and a half and an Avenue over. I imagine it's even worse for people who live closer.

>

> Secondly, 150 people is way too large of a crowd for a moderate-sized house with small a backyard and no parking. Even if half the people took public transportation and didn't park, that's still a significant number of people needing to park throughout the neighborhood where everyone who lives here has to street park.

>

> Out of consideration for the families that live in this quiet neighborhood, please don't allow this SUP for 1705 Commonwealth.

>

> Thank you,

> Sarah Paladino-Strater

> 4307 Augusta Avenue

>

From: Margaret Magee <mmagee0801@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 11:19 PM
To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council; Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office; PDR Land Use Admin; Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR; Tim Magee (tmagee11@verizon.net)
Subject: RE: Opposition to Ord. No. 2025-215-Lavender Hill, 1705 Commonwealth Avenue

You don't often get email from mmagee0801@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Good Evening,

I am a resident of Sauer's Gardens neighborhood, residing at 4416 Monument Avenue. My house is at the corner of Monument and Commonwealth Avenues. I would like to voice my opposition to Ord. No. 2025-215 which would allow for large outdoor events at the Lavender Hill location at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue. The proposed special use permit would allow outdoor events including amplified music to occur at this location up to 52 times per year for up to 150 people between the hours of 8 a.m. and 10 p.m.

Please vote against Ord. No. 2025-215 as it would be very disruptive to our neighborhood. First, it would increase the traffic on Commonwealth Avenue. We have seen many accidents at our intersection and more traffic will surely make this worse. Second, I am aware from speaking to my neighbors on Fitzhugh Avenue that some of the events that have been held at Lavender Hill have been extremely noisy, so noisy in fact that it can be heard inside their homes. Finally, most of the homes in this neighborhood rely upon street parking. My understanding is that the attendees at these large events would be parking in our neighborhood which I don't think can accommodate up to 150 additional cars. Residents should be able to park at their homes and not have to search for parking.

Using Lavender Hill for large events is not well suited for our neighborhood. Please vote against Ord. No. 2025-215.

Thank you for your consideration,

Margaret and Tim Magee

----- Forwarded message -----

From: tmagee11@verizon.net <tmagee11@verizon.net>
Date: Mon, Oct 20, 2025 at 8:49 PM
Subject: Fw: Lavender Hill, 1705 Commonwealth
To: Margaret Magee <mmagee0801@gmail.com>

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Sidney Bragg <sjbragg42@gmail.com>

To: "timagee11@verizon.net" <timagee11@verizon.net>

Sent: Sunday, October 19, 2025 at 06:09:58 PM EDT

Subject: Lavender Hill, 1705 Commonwealth

Tim, it was good speaking with you and Magaret yesterday. I have attached the SUP(see Special Conditions) and listed the contact info for the Planning Commission and City Council below. Folks who live near Lavender Hill have had to deal with several of their events, the noise, traffic, parking and general mess just for 1 event is tough to deal with, especially as it goes on for hours. We can't carry on a conversation, watch TV, or any of the normal things without being interrupted by music or a loudspeaker. The idea of dealing with 52 a year is ridiculous. Any support for the cause is appreciated. It is possible that the SUP will be amended or postponed prior to Tuesday's meeting. Please feel free to call me if you have questions, 804-356-8004.

Thanks, Sid

PS: the following link will take you to the City Calendar, you can click on the Planning Commission meeting for 10-21-25, find Ord. No. 2025-215 and view current public comments and information.

<https://richmondva.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

Council Representative Andrew Breton, Andrew.Breton@rva.gov

Andrew Breton's Liaison Whitney Brown, whitney.brown@rva.gov

Planning Commission, PDRLandUseAdmin@rva.gov

Senior Planner Jonathan Brown, Jonathan.Brown@rva.gov

From: [Kim Roberts](#)
To: [Oliver, Alyson E. - PDR](#)
Subject: Ordinance no 2025-215
Date: Monday, October 13, 2025 2:46:52 PM

[You don't often get email from kimrobertsrva@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Please do not approve special use for the music venue on Commonwealth. This will be so noisy from 8am-10pm (the proposed hours) for our neighborhood. For those of us with small children, bedtime will be a nightmare. We can hear fireworks from the Diamond, so I'm sure loud music from that short distance will be an unwanted and loud distraction for all of us. We already have a nice outdoor venue at Browns Island. Let's just keep that one.

Thank you for your attention.

Kim

From: [Francisco Velez](#)
To: [Oliver, Alyson E. - PDR](#)
Subject: Fwd: Ordinance 2025-215. Special use permit
Date: Monday, October 13, 2025 2:18:11 PM

You don't often get email from franciscovelez@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Francisco Vélez

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Francisco Velez** <franciscovelez@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Oct 13, 2025 at 2:15 PM
Subject: Ordinance 2025-215. Special use permit
To: <Jonathan.Brown@rva.gov>

Good Afternoon,

I am an RVA resident with address at 4604 Augusta Ave. I am writing to express my opposition to special use permit Ordinance 2025-2015. This event venue will significantly impact the residential lifestyle of our neighborhood. The proposed special use permit will increase vehicle traffic in the area, reduce available street parking for the community, increase noise level for the children and residents and increase pollution in the surroundings. This area has been developed as a residential area, modifying the original purpose of this building will have an adverse impact to the residents.

Please let me know if there is something else I could do to express my opposition to this special use permit.

Thanks,

Francisco Vélez

From: Ricky Womack
Subject: Vote NO to Ordinance No. 2025-215 / special use permit for Lavender Hill
Date: Wednesday, October 8, 2025 2:18:37 PM

You don't often get email from rickston69@gmail.com. Learn why this is important
<<https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>>

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern,

As a long time resident of the Sauer's Garden neighborhood, I implore you to please vote against the zoning request from Lavender Hill located at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue. We do not wish to be subjected to loud music that will continue until the late hours of the night. We also do not wish to be subjected to the additional 100+ vehicles that will no doubt be parking throughout the neighborhood. This is supposed to be a quiet residential neighborhood and we would like for it to remain as such. If the owners of Lavender Hill would like to expand their business offering to include large parties with loud music as often as 56 times a year then maybe they should be advised to move to a more accommodating location outside of Sauer's Garden.

Some of us remember what it was like having the Governor's School included in TJ High School with the additional 100+ cars everyday along with students trampling all over our yards as well as congregating in our alleyways. Do not think for one moment that this sort of behavior will not be a result should Lavender Hill be allowed to disrupt our quiet family neighborhood. It is bad enough that a car wash was approved at the corner of Sauer and Broad which has significantly increased traffic and reckless driving along Sauer Avenue. Neighbors who live behind and near Flagstop have complained about the loud music and the noise that comes from the machinery so surely we do not need to add one more source of noise pollution to our family friendly neighborhood.

Sauer's Garden has attracted many new families who have young children that go to bed early in the evening. I'm sure they do not want all of the partying to make it difficult to get them down to sleep. What about residents who go to bed early in order to get to an early work shift or come home late from a graveyard shift who cannot find parking anywhere near their home nor can they get to sleep due to all of the noise coming from Lavender Hill? Would you want this in your backyard? Maybe it's easy for you to not be concerned because you don't live near it as we do.

It should be made clear to Lavender Hill that they would no longer be welcome in the Sauer's Garden neighborhood if they continue to pursue this.

Thanks for your immediate attention to this matter!

R. A. Womack
Sauer's Garden resident

From: Anneli Kirby
To: [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council; PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Lavender Hill
Date: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 3:54:22 PM

You don't often get email from anneli@annelikirby.com. Learn why this is important
<<https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>>

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

I am writing to add my name to the list of Sauers Gardens residents who do not support an increase in the number of people allowed at any events at Lavender Hill. We are an older and established community with a thriving neighborhood association who support many businesses within our area, but this would be excessive and cause too many issues with noise and parking.

Please take into consideration the families and many young children who live around the Lavender Hill property.

Thank you,
Anneli Kirby

Anneli Kirby
GRAPHIC DESIGN/
DOG PORTRAITS
<https://an7247.wixsite.com/annelifelts>

From: Krista Mathis
To: [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Cc: [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council](#); [Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office](#)
Subject: Letter in opposition to Ord. 2025-215
Date: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 5:09:09 PM

You don't often get email from kmslaw@gmail.com. Learn why this is important
<<https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>>

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Members of the Planning Commission:

I write to voice my strong opposition to Ord. 2025-215 to authorize the special use of 1705 Commonwealth Avenue for the purpose of a space for outdoor events. I live at 4406 Fitzhugh Avenue, a property that shares an alley with the subject property.

For over three years, I've experienced the outdoor events hosted in the rear yard of 1705 Commonwealth Avenue. These events almost always include music and that music can be heard in all parts of my house. For me, that noise disturbance is the key concern. There may be solutions to some of the concerns created by the proposed use, but the critical issue with this SUP is the proposed use itself. The requested use is an unresolvable concern. The property is located too close to the residential district to shield the residents of my block, and likely other nearby blocks, from the sound levels that will be created by the proposed use. It's frustrating that there isn't a mutually acceptable compromise in this scenario, as I understand that Ms. Anderson is well-respected by the clients with whom she works, as evidenced by the letters of support submitted for the public hearing, and I don't enjoy creating an impediment for the owner of a successful small business. But the focus has to be on the fact that the proposed use isn't an allowed use of the property and on the impact that use will have on the residential district just feet away from the property. To that end, the conditions of 1705 Commonwealth Avenue are not conducive to the use necessary for Ms. Anderson's business. There are many appropriate uses of the property but outdoor event space is not one of them.

I ask that the Planning Commission deny the application for a special use permit authorizing use of the outdoor space at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue as an event space.

Best,
Krista M. Mathis
4406 Fitzhugh Avenue

--

Krista M. Mathis
email: kmslaw@gmail.com <<mailto:kmslaw@gmail.com>>
cell: (804) 647-3254

From: [Stephanie Suwak](#)
To: [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council](#); [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Lavender Hill special permit / comment from resident
Date: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 10:34:33 AM

You don't often get email from stephaniesuwak@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

To Whom It May Concern:

I'm writing in regard to the proposed Special Use Permit for Lavender Hill, close to the Sauer Gardens neighborhood. I reside in the 4200 block of Augusta Avenue and **am against the current proposal** that will allow 52 events per year with up to 150 people, any day of the week, up to 3 times per week, with amplified music and sound till 10pm.

Already we have heard music at nights when our windows are open and it distracts from our beautiful, peaceful neighborhood. This change would also increase traffic noise, hamper parking spots and add people walking through the neighborhoods surrounding the venue.

Please reconsider the proposed offer and work to keep the neighborhoods quiet and peaceful.

thank you,
Stephanie Mallory

--

Stephanie Suwak Mallory
804-304-7503

From: Erika Nixon- Lambert <enixonva@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 5:00 PM
To: Gibson, Kenya J. - City Council; Elliott, Sarandon C. - City Council
Cc: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: Letter of support for Lavender Hill

You don't often get email from enixonva@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Council Member Gibson,

As a resident of the 3rd district with professional involvement in the events industry, I am pleased to provide this letter of support for Lavender Hill to gain approval for SUP 2025 – 215 for outdoor dining and special events.

Lavender Hill has been a great resource to the greater Richmond community. The venue hosts gatherings, providing a welcoming space where community members could come together to share ideas, build relationships, and celebrate. I have attended events at the venue that encourages networking and small business development which are essential to the city of Richmond small business community. Lavender Hill is more than a meeting place. It is a thoughtfully designed and hospitable environment that encourages connection and collaboration. Nadia's professionalism and care ensure that gatherings of all sizes are both seamless and enjoyable.

I developed a professional relationship that extends for over a decade and I've witnessed the level of excellence and care that Nadia put into creating quality experiences for my clients and their guests. I know that events at Lavender Hill will be organized and managed with care and consideration. Lavender Hill has consistently demonstrated a commitment to supporting Richmond's broader creative and business communities. By opening its doors to diverse organizations and events, it contributes to the sense of belonging and shared purpose that defines our city.

I am confident that Lavender Hill will continue to serve as a valuable asset to our city's cultural and economic life and that approval of the SUP will **not** endanger any city residents. I want to thank you in advance for your time and consideration to this matter.

Erika Nixon- Lambert , Pharm D Candidate 2026 VCU School of Pharmacy

3215 Griffin Ave. Richmond, Va. 23222

From: [Justine Zinskie](#)
To: [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council](#); [Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office](#); [PDR Land Use Admin](#); [Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR](#)
Subject: NO to Ordinance NO. 2025-215
Date: Wednesday, October 15, 2025 9:54:08 AM

You don't often get email from jzinskieot@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Good morning,

My name is Justine Zinskie, and my family and I are constituents residing in the 1st district. My husband Harry, our two children (ages 4 and 2) and myself live on the 4700 block of West Franklin Street. My family lives, learns and works in the city and were concerned to see the recent item Ordinance 2025-215 on the docket for discussion which would allow the address 1705 Commonwealth Avenue to be utilized for special events - as a music venue.

This is extremely concerning to us for a few reasons. To start, this building is separated by only a small alley from residences, and is firmly in a residential community area. As a parent of small children, I could not fathom having a music venue of any size across the alley of my home while my children attempt to nap or go to sleep at night. Just recently, we were disturbed by the noise from the Iron Blossom festival which took place 3.5 miles away - well past 9pm. Having amplified music 10 feet away from someone else's home is unacceptable to have any level of excess regularly scheduled noise, especially as this venue did not exist when these residences purchased their homes near Commonwealth Avenue.

I am additionally concerned about parking. This building currently has off-street parking containing <10 spots (which I believe is generous). Residents are already scrambling to find parking as many do not have driveways/off street, especially on street cleaning days.

I am a big fan of the arts and fully support music venues that can be built in non-residential areas; however, I strongly feel that voting 'yes' on this would be doing a large disservice to homeowners in the first district. Please consider these concerns when voting at the upcoming meeting.

Thank you,
Justine Zinskie
Constituent

From: Nicholas pfab <ncpfab@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 11:32 AM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: ordinance 2025-215

[You don't often get email from ncpfab@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hi Jonathan,

my good friend Leigh Kelley told me to reach out to you in regards to voicing my concerns for ordinance no. 2025-215. I live across the street (4500 fitzhugh ave) from the location asking for special permit to be a live music venue. Sauer's garden is a quiet neighborhood and having a music venue and porta-potties and increased traffic will have a negative affect on the neighborhood as well as home prices. This is a residential area and I would like to vote NO for the passing of the ordinance.

Thank you!
Nicholas Pfab

From: [Michael Gasser](#)
To: [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council](#); [Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office](#); [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Ordinance No. 2025-215 (Lavender Hill - 1705 Commonwealth Avenue)
Date: Saturday, October 11, 2025 2:39:34 PM

You don't often get email from gassermw@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Esteemed members of the Richmond City Government,

My name is Michael Gasser. I am a city resident living at 4411 Cutshaw Avenue in the Sauer's Garden neighborhood. It has come to my attention that a business is attempting to open an event space in the neighborhood — Lavender Hill at 1705 Commonwealth Ave. I want to express my sincere support for their business and whatever permitting they need to continue operating. Please ensure they can continue hosting events and have as many porta-potties as possible.

Thank you for your time.

Regards,
Mike

From: Rachel Pfab <rachelpfab@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 11:46 AM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: Re: Lavender Hill ordinance 2025-215

You don't often get email from rachelpfab@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hi Jonathan,

I would like to add to something to my letter I sent to you earlier. Loud noise is deleterious to children. Studies show that noise pollution can affect their health and well being. It can also lead to ADHD and poor academic achievements especially if the children cannot sleep due to loud noises such as music or simply people making a lot of noise when leaving the venue late at night disturbing their sleep. As you know, this venue is located in the sought after Mary Munford District. People with children are drawn to the location for the school. I have added one study and am happy to provide more if needed.

