

Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR

From: maarn95@comcast.net
Sent: Tuesday, September 08, 2015 10:54 AM
To: Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR
Cc: Wortham, Ann
Subject: ORD 2015-157

Mr. Ebinger,

I am writing in opposition to the proposed Special Use Permit for the property located at 718 North 23rd Street (ORD 2015-157). I respectfully request that the Permit be denied for the following reasons.

1) The application states that R-63 zoning restricts lot coverage to 65%, while the proposed coverage would be 81% (roughly 25% larger). Proposed open space is 16% while the zoning indicates that open space be not less than 30% of the total lot area. The proposed development has the appearance of "fitting a square peg into a round hole" if this much deviation is requested. In addition, the proposed development would extend to the sidewalk on all streets; thus, effectively obstructing the view of oncoming traffic for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers alike.

2) The proposed development poses concerns from a public safety standpoint. No traffic study has been completed on the immediate area. The subject property is located at the point where a narrow side street (Jessamine) meets a wider street (North 23rd). This juncture is located slightly northwest of the intersection of North 23rd Street and M Street, and cannot be considered a part of the 23rd/M intersection. There is but a two way stop at the intersection of 23rd and M Streets, giving traffic on 23rd Street the right of way. There is no other traffic control for any of the traffic along these streets. In addition, there are no dedicated crosswalks for the pedestrian traffic that exists in the subject area. The intersection of 23rd and M Streets is also an active GRTC bus route, with busses changing direction from M Street (westward) to 23rd Street (northward), and reversing from 23rd Street (southward) to M Street (eastward). There are bus stops on both the east and west sides of 23rd Street. The bus stop on the west side of 23rd Street is situated at the point where Jessamine joins 23rd. As the property exists at this time, drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians have an unobstructed view of traffic as they merge into and off of 23rd Street and Jessamine. Even though there are no crosswalks, pedestrians can safely cross from one street to another with the existing unobstructed view. During the times there are church activities taking place, cars double park on either side of 23rd Street to let out passengers, creating both pedestrian and vehicular traffic congestion. Traffic flow will also be obstructed during the time trucks are parked and making deliveries to the proposed business.

3) Another component of the public safety concern is the availability of on street parking. Although a parking study was submitted, I feel that it does not adequately reflect the parking congestion that occurs on a weekly basis around the subject property. The majority of supporting views are taken during daytime hours and do not accurately reflect the parking demands during evening hours. The property is situated across the street (23rd) from a church with a large and active congregation. During the week, there is at least one night that on street parking is nonexistent, and the dedicated parking lots that the congregation owns are full. While the proposed commercial use may be geared toward pedestrian clientele, the history of like commercial uses indicates that patrons drive from many other parts of the city and will inevitably create more than anticipated parking needs. There are many evenings that Jessamine Street becomes the proverbial one-lane bridge with two way traffic. Additionally, the existence of two GRTC bus stops severely limits the availability of viable parking.

Under R-63 zoning, four parking spaces would be normally required. No parking requirement is recommended in the staff report.

4) While no one can argue that another restaurant option is a welcome addition to the Church Hill area, the side and scope of the proposed development and the impact on pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular traffic has been downplayed. Development and infill, as outlined in R-63 zoning, has made a positive change in the area. However, similar businesses (eg: The Roosevelt, SubRosa Bakery, Union Market, Alamo BBQ, Metzger Bar and Butchery) are housed in existing properties that have undergone an adaptive reuse. There is an ample supply of like properties in the general neighborhood that could successfully house another restaurant.

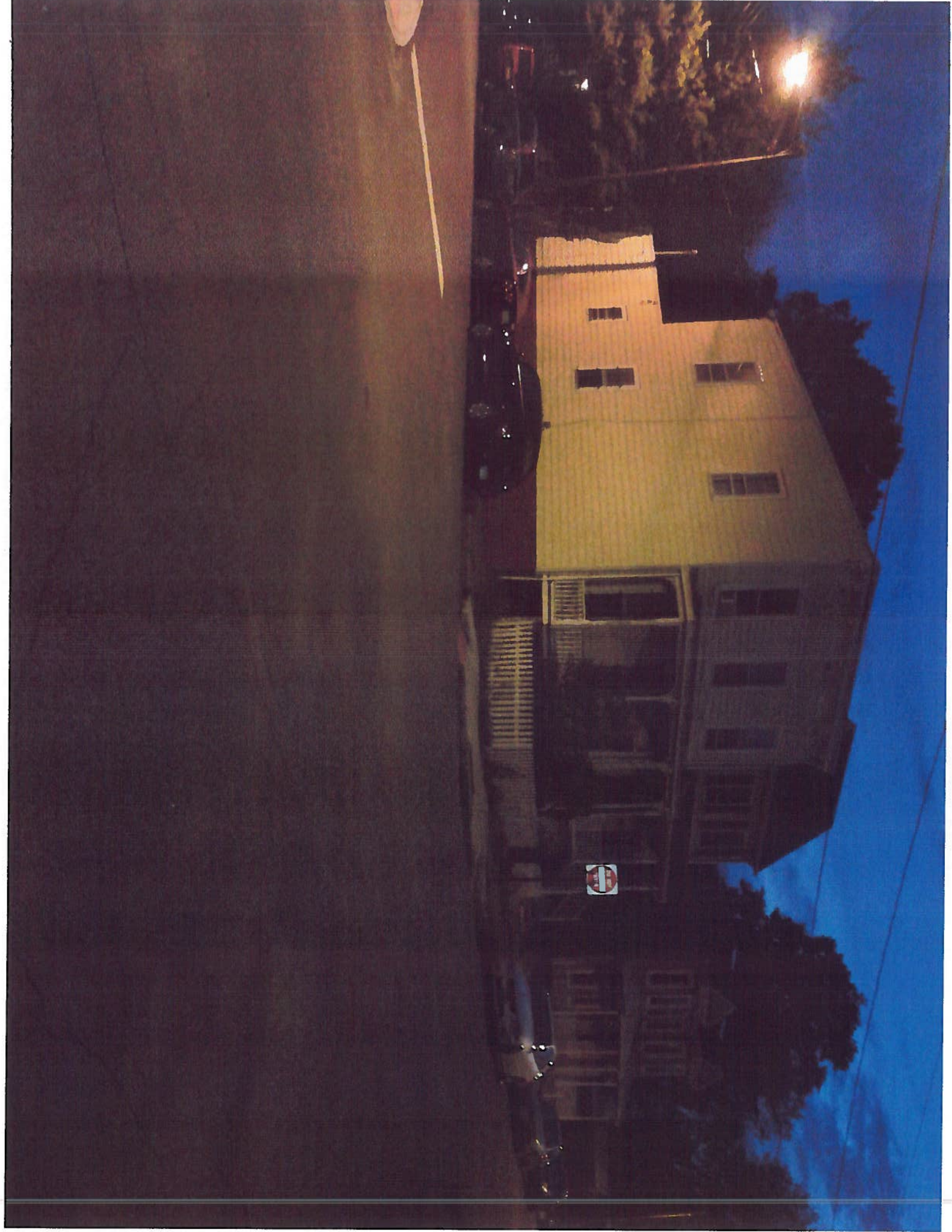
5) The marketing strategy of promoting the commercial use of the proposed development has been effective. However, community support, particularly from the Union Hill Civic Association, has not been unanimous. Additionally, adjacent property owners and support obtained by the developer include interested parties to the development. The developer owns adjacent properties, the developer has represented supporters on a broker/client basis, and contractors that have an interest in the development have signed a letter of support.

