

From: [Markham, Lory P. - PDR](#)
To: [Thompson, Daniel W. - PDR](#)
Subject: FW: Comment for the Nov. 3rd Planning Commission meeting
Date: Tuesday, October 28, 2014 3:42:22 PM

Please replace previous letter with this one.

From: Charles Pool [mailto:charles_pool@msn.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2014 3:34 PM
To: Markham, Lory P. - PDR
Subject: Comment for the Nov. 3rd Planning Commission meeting

Hello Lory,

Below is a revised comment. Could I please trouble you to include the comment below in the packet to the Planning Commission members for the Nov. 3rd meeting? My letter concerns the proposed SUP for 1650 Overbrook Road.

Thanks!

Charles

Dear Members of the Richmond City Planning Commission,

Please do not approve the proposed Special Use Permit for the proposed residential project at 1650 Overbrook Road (Ordinance 2014-121).

The proposed residential use of the property is not in keeping with the commercial and light-industrial use of the district as shown in the city Master Plan. The creation of jobs is a priority of the city, and the Hermitage Road Warehouse area is one of the few successful light-industrial areas left in Richmond. If this project is approved for residential use, it will be very difficult for the city to deny future requests for converting light-industrial space to residential use in the Hermitage Road district. It would not be in the city's interest for this district, which now is home to a host of light-industry, to become yet another bedroom community -- like we are now seeing in Scott's Addition and Manchester. The city stands to lose far more jobs from converting the Hermitage Road district to residential use than the city will gain from the new Stone Brewery, which the city and state have lured with millions of dollars of incentives. Therefore, approval of this Special Use Permit would be detrimental to the general welfare of the city because of the resulting job loss.

The proposed project also would result in great adverse impact to the historic building,

which the applicant himself nominated to the State and National Register of Historic Places. Even the applicant was quoted in the June 16, 2014 edition of the Richmond Times Dispatch, discussing the harm of adding many new window and door apertures at 1650 Overbrook: "If you turn the walls of these warehouses into Swiss cheese, it destroys the historical character of the buildings," Salomonsky said."

The applicant for the SUP, Louis Salomonsky was also the applicant for the Hermitage Road Warehouse Historic District, and inaccurate information was submitted to the Va. Department of Historic Resources (DHR) regarding the dating of 1650 Overbrook Road.

The historic district application submitted to DHR by Salomonsky dated the huge two-story addition at 1650 Overbrook Road to the 1960s, later than the period of significance of the historic district. After I submitted to DHR a copy of the 1956 building permit for the two story addition, DHR determined that the addition was constructed during the period of significance of the district, and determined that the two-story addition is a contributing structure to the historic district. New door and window openings in contributing historic buildings are discouraged in the Secretary of Interior Standards of Rehabilitation. Subsequently, Louis Salomonsky withdrew his application for state and federal historic tax credits for the project, and he has now submitted new plans to the city that would add a multitude of more new window and door apertures to the building and raise the number of residential units from 173 to 205.

It is absurd to accept the assertion that this gigantic warehouse, stretching for three football fields in length, cannot be adapted for commercial and/or light industrial use. Other tobacco warehouses built as part of the same Export Leaf complex are now being used for commercial use, including the Central Va. Food Bank.

In summary, please do not approve the Special Use Permit request to convert 1650 Overbrook Road to residential use because of the job loss that would result in that district and because of the harm to the historic building that would result for adding the multitude of new door and window openings. While this project might enrich one individual, it would be very detrimental to the general welfare of the city of Richmond.

Sincerely,

Charles Pool
421-1/2 S. Laurel Street
Richmond, VA 23220
(804) 788-0359