Thank You,
RAchel Pfab
4500 Fitzhugh Ave

Assessment of Noise Exposure to Children: Considerations for the National Children's Study

[Susan Marie Viet](#)^{1,*}, [Michael Dellarco](#)², [Dorr G Dearborn](#)³, [Richard Neitzel](#)⁴

- Author information
- Article notes
- Copyright and License information

PMCID: PMC4390126 NIHMSID: NIHMS660061 PMID: [25866843](#)

The publisher's version of this article is available at [J Pregnancy Child Health](#)

Abstract

Evidence has been accruing to indicate that young children are vulnerable to noise in their physical environment. A literature review identified that, in addition to hearing loss, noise exposure is associated with negative birth outcomes, reduced cognitive function, inability to concentrate, increased psychosocial activation, nervousness, feeling of helplessness, and increased blood pressure in children. While increasing attention has been given to the health effects of noise in children, research about noise exposure is sparse and often the measure of exposure is simply proximity to a noise source. The U.S. National Children's Study (NCS) provides a unique opportunity to investigate noise exposures to pregnant women and children using a number of assessment modalities at different life stages. Measurement of noise levels in homes and other environments, personal dosimetry measurements made over a period of days, and questionnaires addressing sources of noise in the environment,

annoyance to noise, perceived noise level, use of head phones and ear buds, noisy activity exposures, and occupational exposures, are planned for evaluation within the NCS Vanguard pilot study. We describe the NCS planned approach to addressing noise exposure assessment in study visits over a child's lifetime.

Keywords: Birth cohort, Noise, Children, Exposure assessment, National Children's Study

Background

The National Children's Study (NCS) is a longitudinal, prospective cohort study to examine effects of the environment, broadly defined to include the biological, chemical, physical and psychosocial cultural environments, as they interact with genetic potential to impact growth, development, and health of children across the United States. Participants will be followed from before birth to 21 years of age. The goal of the Study is to improve the health and well-being of children by contributing to the understanding of the influence of multiple factors, both negative and positive, on health and disease (see nationalchildrensstudy.gov). While the NCS Main Study is still under development, an extensive and ongoing pilot phase, known as the Vanguard Study, began field work in January 2009 and has enrolled over 5000 participants. The goals of the Vanguard Study are to assess the feasibility, acceptability and cost of recruitment and retention, study visit data collection, and logistics. The Vanguard Study will continue for the next two decades as a separate study linked to and informing the Main Study.

Evidence has been accruing for over 30 years to indicate that young children are vulnerable to noise in their physical environment. Noise exposure has been associated with a number of adverse health effects, manifesting in the form of physiologic damage or psychological harm through a variety of mechanisms [1]. While increasing attention has been given to health effects of noise in children, research about noise exposure is sparse and often the measure of exposure is simply proximity to a noise source [2].

Noise exposures encountered by children include involuntary (environmental) and voluntary (school activities, listening to loud music) sources. Environmental noise includes transient noise intrusions from outdoors, such as airplanes, railways, motor vehicles, construction, industrial, or outdoor events, as well as indoor sources, such as television, music, appliances, and ventilation equipment. Some noise can arise from either outdoors or indoors, such as sounds made by neighbors, talk, laughter, slamming doors, and noise from barking dogs [3]. Internationally, urbanization, growing demand for motorized transport, and inefficient city planning and zoning are the main driving forces for increasing environmental noise exposure [4].

Auditory Health Effects of Noise in Children

Chronic, elevated noise exposure [above 70 to 80 decibels, A-weighted (dBA) for 8 hours or more per day] can cause auditory effects including permanent hearing threshold shift and loss of hearing in specific frequency ranges. Almost 30 million adults [5] and 5.2 million children [6] in the US suffer from irreversible noise-induced hearing impairment and more than 20 million are exposed to dangerous levels of noise each day [7]. In studies of noise and children, the assumption is that hearing damage occurs at the same sound levels as in adults. However, no studies were identified which support this assumption.

The focus of recent auditory effects studies in children has been on voluntary exposures. Listening to loudly amplified music or video (personal electronic devices, playing electric or traditional musical instruments, concerts, etc.) can cause hearing damage of the same nature as caused by industrial noise. In studies of university students in music programs, 76% of UK subjects reported symptoms associated with hearing loss at mean exposures exceeding 98 dB equivalent continuous A-weighted sound pressure level (LA_{EQ}) [8] and noise-induced hearing loss was identified in 45% of U.S. subjects [9]. In a study of UK students working in university entertainment establishments, mean exposures exceeded 90 dBA; although temporary threshold shifts associated with this exposure were moderate, 29% of subjects showed a permanent hearing loss of more than 30 dB [10]. Levey et al. [11] found 58% of New York College students were exposed above 85 dB LA_{EQ} from listening to music.

There is special concern among hearing specialists about the effects of personal electronic devices (cell phones, MP3 players, tablets, etc.). Numerous studies have looked at the impact of the use of personal devices on teenagers and college students [11-13]. In 2006, 82% of U.S. high school students reported using a cell phone and 62% reported using another personal electronic device [14]. Since 2006, the use of these devices is likely increasingly more common.

The risk of hearing loss from any source of noise, including amplified music, is always a function of exposure intensity (volume) and duration. Hearing damage from headphones and ear buds is probably more common than from loudspeakers, because many people/children exploit the acoustic isolation by listening at higher volumes [13,15]. Moreover, the risk of hearing damage from headphones (or ear buds) may be higher than with loudspeakers due to the close coupling of the transducers to the ears and therefore higher levels at the tympanic membrane. Susceptible adults may sustain hearing ear damage if exposed to noise above 75 decibels (dB) for 8 hours or more per day [16]. In a study of noise exposure from portable stereos, listeners in a quiet laboratory setting were comfortable with headphones set at an average volume of 69 dB, but once outside where the mean noise level was 65 dB, the average volume went up to 82 dB, with some levels as high as 95 dB [15]. The study concluded that “some hearing loss risk would be expected when portable stereos are used in noisy conditions.” Others have reported volumes of 115 dBA with ear buds [17].

A study of 1512 Dutch adolescents (age 12-19) showed that about half of the subjects were exposed above occupational noise exposure limits, about a third due solely to listening to MP3 players [18]. Some studies have reported differences in use of personal music devices, with Latino or Hispanic and Black or African/American students reporting longer duration of use than other racial groups [14,19]. United States (U.S.) males have generally reported louder use than females [19], but the prevalence of personal listening device use is increasing among U.S. females age 12-19 – from 19.8% in 1990 era to 34.8% in 2010 era [20]. High school students are more likely to turn the volume of personal devices to loud than adults [14].

Non-auditory Health Effects in Children

While the most widely recognized health outcome of exposure to loud noise is hearing loss, outcomes arising from exposure to lower noise levels may include hypertension, tachycardia, myocardial infarction, and increased cortisol release and physiologic stress [1,21]. Stress can trigger production of certain hormones which may lead to a variety of intermediate effects, including increased blood

pressure and hypertension [22,23]. Ambient noise is also reported to have disruptive effects on human sleep, although the few studies conducted have large differences in quality [3].

Chronic maternal exposure to airport noise during pregnancy has been shown to result in vasoconstriction which subsequently leads to decreased utero-placental blood flow, and possibly increased fetal hypoxia [24]. The stress of chronic elevated noise can lead to increased maternal blood pressure, greater secretion of maternal epinephrine and norepinephrine, and decreased human placental lactogen [24,25]. Exposure of pregnant women to airplane noise has been associated with a decrease in body weight of newborn babies; and the height of 3-year-old children was shown to be significantly decreased with higher noise levels [25]. Human fetal exposure to noise has been linked with decreased birth weight and length, and increased incidence of birth defects, specifically cleft lip, cleft palate, anencephaly and spinal bifida [24,26,27].

Elevated noise levels in neonatal intensive care units (NICUs) have received considerable attention. Technology to care for newborns has transformed NICUs into very noisy places. In a study of the acoustic environment in several mid-Atlantic region NICUs, the hourly mean sound levels ranged from 53.9 dBA to 60.6 dBA, well above the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommended 45 dBA mean level [28]. Nogueira et al. [29] pointed out issues with noise measurement in NICUs, including placement of the microphone in the incubator, continuous low frequency noise such as the incubator's motor, and intermittent middle frequency (human voice) and high frequency (alarms of equipment, telephones) noise. Situations such as opening and closing the hatches or the intensive care doors, moving the mattress tray, or putting objects on the dome may produce noise that varies from 78 to 93 dBA, exceeding the AAP-recommended impulse noise maximum of 65 dBA. Such noise can affect newborns, increasing their heart rate and respiratory frequency, dropping their oxygen saturation, diminishing the duration of their sleep state and hindering their ability to stay in a deep sleep state, and also causing alterations in their motor activity [29,30].

A large number of studies have looked at annoyance from noise and health effects among people living near an airport or highway. In one study, people living near a large metropolitan airport were exposed to noise levels as much as four times greater than those experienced by residents in a quiet, comparison home [31]. More than 55% of people living within the flight path were bothered by aircraft noise, and 63% by highway noise; these were significantly higher percentages than for residents in the non-flight area [31]. A study of 2,844 children age 9-11 around European airports examined annoyance and children's health and cognition [32]. In the Road Traffic and Aircraft Noise Exposure and Children's Cognition and Health (RANCH) study, London air traffic noise was related to sleep disturbance and cognitive performance, in particular with respect to episodic memory [33,34]. In the Munich Study, 330 children were followed before and after a switchover of airports, with similar findings as the RANCH study [33].

Increasing attention has been given to non-auditory health effects of noise in children including reduced cognitive function, inability to concentrate, increased psychosocial activation, nervousness, and helplessness [23,26,35]. Living in crowded and noisy environments is associated with health risks for children including an increase in stress [36]. Studies of aircraft noise indicate a small but positive relationship between aircraft noise exposure and blood pressure in children, and studies on road-traffic noise show a stronger positive relationship with systolic blood pressure in children [37].

The effect of noise on performance in classrooms has been studied. A significant negative relationship has been found between noise levels and learning attainment, cognitive processing, reading, and to a lesser extent, numeracy tasks [38]. Noise has also been found to negatively affect other performance-related aspects such as attention, concentration, and memory. Irrelevant speech has been shown to have a profound detrimental effect on children's literacy tasks. In open plan schools, speech from adjacent teaching areas has been cited as the most common cause of disturbance; perceived by both teachers and pupils as a problem [38]. Irrelevant meaningful speech has been shown to be a distracting source of noise, and open plan schools are particularly vulnerable to this effect. Surveys of noise in classrooms have shown that noise levels depends on the classroom activity; typical mean levels for primary schools are 44 dBA when pupils are silent, 56 dBA when pupils are engaged in quiet activities, 65 dBA for individual work (for example, working at tables where some talking is allowed), and 70-77 dBA for group work. For comparison purposes, a 35 dBA one-hour average background noise levels has been recommended for unoccupied classrooms [39].

Environmental Noise Level Programs and Standards

Public health standards for noise exist but may not be completely protective against all noise-related health effects, especially to children. In the U.S., the focus of government standards has been on auditory damage and annoyance. Under the Noise Control Act of 1972 and the Quiet Communities Act of 1978, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provided a basis to state and local governments in setting environmental noise standards [40] as a 24-hour exposure level of 70 dBA to prevent any measurable hearing loss over a lifetime. Standards of 55 dBA outdoors where human activity takes place, and 45 dBA for indoor residential areas, hospitals and schools, were established to prevent activity interference and annoyance. In 1982, primary responsibility for noise control and enforcement was shifted to state and local governments, which generally adhere to these guidelines, but which in most cases have not actively attempted to address or reduce the public health hazard associated with noise.

The U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) policy on highway traffic noise and construction noise provides guidance to states in implementing the FHWA Noise Standard (23 CFR Part 772, Appendix A) that reflects state-specific attitudes and objectives in approaching the problem [41]. FHWA recognizes three approaches to reducing noise from highway traffic: source control, mitigation measures associated with road project and operation design, and noise-compatible land-use planning, promoting the latter to attain in-home noise levels from 40 to 45 dBA [42]. In addition, most states have banned the use of car horns for any purpose other than to express warning. New York City has further banned operation, sale, and installation of audible car alarms.

The Guidelines for European Union Noise [43] acknowledge effects of environmental noise, including annoyance, as a serious health problem. In 2002, the European Parliament and the Council adopted the Environmental Noise Directive, which requires Member States to: (1) determine exposure to environmental noise through noise mapping, (2) adopt action plans based upon mapping results, and (3) ensure that information on environmental noise is made available to the public. European Union (EU) Member States are required to use specified noise indicators of a day-evening-night noise indicator (L_{DEN}) and L_{Night} and report the noise exposure of the population of 55 dBA and 50 dBA or more, respectively. The first round of noise mapping suggests that around 40 million people across the EU are exposed to noise above 50 dB from roads within agglomerations during the night, and more than 25

million people are exposed at the same level from major roads outside agglomerations. These numbers are expected to be revised upwards as more noise maps are received [4]. It is important to note that roads also represent only one source of community noise; noise from ports, rail traffic, and construction and industrial sources may add substantially to these estimates of overexposure.

The current EU reporting, which focuses on annoyance, neglects the fact that a considerable fraction of the EU population is exposed to noise pollution at levels which are likely to cause other harmful effects on health. The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Joint Research Centre of the Commission (2011) now propose a guide value for night-time levels as low as 40 dB, L_{Night} , outdoors [4].

Exposure Measurement, Assessment Methods, Research Needs and Challenges

There are a number of considerations to be made in developing an approach(es) to measure and evaluate noise exposures over various stages of a child's life in the NCS. Measurement methods must be reliable, reproducible, and scalable to the large number of study participants. Deployment must be efficient and economical with minimal burden to technicians and participants. Methods must be affordable in terms of the cost of the device, calibration and maintenance requirements, and data capture and transmission capability. Data capture must be of high quality with results that can be related to participant activities, events, or location.

Characterization of Current Noise Exposures

In general, environmental noise exposure assessment has been limited to point activities, such as construction, traffic from a given road or airport, or a noisy commercial establishment in affected localities. There has been little attempt to assess and characterize environmental noise levels across the country. Even where such information might exist, changes in traffic volume and flow, use of traffic noise barriers, housing construction methods, ventilation technologies, aircraft flyover routes, and neighborhood composition and other characteristics serve to alter exposures over time and space. In addition, noise standards usually focus on outdoor levels at property boundaries, and thus noise levels in homes and non-occupational environments are largely unknown and uncharacterized.

Studies of non-auditory health effects have not typically measured sound levels directly; rather exposure is often defined as a crude proximity to a point source (e.g., “near airports or high traffic areas”). When measurements have been made, they are most often done using a sound level meter in an outdoor location, e.g., at the property boundary when assessing traffic and airplane noise, or positioned in a single location in a *neonatal intensive care unit* (NICU) or classroom. They have also often been made using equipment with inappropriate thresholds, i.e., they do not include sound levels below a certain value, typically 70 dBA. However, in one study, noise levels in “quiet” homes away from an airport averaged 38.5 dBA [31] and even among adolescents living in farm and rural homes, the lower mean daily noise exposure was 55.4 dBA [44]. Further characterization of exposures in the home and many environments where pregnant women and children spend time has not been investigated.

Exposure Assessment Tools

Assessment methodology and standards for noise exposure related to hearing loss in work environments is well established. However, for assessments of the general population, and children in particular, whose noise levels are lower and more varied, methodologies are less well specified [45]. Both qualitative and quantitative assessment tools have been used.

Qualitative measures have included proximity to a noise source and the respondent's subjective reporting via questionnaire of home noisiness. Kawada [25] notes that from the point of view of disturbance of daily living, subjective recognition of “noisiness” or annoyance is an important issue. A number of questionnaires for subject reporting of home noisiness have been used. The International Commission on the Biological Effects of Noise (ICBEN) systematically created high-quality survey questions that would yield internationally comparable measures of overall reactions to noise sources [46,47]. However, these have not been tested specifically in homes with pregnant mothers or children.

Three instruments are typically used to measure noise levels: the sound level meter (SLM), the octave-band analyzer (OBA), and the noise dosimeter [48] (Table 1). Such instruments are generally expensive, ranging from \$300-5000, depending on the model and desired capabilities. Additional equipment such as calibrators, protective cases, etc. adds to the overall cost. There can also be a large amount of data to store and analyze when datalogging measurements are made over long time periods on many participants.