In conclusion, I respectfully request that this Special Use Permit be denied based on public safety considerations.

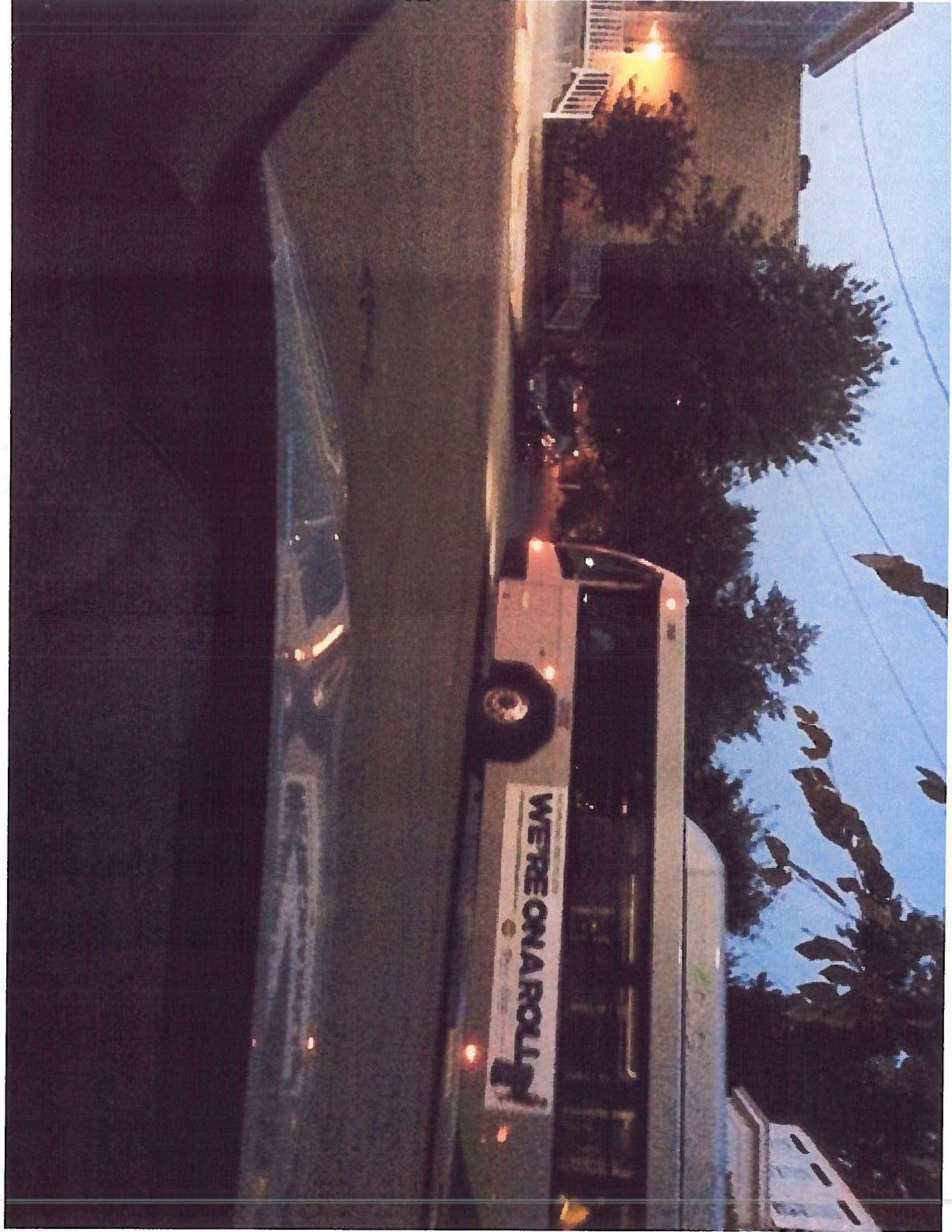
Thank you for your consideration,

Nancy J. Lampert









WE'RE ON A ROLL!

