Several researchers are working to add noise monitoring capability to portable real time air monitoring stations that measure a number of air contaminants simultaneously over time. One has placed an electret microphone in their monitor to record peak dBA (Weisel, C.P, personal communication, July 22, 2013). Another has proposed a study to develop, fabricate, and field test a sound measurement system for use in home environments, ideally connecting this to their remote sensing real time air monitor (Dearborn, D.G., personal communication, March 22, 2012). These instruments may lack portability required for averaging noise exposures over many locations and also must address how internal noise from the air monitor pump will be corrected, especially if the microphone is built into the monitor.

While the term ‘noise’ commonly connotes loudness, perhaps of even more interest is ‘sound clutter,’ the mixture of sound character regardless of amplitude. The question is how specific sounds (e.g., parental yelling), or combination of sounds, impact the cognitive neurodevelopment of the young child. Technically this would require a time/frequency characterization of the ‘noise’ in the context of both time domain and frequency domain patterns. Often times, spectral content from various sources of sound overlap and it is difficult to separate them with frequency deconvolution alone. One approach is to develop a baseline for the home so as to identify and categorize the various sources of sound both individually and collectively. Background, outside sounds would be contrasted with indoor sounds which would include electronic (TV, radio) sources and voices (child vs parent vs siblings, etc). Collection of such data presents a significant analytical and sound characterization challenge.

A new category of noise measurement devices are computer applications (apps) that can be installed on a smartphone or other portable device and are inexpensive (free to \$30). The built-in microphones in portable devices exhibit a remarkably flat frequency response, making them suitable for basic sound level measurements. Given that cell phones are ubiquitous and their use among younger children is on

the rise, there is great potential for participants to do their own data collection in their varied listening environments. However, there are a number of issues to address before they may be used in a study such as the NCS. Such apps have generally not been tested against more sophisticated instruments, but a few technical limitations anticipated with the available phone apps and devices include restricted frequency ranges and inability to quantify very loud (100 + dBA) and very quiet sounds (below 20-30 dBA). If noise levels are measured on a continual basis over a long period, the phone battery may discharge quickly, requiring either additional batteries or external power. In addition, smartphone technology poses a number of study operational challenges such as the feasibility, acceptability and cost of deployment of the device to participants, and ensuring compliance with study protocols. Data collection and transmission requirements, storage and transmission of potentially large data files, and data security must all be considered, especially in light of participant privacy issues. Some of these issues are being investigated, e.g., Kardous and Shaw [\[49\]](#) have recently shown reasonably good measurement accuracy of selected apps for use in occupational noise measurements.

Regardless of the specific instrumentation employed, the result of noise measurements made on children will be a set of instantaneous or short-term (e.g., measured over periods of hours to weeks) sound pressure levels (in dBA) associated with individual children, locations frequented by those children, and/or specific activities conducted by those children. Basic analysis of these levels will provide descriptive information about noise levels routinely encountered by U.S. children in a variety of settings, and can be used to identify exposures which feature excessive noise levels or substantial temporal variability. This descriptive analysis, while basic, will contribute to our understanding of the details of children's noise exposures. However, the true potential in the development of a large dataset of noise exposure measurements on children lies in the use of statistical modeling to extend these data to unmonitored children and locations. This approach requires determining or assigning an exposure for a given location or activity and then applying that exposure for the duration of the time the participant spends in that location or activity. When combined with information about the duration and frequency of activities and locations for an individual child, noise exposure measurement data allow for the statistical prediction of expected activity- and location-specific and total (e.g., summed across all activities and locations) exposure levels. The validity of these predicted levels can then be assessed to determine the accuracy of the prediction model. Whether the information required for such modeling can be easily obtained and applied to the NCS cohort is unknown, but this exposure assessment tool allows for at least the possibility of modeling of total noise exposures for the entire NCS cohort in a highly efficient and validated manner. Such an approach has been used to estimate overall noise exposures for a diverse sample of adults in New York City [\[50,51\]](#) and to predict expected hearing loss for this sample [\[52\]](#) using a widely-accepted mathematical model [\[53\]](#) developed specifically for the estimation of noise-induced hearing loss expected from a range of noise exposure durations and intensities.

Noise Exposure Assessment Approach being Considered for the NCS

Based on the current state of knowledge, additional information is needed before selecting economical noise exposure assessment methodologies appropriate to the NCS needs. In particular, noise in the home and other public environments has not been well characterized, but it is known to be generally lower (though potentially more variable over time) than in workplaces. Initial testing of available devices in the home and other environments, and development of sampling procedures to evaluate the location

and duration of sampling required to obtain the desired data must be conducted to identify the most suitable candidate measures/device(s) and sampling procedures before noise measurements can be scaled up and conducted in the NCS Vanguard Study.

Noise assessment approaches will vary based on the life stage of the child and feature measures from different sources and in various microenvironments (Table 2). The planned approach is to use a core questionnaire(s) with supplemental modules, assess sound levels the children's indoor environments, and move to measuring full or multi-day personal exposures in a systematic manner for older children.

The current Vanguard Study core questionnaire includes a number of questions regarding perceived noise levels and intensity in the home from indoor and outdoor sources based on the ICBEN recommendations [46] and others [31,54]. Core questions will be asked at periodic study visits; supplemental modules will be added as the child ages to address noisy activities (band, sports), use of personal electronic devices and headsets or ear buds, and work exposures. Subsequent pregnancies of NCS participants will allow for assessment of maternal pre-conception exposures.

Ideally, personal noise exposure to the mother during pregnancy, and to the child after birth, would be assessed as an average sound pressure level over all locations over a period of several days to a week. Measurement of personal exposure requires a dosimeter be placed on the pregnant woman or child, or a phone application carried with the woman or child, over a multi-day period. One problem with this approach is that at present it is unknown whether these devices can accurately integrate the very low noise levels expected in some locations. There is also the problem of keeping these devices with the participant. While the dosimeter (or phone) could be clipped in places other than on the child (e.g., hanging on a backpack/car seat/etc. when traveling and hung some place in the room during longer stays at home or child care), it is inevitable that the dosimeter will periodically be far from where the child is situated. A wristband-mounted dosimeter is an option, although this would need to be designed and tested.

Until personal dosimeters are further evaluated for these purposes, average and peak area noise levels will be measured in the home, and if possible, in other locations where participants spend time. Initial testing of approaches for home noise measurement is currently underway in a pilot of nine homes with young children and with different noise characteristics (near traffic, apartment building, single family home, in a rural area, etc.). Factors being investigated are: performance features and cost of measurement devices, location and duration of sampling to characterize noise in homes, data capture and transmission requirements to transmit data to the NCS Vanguard Data Repository, and acceptance of the device by participants. The results of this testing will guide the development of a protocol for testing noise in homes of the Vanguard Study cohort. The Vanguard Study data will allow systematic characterization of noise exposures in home environments and evaluate measurement devices. As children may spend a good deal of time outside of the home, in child care locations and schools where noise levels may also be elevated, area measurement of noise in these locations is being considered.

As the children age, additional noise sources contribute to the child's total exposure. In particular, the increase in the use of personal electronic devices (PEDs) by young children, as well as headsets/ ear buds for other technologies, such as cell phones and computers, dictates that this source of noise be

considered. As described above, PEDs have been shown to cause hearing effects, but it is unknown whether voluntary exposure to elevated sound levels is associated with health effects other than hearing effects. Addressing this source of sound will require development of specialized measures. A number of personal music device questionnaires have been developed for use in other studies, including questions on frequency and duration of device use, volume levels used, types of earphones used, typical environments in which device is worn, and specific activities related to safety while listening [8,13,19,55]. These kinds of questionnaires will be evaluated and may be used for development of a supplemental exposure module for use in the NCS.

As children in the NCS move into adolescence and get jobs, occupational noise exposures will be considered. Even in workplaces not ordinarily associated with high noise levels (restaurants, juice bars, gyms, and even some clothing stores), noise levels above allowable OSHA levels have been recorded [56]. Instruments and procedures used by others [44] will be evaluated and study tools developed to systematically collect information about the nature of the workplace and noise exposure during work.

Conclusions

Noise is an exposure of interest in the NCS. We have described the complexities associated with estimating exposure to noise and described the various outcomes attributed to noise exposure in pregnant women, children, and adults. We have outlined here an approach to develop and test noise measurement methods along with the challenges and factors likely to be encountered. Testing the feasibility, acceptability, and cost of measurement methods in the Vanguard Study ensures the selection of a measurement modality that is scalable and sufficiently informative. Questionnaires, in-home measurements, and personal measurements (using a dosimeter or app) made over a period of days to weeks will be investigated to test instrument performance characteristics, acceptance by participants, and informative value provided by the data collected. This approach will enable us to develop appropriate procedures to measure noise in the NCS and may be useful to other large scale birth cohorts with an interest in investigating participant exposure to noise.

Table 1.

Summary of noise assessment instrumentation

Device	Measurements	Advantages/Disadvantages
Sound level meter (SLM)	Basic hand-held measuring instrument, consisting of a microphone, a frequency selective amplifier, and an indicator. Measures sound level in decibels (dB) of sound pressure level (SPL). Responses are modified with frequency-weighting networks. The A-scale, which approximates the human ear's response to moderate-	Relatively simple to use when noise levels are continuous and the participant remains essentially stationary during the sampling period. Where quantitative measurements have been made in a home of road and air traffic noise, SLMs have been utilized [31]. For the NCS, SLMs would be useful to get an instantaneous or integrated measurement while study staff is at the home or other location. SLMs are relatively expensive to be left in a

Device	Measurements	Advantages/Disadvantages
	level sounds, is commonly used in measuring noise.	participant's home (\$1500-3000) and cannot be worn by the participant for measurement over time/space.
Octave-band analyzer (OBA)	In addition to measuring sound level, divides noise into its frequency components. The human ear is most sensitive around 4000 Hz and least sensitive in the low frequencies. Discrete pure tones, both very high and very low frequency can be audibly disturbing to some people [57].	OBAs are more expensive than SLMs, and as SLMs often include OBA features, OBAs are not considered particularly useful for ongoing data collection in the NCS.
Noise dosimeter	Small (about 3 in × 2 in), typically worn by the participant. Measure sound levels, configured to determine personal noise dose during the sampling period. Typically designed to accurately measure dose in the occupationally regulated range of 70 to 130 dB, although a few models capture noise levels as low as 40 dB.	Dosimeters are preferred when noise levels are varying or intermittent over time; contain impulsive components, or the participant moves around frequently. Can be used to measure ambient or personal noise exposures. Relatively expensive to be left with participant over extended time period. Use of dosimeters on young children will require testing and perhaps development of a wrist-mounted option.
Noise application	Can be loaded onto a phone or tablet.	Unknown how well these perform as compared to more sophisticated instrumentation. There are potential battery life issues. Software changes to phones which are common can change the characteristics of application. Cost of application is very inexpensive (free to \$30). The cost of the device on which the app is loaded increases the overall cost (\$400-1200).

[Open in a new tab](#)

Table 2.

Noise exposure measures by life stage under consideration for testing in the NCS Vanguard Study

Life stage	Study Visit Factors	Proposed Study Visit Measurements		
		Questionnaire Topics	Area measure* (multiple days)	Personal Measure* (multiple days)
Pre-conception (M)	Use subsequent participant births	Perceived noise levels by mother location	X	X
Pregnancy Fetal Stage (M, fetus)	Studies link maternal noise exposure to decreased body weight and growth (but not exposure at a specific stage in pregnancy)	Perceived noise levels by mother location	Home	M- All locations
Infant Stage (0-12 months)	Measurement focus on the home in the room most used by the child	Report of perceived noise levels by child location (include any NICU experience)	Home	M-Transit to child care/other location with child
Toddler Stage (13-24 months)	Child may spend considerable amount of time outside of the home	Report of perceived noise levels by child location	Home	M-Transit to child care/other location with child
Early Childhood (2-5 years)	Child likely will be spending time outside of home, more locations Child may be participating in noisy activities Child may start using personal electronic devices and other electronic media	Report of perceived noise levels by child location Report of child noisy activities (band, sports) Report of headphones/ear buds use and electronic media use	Home	C- All locations
Middle Childhood (5-11 years)	Child is likely participating in noisy activities Child is likely using personal electronic devices and other electronic media	TBD	TBD	C- All locations
Adolescence (12-21 years)	Child may be exposed to tools/equipment that can emit	TBD	TBD	C- All locations, all

Life stage	Study Visit Factors	Proposed Study Visit Measurements		
		Questionnaire Topics	Area measure* (multiple days)	Personal Measure* (multiple days)
	loud sounds (machinery, power tools, musical instruments) in different microenvironments - workplace, school, clubs, concerts Child is likely using personal electronic devices and other electronic media			day C-Sound level of PED setting

[Open in a new tab](#)

M: Mother; C: Child; PED: Personal Electronic Device

Area and personal measures are quantitative measures of noise level. The particular device to be used (SLM, dosimeter or an app) is under investigation.

Acknowledgements

This work was in part conducted under National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Child Health Contract GS-23F-8144H, Order HHSN275201000120U.

Footnotes

Citation: Viet SM, Dellarco M, Dearborn DG, Neitzel R (2014) Assessment of Noise Exposure to Children: Considerations for the National Children's Study. J Preg Child Health 1: 105. doi:10.4172/jpch.1000105

References

- 1. Seidman MD, Standing RT. Noise and quality of life. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2010;7:3730–3738. doi: 10.3390/ijerph7103730. [\[DOI\]](#) [\[PMC free article\]](#) [\[PubMed\]](#) [\[Google Scholar\]](#)
- 2. Evans GW. Child development and the physical environment. Annu Rev Psychol. 2006;57:423–451. doi: 10.1146/annurev.psych.57.102904.190057. [\[DOI\]](#) [\[PubMed\]](#) [\[Google Scholar\]](#)

- 3.Omlin S, Bauer GF, Brink M. Effects of noise from non-traffic-related ambient sources on sleep: review of the literature of 1990-2010. *Noise Health*. 2011;13:299–309. doi: 10.4103/1463-1741.82963. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 4.European Commission . Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and The Council: On the implementation of the Environmental Noise Directive in accordance with Article, 11 of Directive 2002/49/EC. Final. European Commission; Brussels, Belgium: 2011. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 5.Dobie RA. The burdens of age-related and occupational noise-induced hearing loss in the United States. *Ear Hear*. 2008;29:565–567. doi: 10.1097/AUD.0b013e31817349ec. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 6.Niskar AS, Kieszak SM, Holmes AE, Esteban E, Rubin C. Estimated prevalence of noise-induced hearing threshold shifts among children 6 to 19 years of age: the Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 1988-1994, United States. *Pediatrics*. 2001;108:40–43. doi: 10.1542/peds.108.1.40. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 7.Tak S, Davis RR, Calvert GM. Exposure to hazardous workplace noise and use of hearing protection devices among US workers--NHANES, 1999-2004. *Am J Ind Med*. 2009;52:358–371. doi: 10.1002/ajim.20690. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 8.Barlow C. Potential hazard of hearing damage to students in undergraduate popular music courses. *Med Probl Perform Art*. 2010;25:175–182. [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 9.Phillips SL, Henrich VC, Mace ST. Prevalence of noise-induced hearing loss in student musicians. *Int J Audiol*. 2010;49:309–316. doi: 10.3109/14992020903470809. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 10.Sadhra S, Jackson CA, Ryder T, Brown MJ. Noise exposure and hearing loss among student employees working in university entertainment venues. *Ann Occup Hyg*. 2002;46:455–463. [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 11.Levey S, Levey T, Fligor BJ. Noise exposure estimates of urban MP3 player users. *J Speech Lang Hear Res*. 2011;54:263–277. doi: 10.1044/1092-4388(2010/09-0283). [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 12.Mostafapour SP, Lahargoue K, Gates GA. Noise-induced hearing loss in young adults: the role of personal listening devices and other sources of leisure noise.

Laryngoscope. 1998;108:1832–1839. doi: 10.1097/00005537-199812000-00013. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]

- 13.Danhauer JL, Johnson CE, Byrd A, DeGood L, Meuel C, et al. Survey of college students on iPod use and hearing health. J Am Acad Audiol. 2009;20:5–27. doi: 10.3766/jaaa.20.1.2. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 14.Zogby J. Survey of teens and adults about the use of personal electronic devices and head phones. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association; Rockville, MD: 2006. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 15.Airo E, Pekkarinen J, Olkinuora P. Listening to music with earphones: an assessment of noise exposure. Acta Acustica united with Acustica. 1996;82(6):885–894. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 16.U.S. Environmental Protection Agency . Information on levels of environmental noise requisite to protect public health and welfare with an adequate margin of safety (EPA/550/9-74-004) U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Washington, DC: 1974. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 17.Yaffe-Oziel S. How do MP3 Players Affect Our Kids’ Hearing? Washington Parent; May, 2006. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 18.Vogel I, Brug J, Van der Ploeg CP, Raat H. Adolescents risky MP3-player listening and its psychosocial correlates. Health Educ Res. 2011;26:254–264. doi: 10.1093/her/cyq091. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 19.Torre P. Young adults’ use and output level settings of personal music systems. Ear Hear. 2008;29:791–799. doi: 10.1097/AUD.0b013e31817e7409. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 20.Henderson E, Testa MA, Hartnick C. Prevalence of noise-induced hearing-threshold shifts and hearing loss among US youths. Pediatrics. 2011;127:e39–46. doi: 10.1542/peds.2010-0926. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 21.Ndrepepa A, Twardella D. Relationship between noise annoyance from road traffic noise and cardiovascular diseases: a meta-analysis. Noise Health. 2011;13:251–259. doi: 10.4103/1463-1741.80163. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 22.Smoorenburg GF, Axelsson A, Babisch W, Diamond IG, Ising H, et al. Effects of noise on health. Noise News Int. 1996;4:137–50. [[Google Scholar](#)]

- 23. World Health Organization . Burden of disease from environmental noise: quantification of healthy life years lost in Europe. World Health Organization; Geneva, Switzerland: 2011. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 24. Schell LM. Environmental noise and human prenatal growth. *Am J Phys Anthropol*. 1981;56:63–70. doi: 10.1002/ajpa.1330560107. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 25. Kawada T. The effect of noise on the health of children. *J Nippon Med Sch*. 2004;71:5–10. doi: 10.1272/jnms.71.5. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 26. Schell LM, Gallo MV, Denham M, Ravenscroft J. Effects of pollution on human growth and development: an introduction. *J Physiol Anthropol*. 2006;25:103–112. doi: 10.2114/jpa2.25.103. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 27. Knipschild P, Meijer H, Sallé H. Aircraft noise and birth weight. *Int Arch Occup Environ Health*. 1981;48:131–136. doi: 10.1007/BF00378433. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 28. Darcy AE, Hancock LE, Ware EJ. A descriptive study of noise in the neonatal intensive care unit: ambient levels and perceptions of contributing factors. *Adv Neonatal Care*. 2008;8:S16. doi: 10.1097/01.ANC.0000337268.85717.7c. doi:10.1097/01.ANC.0000337268.85717.7c. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 29. Nogueira Mde F, Di Piero KC, Ramos EG, Souza MN, Dutra MV. Noise measurement in NICUs and incubators with newborns: a systematic literature review. *Rev Lat Am Enfermagem*. 2011;19:212–221. doi: 10.1590/s0104-11692011000100028. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 30. Wachman EM, Lahav A. The effects of noise on preterm infants in the NICU. *Arch Dis Child Fetal Neonatal Ed*. 2011;96:F305–309. doi: 10.1136/adc.2009.182014. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 31. Cohen BS, Bronzaft AL, Heikkinen M, Goodman J, Nádas A. Airport-related air pollution and noise. *J Occup Environ Hyg*. 2008;5:119–129. doi: 10.1080/15459620701815564. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 32. van Kempen E, van Kamp I, Nilsson M, Lammers J, Emmen H, et al. The role of annoyance in the relation between transportation noise and children's health and cognition. *J Acoust Soc Am*. 2010;128:2817–2828. doi: 10.1121/1.3483737. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]

- 33.Stansfeld S, Hygge S, Clark C, Alfred T. Night time aircraft noise exposure and children's cognitive performance. Noise Health. 2010;12:255–262. doi: 10.4103/1463-1741.70504. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 34.Matheson M, Clark C, Martin R, van Kempen E, Haines M, et al. The effects of road traffic and aircraft noise exposure on children's episodic memory: the RANCH project. Noise Health. 2010;12:244–254. doi: 10.4103/1463-1741.70503. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 35.Evans GW, Lercher P, Meis M, Ising H, Kofler WW. Community noise exposure and stress in children. J Acoust Soc Am. 2001;109:1023–1027. doi: 10.1121/1.1340642. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 36.Ising H, Kruppa B. Health effects caused by noise: evidence in the literature from the past 25 years. Noise Health. 2004;6:5–13. [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 37.PaunoviÄ K, Stansfeld S, Clark C, BelojeviÄ† G. Epidemiological studies on noise and blood pressure in children: Observations and suggestions. Environ Int. 2011;37:1030–1041. doi: 10.1016/j.envint.2011.03.017. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 38.Shield B, Greenland E, Dockrell J. Noise in open plan classrooms in primary schools: a review. Noise Health. 2010;12:225–234. doi: 10.4103/1463-1741.70501. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 39.American National Standards Institute . Acoustical Performance Criteria, Design Requirements, and Guidelines for Schools (S12.60-2002) American National Standards Institute; Washington, DC: 2002. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 40.National Research Council . Technology for a Quieter America. The National Academies Press; Washington, DC: 2010. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 41.U.S. Federal Highway Administration . Highway traffic noise: analysis and abatement guidance (FHWA-HEP-10-025) U.S. Department of Transportation; Washington, DC: 2011. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 42.Corbisier C. Living with noise. Public Roads. US. Federal Highway Administration; Washington, DC: 2003. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 43.Berglund B, Lindvall T, Schwela D, editors. Guidelines for community noise. World Health Organization; Geneva, Switzerland: 1999. [[Google Scholar](#)]

- 44.Humann M, Sanderson W, Flamme G, Kelly KM, Moore G, et al. Noise exposures of rural adolescents. J Rural Health. 2011;27:72–80. doi: 10.1111/j.1748-0361.2010.00306.x. [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 45.National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders Noise-induced hearing loss in children at work and at play conference; Cincinnati, OH.. 2006. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 46.Fields JM, de Jong RG, Gjestland T, Flindell IH, Job RFS, et al. Standardized general-purpose noise reaction questions for community noise surveys: Research and a recommendation. Journal of Sound and Vibration. 2001;242:641–679. doi: 10.1006/jsvi.2000.3384. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 47.Rohrmann B. Project Report. University of Melbourne; Australia: 2007. Verbal qualifiers for rating scales: sociolinguistic considerations and psychometric data. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 48.Berger E, Royster L, Royster J, Driscoll D, Layne L, editors. The Noise Manual. 5th Edition. American Industrial Hygiene Association; Fairfax, VA.: 2003. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 49.Kardous CA, Shaw PB. Evaluation of smartphone sound measurement applications. J Acoust Soc Am. 2014;135:86. doi: 10.1121/1.4865269. doi: 10.1121/1.4865269. [[DOI](#)] [[PMC free article](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 50.Neitzel R, Gershon RR, Zeltser M, Canton A, Akram M. Noise levels associated with New York City's mass transit systems. Am J Public Health. 2009;99:1393–1399. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2008.138297. [[DOI](#)] [[PMC free article](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 51.Neitzel RL, Gershon RR, McAlexander TP, Magda LA, Pearson JM. Exposures to transit and other sources of noise among New York City residents. Environ Sci Technol. 2012;46:500–508. doi: 10.1021/es2025406. [[DOI](#)] [[PMC free article](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 52.Lewis RC, Gershon RR, Neitzel RL. Estimation of permanent noise-induced hearing loss in an urban setting. Environ Sci Technol. 2013;47:6393–6399. doi: 10.1021/es305161z. [[DOI](#)] [[PMC free article](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 53.American National Standard Institute . Determination of Occupational Noise Exposure and Estimation of Noise-induced Hearing Impairment (S3.44-1996) American National Standards Institute; New York, NY: 1996. [[Google Scholar](#)]

- 54. Neitzel RL, Daniell WE, Sheppard L, Davies HW, Seixas NS. Evaluation and comparison of three exposure assessment techniques. J Occup Environ Hyg. 2011;8:310–323. doi: 10.1080/15459624.2011.568832. [[DOI](#)] [[PMC free article](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 55. Hoover A, Krishnamurti S. Survey of college students' MP3 listening: Habits, safety issues, attitudes, and education. Am J Audiol. 2010;19:73–83. doi: 10.1044/1059-0889(2010/08-0036). [[DOI](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 56. Buckley C. Working or playing indoors, New Yorkers face an unabated roar. The New York Times; Jul 19, 2012. p. A1. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- 57. Wang LM, Bowden EE. Performance review of indoor noise criteria. Architectural Engineering. 2003 <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/archengfacpub/19>.

On Wed, Oct 1, 2025 at 8:57 AM Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR <Jonathan.Brown@rva.gov> wrote:

Good morning Rachel,

Thank you for your message. We will add this to the file and ensure that the Planning Commission receives a copy. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jonathan



DEPARTMENT OF
**PLANNING AND
DEVELOPMENT
REVIEW**

Jonathan W. Brown

Senior Planner

804-646-5734

jonathan.brown@rva.gov

rva.gov/planning-development-review

900 E. Broad St., Room 511, Richmond, Va. 23219-1907

How am I doing? Please contact my supervisor leonard.mantey@rva.gov

From: Rachel Pfab <rachelpfab@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 11:00 PM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR <Jonathan.Brown@rva.gov>
Subject: Lavender Hill ordinance 2025-215

You don't often get email from rachelpfab@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Greetings.

I own the corner house at 4500 Fitzhugh Ave. which is across the street on Commonwealth. You have received letters from neighbors recommending against allowing this Special use permit. This venue has already been disruptive to our current residential zoning. This is a family neighborhood. Late and loud music is a nuisance which makes living here miserable.

Our property taxes have increased. If this venue is given its special permit, then our property values will decrease. Who wants to live in a family friendly neighborhood with a noise producing venue? Will the City of Richmond decrease our property taxes to reflect the ill effect this venue will have on our property when we won't be able to sell our homes because no one wants a party venue in such close proximity to their home?

Where will all of these patrons park? I do not want my property line on Commonwealth being used for their parking. Will Lavender Hill clean the trash and replant grass that will be killed from them walking on my yard? Where will I park if I come in late and patrons have taken my parking spots? The neighborhood cannot handle the excess traffic and people. As a tax paying Richmond City homeowner, I ask kindly that you deny Lavender Hill's request.

Rachel Pfab

2500 Fitzhugh Avenue

From: [Robert Olson](#)
To: [Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR](#); [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council](#); [Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office](#); [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Opposition to Ordinance 2025-215 – 1705 Commonwealth Avenue
Date: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 9:42:11 AM

You don't often get email from rolson@frozeninflight.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

To Whom It May Concern,

As a small business owner, I oppose Ordinance 2025-215. The proposed outdoor event venue at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue, Lavender Hill, is not compatible with the surrounding residential area.

Frequent outdoor gatherings, amplified music, and increased traffic will disrupt nearby residents and small businesses like mine, that rely on stability and quiet to serve their clients responsibly and respectfully.

We respectfully ask that the City Council reject this ordinance.

Sincerely,

--

Frozen in Flight Bird Taxidermy
3300 West Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23230

www.FrozenInFlight.com
(804) 382-4737

From: [Nia Burks](#)
To: [Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR](#); [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council](#); [Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office](#); [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Opposition to Ordinance 2025-215 – 1705 Commonwealth Avenue
Date: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 9:29:07 AM

You don't often get email from nia.burks@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of City Council,

My name is Andrea Nia Burks, a resident and small business owner in the Richmond. I am writing in firm opposition to Ordinance 2025-215, which would permit outdoor events at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue, Lavender Hill.

I have worked in wellness and education in some form or fashion for nearly 20 years. The Sauers Garden neighborhood's peace and quiet *are not luxuries*. They are vital components of the mental, physical, and emotional wellness of its residents. In a time when urban stress and overstimulation are at an all-time high, access to calm and restorative living environments is essential. Allowing frequent events of up to 150 people, with amplified sound and extended evening hours, fundamentally disrupts this equilibrium, risking a decline in restful sleep, restoration, and recharge that the home and neighborhood should offer. This may prevent surrounding residents to underperform at work, which domino effects the Richmond community as a whole.

Wellness cannot flourish where there is chronic noise intrusion. The proposed frequency and capacity of events outlined in the ordinance are incompatible with the lived reality of residential life. Even well-intentioned event operators cannot eliminate the impact that noise, traffic, and light have on those who live and work nearby.

I urge the Council to protect the integrity of our neighborhood and the well-being of the people who call it home. Please reject Ordinance 2025-215.

Respectfully,

Andrea Nia Burks

From: [Nia Burks](#)
To: [Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR](#); [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council](#); [Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office](#); [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Opposition to Ordinance 2025-215 – Responsible Stewardship in Event-Based Business
Date: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 9:23:28 AM

You don't often get email from nia@butterandfilth.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of City Council,

As the owner of Butter & Filth, an event-based and community-centered business in Richmond, I wish to voice my strong opposition to Ordinance 2025-215.

Those of us who operate creative and event-based enterprises must understand that our work does not exist above or outside of neighborhoods. We exist *within* them. With that knowing of coexistence comes an astute responsibility to act as good stewards of space, sound, and shared community resources such as parking, common alleyways, and the like. The privilege of hosting gatherings carries with it an obligation to ensure that our activities enhance, rather than erode, the quality of life around us.

Lavender Hill, which proposes to host frequent outdoor events of up to 150 people in a primarily residential area, threatens to displace peace, increase noise, and compromise accessibility to residents which live in the immediate surrounding areas to their own homes. It sets a concerning precedent for other event-based businesses that strive to operate with respect for their surroundings.

As a business that hosts events such as celebrations and healing space for women, I have worked extremely hard, and for years, to garner credibility and respect. This proposal threatens reputation and credibility damage to many small businesses that may endeavor to operate respectfully. This threat is due not only to the difficulty in the logistical enacting of the proposal, but also to the neighbors that we should consider in the first place. As business owners, we have a duty to act in accordance with not only the professional demands of our brands, but also weigh the immeasurable impact they have on the people around us.

We believe Richmond's growth and vibrancy depend on mutual respect between businesses and residents. To maintain that balance, we urge the Council to reject Ordinance 2025-215.

With respect,

Nia Burks
CEO, Butter & Filth
804.829.3439
butterandfilth.com



From: Elizabeth B Bortell <ebbortell@vcu.edu>
Sent: Thursday, October 2, 2025 4:03 PM
To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council; Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office; PDR Land Use Admin; Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR; asksgca@gmail.com
Subject: 1705 Commonwealth Avenue Special Use Ordinance No. 2025-215 secure
Attachments: [IMG_3413 \(1\).jpeg](#); [closest neighbors.jpeg](#); [alley.jpeg](#); [no dumpster.jpeg](#); [IMG_3428.jpeg](#); [neighborhood.jpeg](#); [alley between neighbor.jpeg](#); [IMG_3429.png](#); [backyard of neighbor.jpeg](#); [school bus stop.jpeg](#)

You don't often get email from ebbortell@vcu.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

This message was sent securely using Zix®

October 1, 2025

Dear Council Rep. Andrew Breton, Council Liaison Whiten Brown, Planning Commission Administration, Senior Planner Jonathan Brown, and Sauers Garden Civic Association,

RE: Please Do not approve special use Ordinance No. 2025-215

My name is Dr. Elizabeth Bortell. I have lived in the Sauers Garden neighborhood since 1972. Over the years, we have had many challenges with living in the city but because of our love of the city and the community, we have faced these challenges and built a wonderful place to live and raise our children. Our neighborhood has houses that sell very quickly on the market because of what we have built. We contribute to the city not only by building this community and not leaving the city for the county, but also by paying very high real estate taxes that financially benefit the city.

The property on **1705 Commonwealth Avenue** is zoned mixed use commercial and residential. However, the houses behind the property and on the sides of the property are residential. The house on the property is used as a **co-working space** that houses at least 3 businesses run by the owner. The house as well as the backyard can be rented for events. The business name of the property is "Lavender Hill," which according to their website can be rented for events for 120 people in the backyard and up to 25 people in the house. The website states that it is located next to a **quiet residential neighborhood with ample unmetered free street parking for the next seven city blocks that you will never have to worry about parking tickets or towing** for your guests. **A luxury restroom trailer** must be rented for events with more than 50 people.

This begs a few questions including, where will up to 150 cars park? We can assume in front of the homes of neighborhood residents. Where will the restroom trailer be parked? Where will the trash be dumped for these events as there is no dedicated dumpster. Presumably, the trash will be dumped in the dumpster of other local businesses as we have experienced this in the past with other events. Will there be alcohol served? Is there a liquor license that allows for this?

Additionally, the venue is asking to have the ability to play music and live bands. Adjacent neighbors have reported at past events that the music was loud enough to vibrate pictures hung on their walls. Our neighborhood currently has to deal with the loud traffic noise on Broad Street and the Car Wash located on the 4400 block of Broad Street. Please don't allow us to also have to deal with the noise of a music venue.

Lavender Hill has applied for a Special Use Permit that can allow for 52 events per year with up to 150 people any day of the week up to 3 times per week with amplified music and sound till 10pm. We have elementary age children and working parents in our neighborhood, some living next door to Lavender Hill, that are asleep before 10pm. How is this fair or reasonable for our neighborhood to have to endure? Shouldn't we be able to park in front of our houses so that we can unload groceries or get our children inside? We love the community we have built. Please don't let it be destroyed with loud music, no parking, intoxicated guests, portable restrooms, and individuals that will be attracted to the portable restrooms and loud music.

Included in this email are **pictures of the event venue/ co-working space** that is disguised as a house within a residential neighborhood for your reference to see the proximity of 1705 Commonwealth Avenue to the family homes in the neighborhood including the location of a school bus stop. Please see the pictures below.

We ask you to **Please Do Not Approve Special Use Ordinance No. 2025-215.**

Thank you for your service,

Elizabeth Bortell, DDS

This message was secured by [Zix](#)®.

From: [Elizabeth B Bortell](#)
To: [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council](#); [Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office](#); asksgca@gmail.com; [Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR](#); [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: 1705 Commonwealth Avenue Special Use Ordinance No.2025-215
Date: Thursday, October 2, 2025 9:57:04 PM
Attachments: [IMG_3429.png](#)

You don't often get email from ebbortell@vcu.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

October 1, 2025

Dear Council Rep. Andrew Breton, Council Liaison Whiten Brown, Planning Commission Administration, Senior Planner Jonathan Brown, and Sauers Garden Civic Association,

RE: Please Do not approve special use Ordinance No. 2025-215

My name is Dr. Elizabeth Bortell. I have lived in the Sauers Garden neighborhood since 1972. Over the years, we have had many challenges with living in the city but because of our love of the city and the community, we have faced these challenges and built a wonderful place to live and raise our children. Our neighborhood has houses that sell very quickly on the market because of what we have built. We contribute to the city not only by building this community and not leaving the city for the county, but also by paying very high real estate taxes that financially benefit the city.

The property on **1705 Commonwealth Avenue** is zoned mixed use commercial and residential. However, the houses behind the property and on the sides of the property are residential. The house on the property is used as a **co-working space** that houses at least 3 businesses run by the owner. The house as well as the backyard can be rented for events. The business name of the property is "Lavender Hill," which according to their website can be rented for events for 120 people in the backyard and up to 25 people in the house. The website states that it is located next to a **quiet residential neighborhood with ample unmetered free street parking for the next seven city blocks that you will never have to worry about parking tickets or towing** for your guests. **A luxury restroom trailer** must be rented for events with more than 50 people.

This begs a few questions including, where will up to 150 cars park? We can assume in front of the homes of neighborhood residents. Where will the restroom trailer be parked? Where will the trash be dumped for these events as there is no dedicated dumpster. Presumably, the trash will be dumped in the dumpster of other local businesses as we have experienced this in the past with other events. Will there be alcohol served? Is there a

liquor license that allows for this? Additionally, the venue is asking to have the ability to play music and live bands. Adjacent neighbors have reported at past events that the music was loud enough to vibrate pictures hung on their walls. Our neighborhood currently has to deal with the loud traffic noise on Broad Street and the Car Wash located on the 4400 block of Broad Street. Please don't allow us to also have to deal with the noise of a music venue.

Lavender Hill has applied for a Special Use Permit that can allow for 52 events per year with up to 150 people any day of the week up to 3 times per week with amplified music and sound till 10pm. We have elementary age children and working parents in our neighborhood, some living next door to Lavender Hill, that are asleep before 10pm. How is this fair or reasonable for our neighborhood to have to endure? Shouldn't we be able to park in front of our houses so that we can unload groceries or get our children inside? We love the community we have built. Please don't let it be destroyed with loud music, no parking, intoxicated guests, portable restrooms, and individuals that will be attracted to the portable restrooms and loud music.

Included in this email are **pictures of the event venue/ co-working space** that is disguised as a house within a residential neighborhood for your reference to see the proximity of 1705 Commonwealth Avenue to the family homes in the neighborhood including the location of a school bus stop. Please see the pictures below.

We ask you to **Please Do Not Approve Special Use Ordinance No. 2025-215.**

Thank you for your service,

Elizabeth Bortell, DDS







From: Elizabeth B Bortell <ebbortell@vcu.edu>
Sent: Thursday, October 2, 2025 9:56 PM
To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council; Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office; asksgca@gmail.com; Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR; PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: 1705 Commonwealth Avenue Special Use Ordinance No.2025-215

You don't often get email from ebbortell@vcu.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

October 1, 2025

Dear Council Rep. Andrew Breton, Council Liaison Whiten Brown, Planning Commission Administration, Senior Planner Jonathan Brown, and Sauers Garden Civic Association,

RE: Please Do not approve special use Ordinance No. 2025-215

My name is Dr. Elizabeth Bortell. I have lived in the Sauers Garden neighborhood since 1972. Over the years, we have had many challenges with living in the city but because of our love of the city and the community, we have faced these challenges and built a wonderful place to live and raise our children. Our neighborhood has houses that sell very quickly on the market because of what we have built. We contribute to the city not only by building this community and not leaving the city for the county, but also by paying very high real estate taxes that financially benefit the city.

The property on **1705 Commonwealth Avenue** is zoned mixed use commercial and residential. However, the houses behind the property and on the sides of the property are residential. The house on the property is used as a **co-working space** that houses at least 3 businesses run by the owner. The house as well as the backyard can be rented for events. The business name of the property is "Lavender Hill," which according to their website can be rented for events for 120 people in the backyard and up to 25 people in the house. The website states that it is located next to a **quiet residential neighborhood with ample unmetered free street parking for the next seven city blocks that you will never have to worry about parking tickets or towing** for your guests. **A luxury restroom trailer** must be rented for events with more than 50 people.

This begs a few questions including, where will up to 150 cars park? We can assume in front of the homes of neighborhood residents. Where will the restroom trailer be parked? Where will the trash be dumped for these events as there is no dedicated dumpster. Presumably, the trash will be dumped in the dumpster of other local businesses as we have experienced this in the past with other events. Will there be alcohol served? Is there a liquor license that allows for this? Additionally, the venue is asking to have the ability to play music and live bands. Adjacent neighbors have reported at past events that the music was loud enough to vibrate pictures hung on their walls. Our neighborhood currently has to deal with the loud traffic noise on Broad Street and the Car Wash located on the 4400 block of Broad Street. Please don't allow us to also have to deal with the noise of a music venue.

Lavender Hill has applied for a Special Use Permit that can allow for 52 events per year with up to 150 people any day of the week up to 3 times per week with amplified music and sound till 10pm. We have elementary age children and working parents in our neighborhood, some living next door to Lavender Hill, that are asleep before 10pm. How is this fair or reasonable for our neighborhood to have to endure? Shouldn't we be able to park in front of our houses so that we can unload groceries or get our children inside? We love the community we have built. Please don't let it be destroyed with loud music, no parking, intoxicated guests, portable restrooms, and individuals that will be attracted to the portable restrooms and loud music.

Included in this email are **pictures of the event venue/ co-working space** that is disguised as a house within a residential neighborhood for your reference to see the proximity of 1705 Commonwealth Avenue to the family homes in the neighborhood including the location of a school bus stop. Please see the pictures below.

We ask you to **Please Do Not Approve Special Use Ordinance No. 2025-215.**

Thank you for your service,

Elizabeth Bortell, DDS

From: [Lynne Wiseman](#)
To: [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Special Use Permit Ordinance 2025-215
Date: Sunday, October 5, 2025 9:15:28 PM

You don't often get email from lynne.wiseman@verizon.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to ask you NOT to support Special Use Permit Ordinance 2025-215 for 1705 Commonwealth Avenue. This venue is in a quiet, family-oriented neighborhood and abuts multiple single-family homes, as can be seen on page 14 of the proposal. Allowing amplified music until 10:00 pm every night of the week will be a disruption for the many families with elementary-aged school children who reside within a two block radius of 1705 Commonwealth Avenue. Further, this residential neighborhood does not have available parking to accommodate up to 150 additional vehicles for proposed events; the TWO parking spaces provided by the venue will not be sufficient. I urge you to consider if you would like such a venue to operate behind your house and how that might affect the quality of home life for your family.

I thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Barbara Wiseman

From: [Sam Campbell](#)
To: [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Special use permit ordinance no 2025-215
Date: Sunday, October 5, 2025 5:02:58 PM

You don't often get email from campbesj@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hello planning commission,

My name is Sam Campbell and I reside at 4308 Cutshaw Ave and I have recently learned about this special use permit and I strongly oppose this request. Our neighborhood is special because it is quiet and family oriented. The businesses that border our neighborhood on Broad St are quiet and respectful of the community. Having a music venue that would be loud and disruptive every day of the week is detrimental to the entire neighborhood. Please consider all of the people that live in this area. We chose this neighborhood for the quiet and peaceful nature. This venue would destroy that calm atmosphere. Please do not allow this ordinance to pass.

Sincerely

Sam Campbell, MD

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Sidney Bragg <sjbragg42@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 6, 2025 9:09 PM
To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council
Cc: Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office; Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: Lavender Hill, Objective Comments

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Andrew, please don't dismiss this as just another objection. I spent some time today reviewing the Public Comment letters regarding Lavender Hill posted on the city calendar, I also reviewed the other SUPs under consideration and I have several observations: 1) none of the letters in support of Lavender Hill discuss major outdoor events, they talk about meetings or dining and other small events or they speak in generalities, but none appears to endorse Lavender Hill as a major event space, and I'm not sure they appreciate what their endorsing, 2) none of these entities have to deal with the noise, traffic, frequency and general mess associated with the events, 3) most of the letters are in opposition and they speak from the heart, these people are happy here and they see the major events at Lavender Hill as a threat to what they hold dear, 4) I don't see any other SUP that is asking for something so out of character for the neighborhood, there is no precedent for this and plenty of opposition. Why do it here?

Please consider that the current zoning of Lavender Hill provides for them to be the type of meeting space these supporting letters discuss. The reason they want the SUP is to expand into major events, weddings, etc. Their website is pushing these events even without the SUP. This also means that they will want to maximize the number of events to get the revenue. This goes way beyond the idea of a gathering or community space. It is not the proper use of the space. It's pure business. Please don't let this happen here. This is not about community, it's about destroying our community for another's benefit.

Respectfully, Sidney Bragg

From: Jeff Hansen <jeffreywhansen@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 4, 2025 10:36 AM
To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council; Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office; PDR
Land Use Admin; Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR; askgca@gmail.com
Subject: NO to Ordinance No. 2025-215

You don't often get email from jeffreywhansen@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

As a long time resident of 4517 Augusta Ave I would like make it known that I am opposed to 1705 Commonwealth Ave becoming a place that includes outdoor music. What make this neighborhood special is that it is a small, quiet oasis within the city. Please, please, please do not allow Ordinance No. 2025-215 to pass and ruin this wonderful neighborhood.

Regards,
Jeff Hansen
4517 Augusta Ave

From: Nia Burks <nia.burks@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 9:29 AM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR; Breton, Andrew S. - City Council; Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office; PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: Opposition to Ordinance 2025-215 – 1705 Commonwealth Avenue

You don't often get email from nia.burks@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of City Council,

My name is Andrea Nia Burks, a resident and small business owner in the Richmond. I am writing in firm opposition to Ordinance 2025-215, which would permit outdoor events at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue, Lavender Hill.

I have worked in wellness and education in some form or fashion for nearly 20 years. The Sauers Garden neighborhood's peace and quiet *are not luxuries*. They are vital components of the mental, physical, and emotional wellness of its residents. In a time when urban stress and overstimulation are at an all-time high, access to calm and restorative living environments is essential. Allowing frequent events of up to 150 people, with amplified sound and extended evening hours, fundamentally disrupts this equilibrium, risking a decline in restful sleep, restoration, and recharge that the home and neighborhood should offer. This may prevent surrounding residents to underperform at work, which domino effects the Richmond community as a whole.

Wellness cannot flourish where there is chronic noise intrusion. The proposed frequency and capacity of events outlined in the ordinance are incompatible with the lived reality of residential life. Even well-intentioned event operators cannot eliminate the impact that noise, traffic, and light have on those who live and work nearby.

I urge the Council to protect the integrity of our neighborhood and the well-being of the people who call it home. Please reject Ordinance 2025-215.

Respectfully,

Andrea Nia Burks

From: Robert Olson <rolson@frozeninflight.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 9:40 AM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR; Breton, Andrew S. - City Council; Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office; PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: Opposition to Ordinance 2025-215 – 1705 Commonwealth Avenue

You don't often get email from rolson@frozeninflight.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of City Council,

My name is Robert Olson, and I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed special use permit at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue, Lavender Hill.

Homeownership represents decades of hard work, dedication, and personal investment. Our homes are our sanctuaries. They are places of rest and refuge from the demands of daily life. To introduce a high-traffic, event-based business into the heart of a residential neighborhood undermines that promise of peace and security.

Even with conditions limiting events to 52 days per year, the ordinance allows gatherings of up to 150 people, multiple times a week, with amplified sound until 10:00 p.m. This level of activity would create ongoing noise, traffic congestion, and safety concerns that are entirely inappropriate for a residential setting.

The Sauers Garden neighborhood deserves the same respect and protection that all hardworking Richmond residents expect when they come home after a long day. Please uphold the integrity of our community by rejecting Ordinance 2025-215.

Sincerely,

Robert Olson

Homeowner and Resident

From: Robert Olson <rolson@frozeninflight.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 9:42 AM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR; Breton, Andrew S. - City Council; Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office; PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: Opposition to Ordinance 2025-215 – 1705 Commonwealth Avenue

You don't often get email from rolson@frozeninflight.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

To Whom It May Concern,

As a small business owner, I oppose Ordinance 2025-215. The proposed outdoor event venue at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue, Lavender Hill, is not compatible with the surrounding residential area.

Frequent outdoor gatherings, amplified music, and increased traffic will disrupt nearby residents and small businesses like mine, that rely on stability and quiet to serve their clients responsibly and respectfully.

We respectfully ask that the City Council reject this ordinance.

Sincerely,

--

Frozen in Flight Bird Taxidermy
3300 West Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23230

www.FrozenInFlight.com

(804) 382-4737

From: Nia Burks <nia@butterandfilth.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 9:23 AM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR; Breton, Andrew S. - City Council; Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office; PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: Opposition to Ordinance 2025-215 – Responsible Stewardship in Event-Based Business

You don't often get email from nia@butterandfilth.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of City Council,

As the owner of Butter & Filth, an event-based and community-centered business in Richmond, I wish to voice my strong opposition to Ordinance 2025-215.

Those of us who operate creative and event-based enterprises must understand that our work does not exist above or outside of neighborhoods. We exist *within* them. With that knowing of coexistence comes an astute responsibility to act as good stewards of space, sound, and shared community resources such as parking, common alleyways, and the like. The privilege of hosting gatherings carries with it an obligation to ensure that our activities enhance, rather than erode, the quality of life around us.

Lavender Hill, which proposes to host frequent outdoor events of up to 150 people in a primarily residential area, threatens to displace peace, increase noise, and compromise accessibility to residents which live in the immediate surrounding areas to their own homes. It sets a concerning precedent for other event-based businesses that strive to operate with respect for their surroundings.

As a business that hosts events such as celebrations and healing space for women, I have worked extremely hard, and for years, to garner credibility and respect. This proposal threatens reputation and credibility damage to many small businesses that may endeavor to operate respectfully. This threat is due not only to the difficulty in the logistical enacting of the proposal, but also to the neighbors that we should consider in the first place. As business owners, we have a duty to act in accordance with not only the professional demands of our brands, but also weigh the immeasurable impact they have on the people around us.

We believe Richmond's growth and vibrancy depend on mutual respect between businesses and residents. To maintain that balance, we urge the Council to reject Ordinance 2025-215.

With respect,

Nia Burks
CEO, Butter & Filth
804.829.3439

butterandfilth.com



From: Ian Indseth <indsethik@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 2, 2025 4:32 PM
To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council; Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office
Cc: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: Opposition to SUP-152014-2024 (1705 Commonwealth Ave – Lavender Hill)

You don't often get email from indsethik@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Councilmember Breton and Ms. Brown,

I'm writing to express my strong opposition to **SUP-152014-2024**, which would allow **weekly outdoor events for up to 150 people** at Lavender Hill (1705 Commonwealth Ave), including **amplified music from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., any day of the week**.

This property sits at the edge of a quiet, residential neighborhood and was formerly a low-impact office. The proposed use would significantly disrupt the area with **excessive noise and parking issues**, as we've already experienced during previous unpermitted events. Despite concerns raised, the property owner has shown little regard for the impact on neighbors.

Unfortunately, existing noise and parking regulations offer little real-time protection for residents. The most effective way to prevent recurring disruption is to **deny this Special Use Permit**.

I support small businesses that fit within our neighborhood, but large, frequent events with amplified sound are simply not appropriate for this location.

Thank you for considering the well-being of local residents.

Sincerely,
Ian Indseth
4424 Fitzhugh Ave, Richmond, VA

From: Nicole BLANKENBECKLER <vze3kqhg@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, October 6, 2025 12:08 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin; Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: ORDINANCE No. 2025-215 please reject!

You don't often get email from vze3kqhg@verizon.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Council Liason,

I am writing to ask you NOT to support Special Use Permit Ordinance 2025-215 for [1705 Commonwealth Avenue](#). This venue is in a quiet, family-oriented neighborhood and abuts multiple single-family homes, as can be seen on page 14 of the proposal. Allowing amplified music until 10:00 pmevery night of the week will be a disruption for the many families with elementary-aged school children who reside within a two block radius of [1705 Commonwealth Avenue](#). Further, this residential neighborhood does not have available parking to accommodate up to 150 additional vehicles for proposed events; the TWO parking spaces provided by the venue will not be sufficient. I urge you to consider if you would like such a venue to operate behind your house and how that might affect the quality of home life for your family.

I thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Nicole Blankenbeckler
4500 Augusta Avenue .

Sent from my iPhone

From: Franklyn Stanfield <fstanfie@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 2, 2025 8:10 PM
To: Ian Indseth
Cc: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council; Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office;
Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: Re: Opposition to SUP-152014-2024 (1705 Commonwealth Ave – Lavender Hill)
Attachments: [IMG_7345.jpeg](#); [IMG_7343.jpeg](#); [IMG_7344.jpeg](#)

You don't often get email from fstanfie@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

I have attached some photos from an event on May 30 of this year where a large tent was set up due to calls for rain. There were also calls for extreme winds which also materialized cutting the event short. It was distressing, to say the least, watching that tent sway in the wind less than 100 feet from our home.

That was also a relatively small event and still cars were wrapped around the block on both sides because there is no parking lot for this “event space.”

As a Richmond voter and your constituents I ask two questions:
Have you actually been out to the location in person?

Do you plan to personally mediate/enforce any compromised agreements between the parties?

Best,

F. Leigh Stanfield Jr.

On Thu, Oct 2, 2025 at 4:59 PM Ian Indseth <indsethik@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Councilmember Breton and Ms. Brown,

I’m writing to express my strong opposition to **SUP-152014-2024**, which would allow **weekly outdoor events for up to 150 people** at Lavender Hill (1705 Commonwealth Ave), including **amplified music from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., any day of the week**.

This property sits at the edge of a quiet, residential neighborhood and was formerly a low-impact office. The proposed use would significantly disrupt the area with **excessive noise and parking issues**, as we’ve already experienced during previous unpermitted events. Despite concerns raised, the property owner has shown little regard for the impact on neighbors.

Unfortunately, existing noise and parking regulations offer little real-time protection for residents. The most effective way to prevent recurring disruption is to **deny this Special Use Permit**.

I support small businesses that fit within our neighborhood, but large, frequent events with amplified sound are simply not appropriate for this location.

Thank you for considering the well-being of local residents.

Sincerely,
Ian Indseth
[4424 Fitzhugh Ave, Richmond, VA](#)

From: Lynne Wiseman <lynne.wiseman@verizon.net>
Sent: Sunday, October 5, 2025 9:17 PM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: Special Use Permit Ordinance 2025-215

You don't often get email from lynne.wiseman@verizon.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr. Brown,

I am writing to ask you NOT to support Special Use Permit Ordinance 2025-215 for 1705 Commonwealth Avenue. This venue is in a quiet, family-oriented neighborhood and abuts multiple single-family homes, as can be seen on page 14 of the proposal. Allowing amplified music until 10:00 pm every night of the week will be a disruption for the many families with elementary-aged school children who reside within a two block radius of 1705 Commonwealth Avenue. Further, this residential neighborhood does not have available parking to accommodate up to 150 additional vehicles for proposed events; the TWO parking spaces provided by the venue will not be sufficient. I urge you to consider if you would like such a venue to operate behind your house and how that might affect the quality of home life for your family.

I thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Barbara Wiseman

From: Sam Campbell <campbesj@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 5, 2025 5:01 PM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: Special use permit ordinance no 2025-215

You don't often get email from campbesj@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hello Mr Brown,

My name is Sam Campbell and I reside at 4308 Cutshaw Ave and I have recently learned about this special use permit and I strongly oppose this request. Our neighborhood is special because it is quiet and family oriented. The businesses that border our neighborhood on Broad St are quiet and respectful of the community. Having a music venue that would be loud and disruptive every day of the week is detrimental to the entire neighborhood. Please consider all of the people that live in this area. We chose this neighborhood for the quiet and peaceful nature. This venue would destroy that calm atmosphere. Please do not allow this ordinance to pass.

Sincerely

Sam Campbell, MD
Get [Outlook for iOS](#)



September 5, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

As President of InUnison, I am pleased to provide this letter of support for Lavender Hill to gain approval for the SUP for outdoor dining.

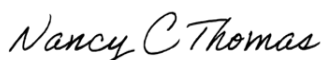
Our organization is dedicated to strengthening connections among local businesses and fostering a vibrant, collaborative community. In this spirit, Lavender Hill has been a great resource. The venue has hosted one of our monthly Happier Hour gatherings, providing a welcoming space where merchants, entrepreneurs, and community members could come together to share ideas, build relationships, and celebrate Richmond's creative spirit.

Lavender Hill is more than a meeting place. It is a thoughtfully designed and hospitable environment that encourages connection and collaboration. Nadia's professionalism and care ensure that gatherings of all sizes are both seamless and enjoyable.

Beyond its partnership with InUnison, Lavender Hill has consistently demonstrated a commitment to supporting Richmond's broader creative and business communities. By opening its doors to diverse organizations and events, it contributes to the sense of belonging and shared purpose that defines our city.

InUnison is proud to count Lavender Hill as a member and among the spaces that help nurture connection, creativity, and community in Richmond. We are confident that it will continue to serve as a valuable asset to our city's cultural and economic life.

Sincerely,



Nancy C. Thomas
President & CEO
InUnison

From: Adam Young <adam@pf-law.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 2, 2025 12:11 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin; Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: 1705 Commonwealth Ave; SUP-152014-2024

Some people who received this message don't often get email from adam@pf-law.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Good Afternoon,

I am writing to lodge my objection to this SUP. My family and I live at 4403 Fitzhugh Avenue, which is a block away from the subject property. When the property owner began using the property for an event space and a music venue, it was beyond disruptive to the neighborhood. It wasn't until a complaint was filed that they stopped the use and filed for this SUP. Sauer's Gardens is a quiet neighborhood. A music venue would be incredibly troublesome to the families living nearby and would drive down property values. The increase in traffic and parking would also be extremely problematic and dangerous for the young children. The carwash a few blocks down on Broad St. even has to cease activities earlier than what this SUP is requesting. Additionally, the property owner has not reached out to us to get feedback on their proposal. As an attorney who has worked on zoning files, that is one of the first things they should have done. Virginia is a caveat emptor state (buyer beware). If they intended for this type of use, they should have confirmed that prior to purchasing the property. I formally ask the City to reject the property owner's request for this SUP.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need anything else.

Thank you,

Adam Young

Adam Young, Esquire
Fleckenstein Young & Pearson, P.C.
Attorneys & Counselors at Law
311 S. Arthur Ashe Boulevard
Richmond, VA 23220
Direct - 804-655-2642
Phone - 804-358-9400 Ext. 412
Fax - 804-358-9089
adam@pf-law.com

NOTICE: DUE TO THE INCREASE IN INTERNET FRAUD, THIS LAW FIRM DOES NOT ACCEPT WIRING INSTRUCTIONS OVER THE INTERNET. UNLESS WIRING INSTRUCTIONS ARE HAND-DELIVERED, WE WILL ONLY DISBURSE BY CHECK. FURTHERMORE, WE WILL NOT ACCEPT ANY CHANGES TO WIRING INSTRUCTIONS THAT ARE NOT VERIFIED BY US TO OUR SATISFACTION.

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTE: This email and any attachments are confidential and may be protected by legal privilege. If you are not the intended recipient, be aware that any disclosure, copying, distribution or use of this email or any attachment is prohibited. If you have received this email in error, please notify us immediately by returning it to the sender and delete this copy from your system. Thank you for your cooperation.

TAX ADVICE NOTE: This law firm does not give tax advice, and nothing in this or any other correspondence or communication from us is intended to be tax advice. You are advised to contact your own tax advisor on all transactions concerning the tax implications thereof.

September 3, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the CreativeMornings/Richmond (RVA) chapter, it is our great pleasure to share our enthusiastic support for Lavender Hill.

Lavender Hill is a valued partner and cherished gathering place for our organizing team and the broader creative community in Richmond. Our team uses the venue for planning meetings, and each time we are welcomed with warmth, professionalism, and a true spirit of hospitality. The space provides not only comfort and functionality but also an atmosphere of inspiration—qualities that are essential for a community built on creativity and connection.

In addition to serving as a meeting place, Lavender Hill has generously opened its doors for larger community events. Most notably, Lavender Hill has hosted our winter wrapping paper giveaway and breakfast on multiple occasions, complete with fire pits, hot cocoa, and waffles. This event brought together a wide spectrum of Richmonders to celebrate creativity, generosity, and shared joy. Lavender Hill's inviting outdoor setting created the perfect backdrop for fellowship and fun, embodying the spirit of inclusivity and connection that defines CreativeMornings.

We believe strongly that Lavender Hill is more than a venue—it is an integral contributor to the cultural fabric of Richmond. Its dedication to fostering community, creativity, and collaboration aligns seamlessly with our mission at CreativeMornings. We are grateful for the role Lavender Hill plays in supporting and uplifting the creative community in our city.

Please let me know if you have any questions. You can reach me via cell at 602-828-1520 or email at richmond@creativemornings.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Mercurio', written in a cursive style.

Michelle Mercurio, Host
CreativeMornings/Richmond

From: Rachel Pfab <rachelpfab@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 11:00 PM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: Lavender Hill ordinance 2025-215

You don't often get email from rachelpfab@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Greetings.

I own the corner house at 4500 Fitzhugh Ave. which is across the street on Commonwealth. You have received letters from neighbors recommending against allowing this Special use permit. This venue has already been disruptive to our current residential zoning. This is a family neighborhood. Late and loud music is a nuisance which makes living here miserable.

Our property taxes have increased. If this venue is given its special permit, then our property values will decrease. Who wants to live in a family friendly neighborhood with a noise producing venue? Will the City of Richmond decrease our property taxes to reflect the ill effect this venue will have on our property when we won't be able to sell our homes because no one wants a party venue in such close proximity to their home?

Where will all of these patrons park? I do not want my property line on Commonwealth being used for their parking. Will Lavender Hill clean the trash and replant grass that will be killed from them walking on my yard? Where will I park if I come in late and patrons have taken my parking spots? The neighborhood cannot handle the excess traffic and people. As a tax paying Richmond City homeowner, I ask kindly that you deny Lavender Hill's request.

Rachel Pfab
2500 Fitzhugh Avenue



To Whom It May Concern,

As President of the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) Richmond Chapter, it is my pleasure to provide this letter of support for Lavender Hill and the SUP allowing outdoor dining.

Our chapter gathers each month for a Lunch & Learn, where members hear from one another on areas of expertise, share a meal, and then continue the afternoon with co-working, networking, idea sharing, and problem solving. Lavender Hill has become the ideal home for these gatherings. The venue's thoughtful design and professional team create a seamless experience for our members, while Nadia's warm and hospitable spirit fosters genuine connection and collaboration for our members.

Members enjoy both the inviting indoor spaces and the beautiful garden, which provides a refreshing place to continue conversations after the formal meeting has concluded. The ability to move so naturally between structured learning and relaxed conversation is part of what makes Lavender Hill such an exceptional setting for our community.

Lavender Hill is more than a venue; it is a partner in helping NAWBO Richmond achieve its mission of supporting and advancing women business owners. We are grateful for the role it plays in strengthening our chapter and the broader Richmond business community.

Sincerely,

Heidi Maestri
President
NAWBO Richmond Chapter

September 11, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am pleased to provide this letter of support for Lavender Hill to gain approval for the SUP for outdoor dining.

I recently hosted the launch party for my first book, *Blackinese: Reflections on Race and Ethnicity from a Biracial Millennial*. My guests enjoyed five interactive culture stations inside the house, and I read select excerpts from the book outside in the garden.

In all my business endeavors, Lavender Hill has been a great resource. In the past, I've hosted afternoon tea and participated in several of the entrepreneurial programs and social activities that have been offered at Lavender Hill.

Lavender Hill is more than a repurposed house. It is a thoughtfully designed and hospitable environment that encourages connection and collaboration for people from across the city. Nadia's professional experience and detailed eye ensure that gatherings optimize guest experience and create space for meaningful connections.

Through her work as a small business consultant, which is how we first met, and in opening the doors of Lavender Hill, Nadia has consistently demonstrated a commitment to supporting Richmond's broader creative and business communities. By welcoming diverse organizations and events, Lavender Hill contributes to the sense of belonging and shared purpose that defines our city.

I am confident that this location will continue to serve as a valuable asset to our city's cultural and economic landscape.

Sincerely,



Patricia B. Moore

Author | Coach | Speaker | Technologist

hello@patriciabmoore.com

www.patriciabmoore.com

From: [story hinckley](#)
To: [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: PLEASE NO SUP FOR LAVENDER HILL!
Date: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 3:43:53 PM

You don't often get email from storyhinckley@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern,

As homeowners who live one block from Lavender Hill, we adamantly OPPOSE their request for a Special Use Permit that would allow 52 events per year with up to 150 people, any day of the week, up to 3 times per week, with amplified music and sound till 10pm.

This is incredibly inappropriate given that "Lavender Hill" is actually just a converted single family home IN THE MIDDLE of a quiet, single family residential neighborhood.

We have a baby at home, and there have been several instances recently when our baby has been awoken by their incredibly loud music that shakes our house.

PLEASE PLEASE reject this permit requested!

Yours truly,

Story Hinckley (A very tired mother with a very tired baby)

From: [Brooke Weedon](#)
To: [Breton, Andrew S. - City Council](#)
Cc: [Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office](#); [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Re: Opposition to Special Use Permit for Lavender Hill
Date: Thursday, October 2, 2025 9:50:11 AM

You don't often get email from baweedon@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Councilman Breton:

Thank you for your consideration of this matter and for seeking feedback from directly affected residents. I urge you to reconsider your proposal with respect to "large events." Allowing twenty-four of these events is still excessive and will unreasonably and unnecessarily interfere with nearby residents' ability to enjoy their homes.

First, live/amplified sound is simply incompatible with the city noise ordinance limit of 65 dB. There are resident properties just a few feet away from the Lavender Hill backyard. There is no way live music and sound amplification (typically at least 90 dB) can be limited to 65 dB (the level of normal conversation) as measured from just a few feet away. It is not credible to expect compliance in this setting. In practice, this would leave neighbors to shoulder the burden of repeatedly documenting violations and calling the City twice a month, which is unfair and unsustainable.

Second, the off-street parking for 30 cars proposal is similarly unenforceable. There is no nearby site that can accommodate 30 cars, and there is little incentive for guests to bypass the convenient street parking directly in front of neighbors' homes. The result will be the same as what residents have already expressed concern over.

Lastly, I appreciate your recognition of support from community groups for Lavender Hill, but I'd like to point out that the support is not coming from neighbors who will be directly impacted. Neighbors like myself likewise support Lavender Hill's mission of community building, which the existing coworking and intimate event space, and your small event framework, already preserves. The push for large-scale events is not about community--it is about operating as a commercial wedding venue. Lavender Hill's own website advertises weddings and large celebrations for up to 150 guests (despite the fact that such events are not allowed under existing zoning), which makes clear the goal of the new business model. That business model comes at the direct expense of residents' ability to exist peacefully in their homes.

In sum, while I appreciate your effort to strike a balance, permitting large events with amplified music and 100 guests--even twice a month--tips the scales too far against the residents who live here year round. The small event framework you outlined already provides Lavender Hill with ample opportunity to host community-building gatherings, without imposing unreasonable burdens on neighbors.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that you remove the "large event" category from consideration. Thank you for your consideration of those directly affected.

Respectfully,
Brooke Weedon
4507 Fitzhugh Avenue

On Tue, Sep 30, 2025 at 8:51 PM Breton, Andrew S. - City Council
<Andrew.Breton@rva.gov> wrote:

The Lavender Hill application is scheduled to be heard at the Planning Commission on Tuesday October 7th. I am hoping to get the application amended significantly in order to create an application the neighbors can support.

I have heard from residents who have experienced disturbances from large events, particularly related to noise levels. As I understand, residents are especially concerned about the prospect of a high frequency of such events. I myself could not imagine the prospect of a wedding band in my back yard late into each weekend.

I have also received letters of support from many community groups that value the importance of shared gathering spaces such as Lavender Hill to meet and create fellowship and community. This is something I also believe in, as people find it more and more difficult to foster relationships and connections in modern life. Shared community spaces are a vital resource.

The city has to find a balance between protecting the health and wellness of residents, and cultivating an environment in which groups of people can gather to strengthen our community.

In order to achieve that balance, I propose something like the below set of restrictions. Essentially, I propose that the special parcel zoning allow for two types of outdoor events – small and large. Small events are intended to be quiet enough that there should be no limit on how often they can occur. Large events can be larger and louder but would be infrequent, and would still be subject to the city's 65 dB noise ordinance limits.

I would like to know your feedback on a proposal like this. The applicant has not yet agreed to these particular conditions, but she is open to some reasonable guardrails in order to protect the neighbors.

Small events (minimal disruption):

- No frequency limit
- No outdoor amplified sound
- Acoustic and/or vocal non-amplified music permitted until 8pm
- Up to 50 guests
- Outdoor use permitted 8am to 10pm (9pm on weeknights)
- Outdoor restrooms optional
- Staff onsite at all times with contact info

Large Events (infrequent):

- No more than two large events per calendar month
- Live music and sound amplification allowed
- *Still subject to city noise ordinance limit of 65 dB, measured from any point on a residential parcel*
- Up to 100 guests
- Outdoor use permitted 8am to 10pm (9pm on weeknights)
- Outdoor restroom required
- Staff onsite at all times with contact info
- Off-street parking plan required for at least 30 cars
- 14-day advance notice to neighbors required

The Honorable Andrew Breton

1st District Councilor

Richmond West End & Museum District

RICHMOND CITY COUNCIL

804-646-5935 (desk)

804-357-2631 (mobile)

andrew.breton@rva.gov

From: Brooke Weedon <baweedon@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 10:33 PM

To: Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office <Whitney.Brown@rva.gov>; Breton, Andrew S. - City Council <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>

Subject: Fwd: Opposition to Special Use Permit for Lavender Hill

You don't often get email from baweedon@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Adding Ms. Brown per Councilman Breton's automatic reply.

Thank you,

Brooke Weedon

Begin forwarded message:

From: Brooke Weedon <baweedon@gmail.com>

Date: September 29, 2025 at 10:30:23 PM EDT

To: andrew.breton@rva.gov

Subject: Opposition to Special Use Permit for Lavender Hill

Dear Councilman Breton:

I am writing as a homeowner less than a block away from Lavender Hill to strongly oppose the request for a special use permit to allow large-scale event at this property. While the venue advertises itself as a "charming event space," the impacts of granting such a permit would be severe, disruptive, and fundamentally incompatible with the residential character of our neighborhood.

Lavender Hill's own website acknowledges that it is located in a "quiet residential neighborhood," yet the owners are seeking permission to host "weddings, receptions, and large celebrations" for up to 150 guests—as often as 52 nights per year, up to three nights a week. It is outrageous to suggest that this level of commercial activity belongs in a community where families live, children play outdoors, and neighbors expect safety and peace in their homes.

My family, including my young toddler, would be directly and personally affected. Loud music and large gatherings at night

will disrupt our child's bedtime and make our home life stressful. The constant flow of cars, ride-shares, and strangers presents serious safety concerns for children who play in our streets. Parking is already scarce, as nearly all residents must park in front of their homes. There is no feasible plan to accommodate vehicles for 150 extra guests, which will create ongoing conflict and congestion.

This is not a modest or occasional use—it is the creation of a full-time commercial event business in the middle of a residential neighborhood. It is particularly concerning that the owners are already openly advertising these large celebrations on their website, as though City approval is a mere formality. Our neighborhood should not be forced to shoulder the noise, traffic, and safety risks so that a private business can profit at residents' expense.

I urge you to reject this special use permit. The proposed intensity and frequency of these events is wholly incompatible with the surrounding community and would irreparably damage the quality of life for the families who call this neighborhood home.

Respectfully,

Brooke Weedon

4507 Fitzhugh Avenue

(804) 337-4439

Baweedon@gmail.com

From: Alfred Pollard <alpollard67@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 8:18 PM
To: Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office; asksgca@gmail.com; Breton, Andrew S. - City Council; PDR Land Use Admin; Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: Special Use Permit Ordinance No. 2025-215

You don't often get email from alpollard67@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Council Rep. Andrew Breton, Council Liaison Whitney Brown, Planning Commission Administration, Senior Planner Jonathan Brown and Sauers Garden Civic Association:

Please do not approve special use Ordinance No. 2025-215.

We are a neighborhood of young families with children and babies and many older retired families live here as well.

We have respect for our properties and our neighborhood school. Our families feel safe to enjoy a walk in the neighborhood with our dogs and our children or enjoy peaceful time in our backyards with friends and family.

Please note, as a result, our property values have substantially increased giving the City a greater tax base.

The proposed outdoor Music Venue would destroy our thriving residential neighborhood with continuous amplified music, outdoor toilets, heavy traffic and not enough parking for residents. This type of venue would most likely generate alcohol and drug use, trash and rats near our homes and schools.

We sincerely hope that you will say "NO" and protect us and the City of Richmond historic Sauers Garden, residential neighborhood.

Best Regards,
Alfred E. Pollard
Linda Bortell Pollard

From: [Life with Laura](#)
To: [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Opposition to Special Use Permit for 1705 Commonwealth
Date: Monday, September 29, 2025 11:01:26 PM

You don't often get email from lauradora83@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Richmond Planning Commission and Councilman Breton,

I am a resident of the Sauer's Gardens neighborhood writing to strongly oppose the Special Use Permit for 1705 Commonwealth (Lavender Hill).

Allowing up to 52 events per year with amplified music and as many as 150 attendees—even until 10 p.m.—would bring significant noise, parking issues, and heavy foot traffic to our quiet residential area. We have already experienced disruptive noise from past events at this location, and the thought of making this a permanent, year-round situation is deeply concerning.

This permit would also remain in effect for future owners, creating a lasting problem for all neighbors. Please consider the quality of life and safety of residents who live in close proximity and deny this application.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for protecting the character of our neighborhood.

Sincerely,
A concerned resident of Sauer's Garden
Laura Tippet

From: [Brooke Weedon](#)
To: [PDR Land Use Admin](#)
Subject: Opposition to Special Use Permit for Lavender Hill
Date: Monday, September 29, 2025 10:38:03 PM

You don't often get email from baweedon@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Richmond Planning Commission:

I am writing as a homeowner less than a block away from Lavender Hill to strongly oppose the request for a special use permit to allow large-scale events at this property. While the venue advertises itself as a “charming event space,” the impacts of granting such a permit would be severe, disruptive, and fundamentally incompatible with the residential character of our neighborhood.

Lavender Hill’s own website acknowledges that it is located in a “quiet residential neighborhood,” yet the owners are seeking permission to host “weddings, receptions, and large celebrations” for up to 150 guests—as often as 52 nights per year, up to three nights a week. It is outrageous to suggest that this level of commercial activity belongs in a community where families live, children play outdoors, and neighbors expect safety and peace in their homes.

My family, including my young toddler, would be directly and personally affected. Loud music and large gatherings at night will disrupt our child’s bedtime and make our home life stressful. The constant flow of cars, ride-shares, and strangers presents serious safety concerns for children who play in our streets. Parking is already scarce, as nearly all residents must park in front of their homes. There is no feasible plan to accommodate vehicles for 150 extra guests, which will create ongoing conflict and congestion.

This is not a modest or occasional use—it is the creation of a full-time commercial event business in the middle of a residential neighborhood. It is particularly concerning that the owners are already openly advertising these large celebrations on their website, as though City approval is a mere formality. Our neighborhood should not be forced to

shoulder the noise, traffic, and safety risks so that a private business can profit at residents' expense.

I urge you to reject this special use permit. The proposed intensity and frequency of these events is wholly incompatible with the surrounding community and would irreparably damage the quality of life for the families who call this neighborhood home.

Respectfully,

Brooke Weedon

4507 Fitzhugh Avenue

(804) 337-4439

Baweeton@gmail.com

From: Sidney Bragg <sjbragg42@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 3, 2024 10:15 AM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: 1705 Commonwealth Ave, Lavender Hill

[You don't often get email from sjbragg42@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr Brown, my name is Sidney Bragg and I live at 4408 Fitzhugh Ave, across the alley from 1705 Commonwealth Ave, Richmond. I understand that a special use permit allowing the property to have events 125 days per year with up to 150 people is being considered. Based on what past events that Lavender Hill has held I can tell you that this will be very disruptive to our lives. I have literally had pictures vibrating on my wall from the music, there is no way to enjoy the evening with loud events almost in our backyard. I have spoken with my neighbors regarding this and they are universally opposed. There are 7 houses directly exposed to the noise, with the rest of the neighborhood catching the noise that gets through our houses. No-one is going to be happy about this.

I would like to understand the process for opposing this permit. Please feel free to call me or respond with direction on how to proceed.

Thanks for your consideration,

Sidney Bragg, 804-356-8004



THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF VIRGINIA, INC.
1708 Commonwealth Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23230
(804) 353-6606 – FAX (804) 358-1940 – www.valegion.org

September 12, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

As neighbors to Lavender Hill, The American Legion is pleased to share this letter of support for the SUP that allows for outdoor dining.

Lavender Hill has proven to be not only a beautifully maintained and versatile event space, but also a valued member of our immediate community. The owner demonstrates professionalism and hospitality, and the venue provides an inviting setting for gatherings.

As an organization committed to service, community and programs, we appreciate Lavender Hill's role in fostering connection and supporting a wide variety of groups and events here in Richmond.

We are proud to have Lavender Hill as our neighbor and confident in recognizing them as an important asset to the Richmond community.

Sincerely,

Linden B. Dixon, Jr.
Department Administrator
The American Legion
Department of Virginia

LBD/ede

From: Josh LeHuray <jlehuray11@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 1, 2025 12:16 PM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: Concern regarding SUP-152014-2024/Lavender Hill

You don't often get email from jlehuray11@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Jonathan,

Our names are Josh and Dawn LeHuray and we live at 4410 Fitzhugh Ave in the Sauers Gardens neighborhood. We are writing regarding Lavender Hill, the business at 1705 Commonwealth Avenue. They are seeking approval of a Special Use Permit (SUP-152014-2024) that will allow regular use of the property's backyard for outdoor events. These events could include up to 150 people, 52 times per year, any day of the week, between the hours of 8:00 am and 10:00 pm, with amplified outdoor music until 10:00 pm.

We strongly oppose the granting of this SUP. This property, originally built as a residential home, has been in use as a business office for many years. Until its sale in 2021, it was an accountant's office. Last year, its current owner began hosting outdoor events with amplified music/live bands, until the City temporarily intervened. From our back windows and back steps, we can look directly into the backyard of Lavender Hill and see the tents, portable bathrooms, and guests coming and going from the event space. In 2024 they held multiple events where the music and bass were so loud that you could hear and feel the music inside of our house with the windows closed. Often these events lasted until after 10 p.m., disrupting a quiet residential neighborhood and making it impossible for us to enjoy our evenings in our home.

Based on our experience, the proposed use of this property will unquestionably impact the immediate neighbors. But it will undoubtedly impact the neighborhood more widely through the noise that will extend beyond our block and the ripple effect of parking congestion. There can be no quiet enjoyment of our property with these events taking place on a regular basis. The current zoning of the property is designed for use as an office or small business. This zoning doesn't allow for large numbers of people or loud events in residential areas, as is appropriate. The point of proper zoning is to ensure compatible uses.

This SUP represents a complete lack of respect for the local residents and is an inappropriate use of property close to residential areas. To be clear, we are not against Lavender Hill operating a business compatible with its placement "adjacent to a quiet neighborhood" (as advertised on its website), but we are not in favor of any events which disturb the general peace of the community.

We thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Josh and Dawn LeHuray

4410 Fitzhugh Ave

Richmond, VA 23230

608-213-8942

From: PDR Land Use Admin
Sent: Monday, September 15, 2025 9:32 AM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: FW: 1705 Commonwealth Ave - Lavender Hill

From: Susan Yates <susanyates30@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 13, 2025 2:18 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin <dcldLandUseAdm@rva.gov>
Subject: 1705 Commonwealth Ave - Lavender Hill

You don't often get email from susanyates30@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hello, I live 500 feet from the above address and I understand that this tenant is proposing to have weekly parties up to 150 people with loud music up to 10 PM at night. I would like to say that this is a residential neighborhood and I oppose this greatly. I'm not sure how to voice my opposition so I'm sending this email to you. Thank you.

From: PDR Land Use Admin
Sent: Tuesday, August 19, 2025 10:56 AM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: FW: Opposed to SUP-152014-2024

-----Original Message-----

From: Eric Norris <eric@norrisservicesrva.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 17, 2025 12:11 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin <dcdLandUseAdm@rva.gov>
Subject: Opposed to SUP-152014-2024

You don't often get email from eric@norrisservicesrva.com. Learn why this is important
<<https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>>

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Commission,

While I respect Lavender Hill as a small business that fits within the character of our neighborhood under current zoning, I cannot support the proposal to host large, frequent events with amplified sound. This use is not appropriate for this location.

I am strongly opposed to SUP-152014-2024, which would allow weekly outdoor events for up to 150 people at Lavender Hill (1705 Commonwealth Ave), including amplified music from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., any day of the week.

This property sits at the edge of a quiet, residential neighborhood and was previously a low-impact office. The proposed use would bring excessive noise, traffic, and parking problems—issues that we’ve already dealt with during prior unpermitted events. Despite repeated concerns, the property owner has shown little regard for the impact on neighbors.

There are also specific problems that directly affect my household and small business:

- * The business has used my trash and recycling bins without permission, even filling the recycling bin with garbage that the city won’t collect. This has left us unable to use our own bins until I removed their waste.

- * Patrons have trespassed into my fenced yard, blocked the shared alleyway, and pulled into my driveway to park or turn around—despite posted “no parking” and “no trespassing” signs. When the alley is blocked, it also prevents Norris Services from accessing their property and disrupts their business operations.

* Even when amplified sound ends at 10 p.m., announcements and lingering guests keep noise going well past 11 p.m. Patrons have left trash in my yard and smoked cigarettes and cannabis on the property, with the smoke drifting into my home.

* The owner has also rented the property as an Airbnb event space, in violation of Airbnb's rules. Reviews on the listing itself note that the host does not follow published policies, which raises serious concerns about ongoing compliance even if a permit is granted.

Existing noise and parking regulations offer little real-time protection for residents. The only reliable way to prevent continued disruption is to deny this Special Use Permit.

Thank you for considering the well-being of those of us who live here and bear the direct impact of this decision.

Regards,

M. Eric Norris

Owner/Operator Norris Services. LLC

From: PDR Land Use Admin
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 3:51 PM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: FW: Opposition to SUP-152014-2024 (1705 Commonwealth Ave – Lavender Hill)

From: Victoria Marchetti Young <victoria.marchetti@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 3:22 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin <dcdLandUseAdm@rva.gov>
Subject: Opposition to SUP-152014-2024 (1705 Commonwealth Ave – Lavender Hill)

You don't often get email from victoria.marchetti@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Commission,

My family and I are residents of the 4400 block of Fitzhugh Avenue, and it has come to our attention that Lavender Hill is seeking a special use permit to host large outdoor events for up to 150 people. While we support Lavender Hill operating as a coworking space, we do not support the special use permit.

My husband and I have a 4 year old and a baby on the way. The proposed use of Lavender Hill would negatively impact our daily life with excessive noise, increased traffic, and parking issues. Last summer, when Lavender Hill held unpermitted, large, outdoor events, it was so loud my son was unable to sleep until the music ended well after his bedtime. With a baby on the way, the last thing we need is more sleep disturbances! Additionally, we are concerned that the increased traffic that will inevitably result from these events will make our street and neighborhood less safe. Our kids walk, bike, and scooter up and down these streets and sidewalks everyday, and the increased traffic poses a danger to our children. Finally, the neighborhood does not have the parking infrastructure to support large events. The vast majority of the houses in our neighborhood rely on street parking, which is barely sufficient on a normal day. Large events will make it near impossible to find parking near our homes.

We oppose the special use permit and hope you will make a recommendation to the City Council to oppose it as well.

Best,
Victoria Young
4403 Fitzhugh Avenue

From: PDR Land Use Admin
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 9:21 AM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: FW: SUP opposition - 1705 Commonwealth Ave

-----Original Message-----

From: Sarah Paladino <sarahjpaladino@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 8:43 PM
To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>; PDR Land Use Admin <dcdLandUseAdm@rva.gov>
Cc: Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office <Whitney.Brown@rva.gov>
Subject: SUP opposition - 1705 Commonwealth Ave

[You don't often get email from sarahjpaladino@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hi,

I live at 4307 Augusta Avenue and am writing out of concern about the proposed SUP for 1705 Commonwealth Ave.

I am opposed to permitting this SUP as proposed because of allowing outdoor music up to 52 times a year, and the number of people (150) allowed at events.

Sauers Garden is a quiet residential neighborhood with a lot of young families. Allowing a house in this neighborhood to host large outdoor parties with music so frequently would be a major disruption to people living nearby. This business has had outdoor events in the past and I've been able to hear their music from a block and a half and an Avenue over. I imagine it's even worse for people who live closer.

Secondly, 150 people is way too large of a crowd for a moderate-sized house with small a backyard and no parking. Even if half the people took public transportation and didn't park, that's still a significant number of people needing to park throughout the neighborhood where everyone who lives here has to street park.

Out of consideration for the families that live in this quiet neighborhood, please don't allow this SUP for 1705 Commonwealth.

Thank you,
Sarah Paladino-Strater
4307 Augusta Avenue

From: PDR Land Use Admin
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 3:52 PM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: FW: Vote against Lavender Hill

From: kristine smetana <kristinesmetana@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 11:18 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin <dcldLandUseAdm@rva.gov>
Subject: Vote against Lavender Hill

You don't often get email from kristinesmetana@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I have lived diagonally from Lavender Hill, at the corner of Fitzhugh and Commonwealth, and have been in this neighborhood since 1997. We have had a peaceful neighborhood until this business purchased a house and changed it into a business.

I am aware they have applied for a special use permit to allow 52 events per year, with up to 150 people any day of the week and up to 3 times per week. We do not need amplified music and sound until 10 pm. There are families who have babies in the neighborhood and others who go to sleep early. I find it truly awful that they would invade a residential neighborhood that had so many rules for who lives in the neighborhood and who can rent, and now we have a noise issue. It was bad enough when another business would have loud parties across on W. Broad and we could hear the ruckus, the cars parking, the trash thrown on our streets.

I ask you to please not approve this request from Lavender Hill.
Thank you for your attention to this matter,
Kristine Smetana
4501 Fitzhugh Ave



September 22, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

As Executive Director of **The JWC Foundation**, I am pleased to provide this letter of support for Lavender Hill to gain approval for the SUP for outdoor dining.

Our organization is dedicated to ensuring Black entrepreneurs have the access, resources and community support needed to build sustainable businesses that drive economic growth. In this spirit, Lavender Hill has been a great resource to the greater Richmond community. The venue hosts gatherings, providing a welcoming space where community members could come together to share ideas, build relationships, and celebrate Richmond's creative spirit.

Lavender Hill is more than a meeting place. It is a thoughtfully designed and hospitable environment that encourages connection and collaboration. Nadia's professionalism and care ensure that gatherings of all sizes are both seamless and enjoyable.

Lavender Hill has consistently demonstrated a commitment to supporting Richmond's broader creative and business communities. By opening its doors to diverse organizations and events, it contributes to the sense of belonging and shared purpose that defines our city.

We are proud to count Lavender Hill as a member and among the spaces that help nurture connection, creativity, and community in Richmond. We are confident that it will continue to serve as a valuable asset to our city's cultural and economic life.

Sincerely,

Rasheeda N. Creighton
Executive Director

From: Ryan Oliver <ryanocodes@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2025 6:35 PM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: Opposition to SUP-152014-2024 (1705 Commonwealth Ave – Lavender Hill)

You don't often get email from ryanocodes@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr. Brown,

I'm writing to express my strong opposition to **SUP-152014-2024**, which would allow **weekly outdoor events for up to 150 people** at Lavender Hill (1705 Commonwealth Ave), including **amplified music from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., any day of the week**.

This property sits at the edge of a quiet, residential neighborhood and was formerly a low-impact office. The proposed use would significantly disrupt the area with **excessive noise and parking issues**, as we've already experienced during previous unpermitted events. Despite concerns raised, the property owner has shown little regard for the impact on neighbors.

Unfortunately, existing noise and parking regulations offer little real-time protection for residents. The most effective way to prevent recurring disruption is to **deny this Special Use Permit**.

I support small businesses that fit within our neighborhood, but large, frequent events with amplified sound are simply not appropriate for this location.

Thank you for considering the well-being of local residents.

Sincerely,
Ryan Oliver
4402 Fitzhugh Ave

From: Kathryn Weakley <weakleykathryn@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 17, 2025 11:31 AM
To: Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: Opposition to SUP-152014-2024

You don't often get email from weakleykathryn@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Jonathan Brown,

While we support Lavender Hill as a small business that complements the character of our neighborhood and complies with current zoning, we cannot support the proposal to host large, frequent events with amplified sound. This type of use is not appropriate for this location.

We are writing to express strong opposition to SUP-152014-2024, which would allow weekly outdoor events for up to 150 attendees at Lavender Hill (1705 Commonwealth Ave), including amplified music from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., any day of the week.

This property sits at the edge of a quiet, residential neighborhood and was previously a low-impact office. The proposed use would bring excessive noise, traffic, and parking issues—disruptions we have already experienced during prior unpermitted events. Despite repeated concerns, the property owner has shown little regard for the impact on neighbors.

In addition to the noise and parking challenges, the business's activities have directly affected our home:

- The business has used our personal trash and recycling bins without permission, leaving trash in the recycling bin that is not collected by the city. This forces us to clean and repurpose our bins and has prevented us from using them ourselves.
- Patrons have trespassed into our fenced yard in attempts to access the business, left trash in our yard late at night, and parked or blocked access in the shared alleyway and our personal driveway—despite clear “no parking” and “no trespassing” signs.
- Even when amplified music stops at 10 p.m., announcements and lingering patrons keep noise levels high well past 11 p.m. Patrons frequently smoke cigarettes and cannabis on site, with smoke drifting into our yard and home.
- The property has also been operated as an Airbnb, with guests using the space for events despite Airbnb rules prohibiting such use. Public reviews of the listing note that the host does not follow published policies, raising serious concerns about future compliance even if a special use permit is granted.

Unfortunately, existing noise and parking regulations provide little real-time protection for residents. The most effective way to prevent ongoing and escalating disruption is to deny this Special Use Permit.

Thank you for considering the well-being and quality of life of local residents.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Weakley, PharmD, MBA

From: Sidney Bragg <sjbragg42@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 6, 2025 12:26 PM
To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council
Cc: Brown, Whitney H. - City Council Office; Brown, Jonathan W. - PDR
Subject: Re: 1705 Commonwealth Special Use Permit, Councilman

Some people who received this message don't often get email from sjbragg42@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear CM Breton, Lavender Hill had an event last Friday(5/30) that involved a tent that covered most of the yard, porta potties and food, vehicles were parked throughout the neighborhood (some parked on corners that made navigation difficult), the preparatory music and announcements were loud enough to be heard over the sound of chainsaws being used to construct a nearby fence. It was a graduation celebration, I could tell because I could hear the loudspeaker being used while in my house. They are currently not permitted for this type of event.

The event was interrupted by a thunderstorm, the result was chaos as people exited the yard and tried to get to their cars, people were in the streets making it dangerous to walk and drive, confusion of drivers trying to leave and blocking intersections. It was an example of how things shouldn't be in a residential neighborhood.

I would like to ask you again to please come and look at this situation. When observed from neighboring yards it becomes apparent that this should not be a large event space as proposed in the SUP. Please come look, we are very concerned about what is already happening, the SUP will only make it worse.

Thanks, Sidney & Debbie Bragg, 4408 Fitzhugh.

On Wed, May 21, 2025 at 8:10 PM Sidney Bragg <sjbragg42@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear CM Breton, we are following up with you regarding SUP-152014-2024 for Lavender Hill at 1705 Commonwealth Ave. The SUP will allow up to 150 people, 52 times per year, to use the facility for outdoor events. These events would include amplified outdoor music till 10pm and could be on any day from 8am -10pm. Our guess is that these events will occur mostly on the nice days in the spring and fall when the residents will also want to enjoy their outdoors areas. This would be a completely inappropriate business model for a residential neighborhood, **it would legalize a nuisance**. Our understanding is that the SUP is currently awaiting approval from the City Attorney's Office and could be scheduled for the June 23th City Council Meeting. We hope that you will oppose the SUP and get other CMs to oppose as well.

We would like to meet with you regarding this matter and possibly show you the layout, it becomes clear how impactful this will be to the local residents. We have also discussed this with other local residents and they are also opposed, we have asked them to contact your office as well.

I hope to be able to discuss this issue with you soon.

Thanks, Sidney & Debbie Bragg, 4408 Fitzhugh Ave, 804-356-8004

On Tue, Jan 21, 2025 at 11:20 PM Breton, Andrew S. - City Council <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov> wrote:

Sidney and Debbie –

I am digging out of the pre-water-crisis emails and I can confirm receipt of your message. I haven't heard yet what the timeline is for bringing this SUP to planning and to Council – thank you for bringing it to my attention.

Aside from this SUP, it does sound like you have concerns about the noise level already. I believe the city has a noise ordinance that you may be able to leverage to restrict the volume levels of your neighbors. Have you had a chance to investigate that angle?

-CM Breton

From: Sidney Bragg <sjbragg42@gmail.com>

Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 12:13 PM

To: Breton, Andrew S. - City Council <Andrew.Breton@rva.gov>

Subject: 1705 Commonwealth Special Use Permit, Councilman

You don't often get email from sjbragg42@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Councilmember Breton,

I'm sorry to throw this at you as you begin your term, however this issue has a near term timeline. My name is Sidney Bragg, my wife Debbie and I live in the 1st District at 4408 Fitzhugh Ave. Debbie has lived here since 1983, I have been here since 2003. There is a business in our community named Lavender Hill, located at 1705 Commonwealth Ave, that is proposing a Special Use Permit(SUP) that will allow up to 150 people, 125 times per year, to use the facility for outdoor events. This business is across the alley from us and resembles the typical house and yard in Sauers Garden community. These events could include outdoor music till 9pm. My guess is that these events will occur mostly on

the nice days in the spring and fall when the local residents will also want to enjoy their outdoor areas. I have attached the proposed draft ordinance and management plan.

Several of the residences near Lavender Hill have already had experience with music coming from Lavender Hill's backyard. It was so loud you could not get away from it, I had pictures vibrating on my walls. The parking was also a problem, with no place available on Commonwealth or Fitzhugh near Commonwealth. These were parties with maybe 50-60 people, I can't imagine how it would work with 150 people. I spoke with the owner after the event and she didn't see it as a problem. There can be no quiet enjoyment of our property with these events taking place across the alley from us. All of the houses along the even side of the 4400/4500 block of Fitzhugh will be significantly impacted, other houses in the area will also get tired of it as more events take place.

The current zoning of the property is designed for use as an office or small business. The following rules apply for a good reason:

"Recreation and entertainment uses, including theaters, except that if such use is situated within 100 feet of any property in any R district, such use shall be located within a completely enclosed building.

No deck, patio, terrace or other area outside a completely enclosed building and used for the service or accommodation of patrons shall be situated within 100 feet of any property in any R district."

The current zoning is designed to restrict large numbers of people and loud events in residential areas as is appropriate.

To be clear, we are not against Lavender Hill having a business or hosting events as long as they abide by the current zoning requirements. We are not in favor of any events which disturb the general peace of the community. As advertised on their website they are "adjacent to a quiet neighborhood" and we would like to keep it that way.

Debbie and I have spoken with most of the folks on the 4400 block of Fitzhugh and all have expressed opposition. I plan to oppose the SUP at any Planning or City Council meetings. I would like to ask you to oppose this SUP. This SUP represents a complete lack of respect for the local residents and is an inappropriate use of property close to residential areas.

I would be happy to discuss this with you, my contact info is shown below.

Thanks for your consideration,

|| Sidney and Debbie Bragg, 804-356-8004, sjbragg42@gmail.com



401 North 3rd Street
Richmond, VA 23219
P: 804.782.2777
F: 804.780.2577

September 16, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

As President & CEO of Richmond Region Tourism, I am pleased to provide this letter of support for Lavender Hill in their request for approval of a Special Use Permit for outdoor dining.

At Richmond Region Tourism, our mission is to drive economic prosperity and enhance the quality of life for the Richmond Region by inspiring visitation and showcasing the area's vibrant culture. In this spirit, Lavender Hill has been a valuable resource to the community. The venue provides a welcoming space where residents and visitors alike come together to exchange ideas, build relationships, and celebrate the region's creative energy.

Lavender Hill is more than a gathering place, it is a thoughtfully designed, hospitable environment that fosters connection and collaboration. Nadia's professionalism and care ensure that events of all sizes are seamless, enjoyable, and reflective of the Richmond Region's spirit of hospitality.

Lavender Hill has consistently demonstrated a commitment to supporting our region's creative, cultural, and business communities. By opening its doors to diverse organizations and events, it strengthens the sense of belonging and shared purpose that makes Richmond such a dynamic place to live, work, and visit.

Richmond Region Tourism is proud to count Lavender Hill among the partners and places that nurture creativity, connection, and community. We are confident that approval of this Special Use Permit will allow Lavender Hill to expand its positive impact and continue serving as an asset to the region's cultural and economic vitality.

Sincerely,

Katherine O'Donnell, President & CEO
Richmond Region Tourism