

From: Mike Farrell
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Fwd: Disposition of statues
Date: Saturday, January 1, 2022 12:19:01 PM

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Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Mike Farrell [REDACTED]
Date: January 1, 2022 at 12:17:46 PM EST
To: Mike Farrell [REDACTED]
Subject: Disposition of statues

To: RTD Letters [REDACTED]
Subject: disposition of statues

Dear city council

I am a long time Fan resident who voted for Joe Biden, Ralph Northam and Terry McCauliffe. I am glad the confederate statues came down BUT I would want state publicly my opposition to your plan to place the former monuments to the Confederate generals in the the black history museum.

To be quite frank this does nothing to promote unity or healing in our city and is much more like pouring salt into the wound of people who were upset about the tumultuous events of last year.

This is akin to an obsequious self promoting touchdown dance in the end zone instead of a much more dignified handing the ball to the referee after a score ala Jim Brown or Barry Sanders.

Folks, it is Democratic far-left over reach like this that ends up electing Glen Youngkin Governor and a Republican majority to the Generally Assembly.

This is just "in your face" gloating that pleases a small segment of the democratic base to antagonize conservatives which also alienates moderates.

And you wonder why you lose statewide and national elections? Can't you accept victory and move on without gloating?

These statues may not have been appropriate for the most prominent thoroughfare

in our city but they would be a useful addition to historical civil war battlefields where these men actually led their troops, regardless of how misguided their cause may have been.

Why not place Lee at Appomattox where his troops were camped as he surrendered to Grant? Or in Gettysburg at the bottom of the hill where he actually sat on his horse observing the hopeless debacle of "Pickett's charge"?

Why not place Jackson at Chancellorsville where he was killed or in Manassas where he got his nick name?

These battlegrounds could be a dignified place to finally put to rest these figures that still divide us today. It would enable us to have civil conversations about an uncivil war.

Your proposal just makes everything worse.

Remember the treaty of Versailles.

Please try to be magnanimous in victory and understand that the many people throughout the state and country, who have ambivalent feelings about all that has had happened in the past year, matter too.

Michael T. Farrell
Richmond

Sent from my iPhone

From: Christopher Homan
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Traffic Cameras
Date: Monday, January 3, 2022 3:34:59 PM

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Traffic cameras are a bad tool used to make money off the backs of local citizens. We already have a toll road as the main thoroughfare through downtown Richmond. Please do not put speed cameras in. Its a gross abuse of power. It violates any real sense of due process pushing citizens to need to prove their innocence. For that matter, traffic enforcement in Richmond is terrible already. Maybe have police do their jobs and you won't have the same issues with speeding that we currently do.

Chris Homan

From: [Robins, Amy E. - City Council Office](#)
To: [Reid, Candice D. - Clerk's Office](#); [Warren Jr., Richard A. - Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: RES. 2021-R065
Date: Wednesday, December 22, 2021 6:46:43 PM
Attachments: [Semmes Avenue.msg](#)

Candice/RJ,

Can you please add the attached emails as a support letter to RES. 2021-R065?

Thank you,

Amy

Amy Robins (she/her)

5th District Liaison

Office of The Honorable Stephanie A. Lynch

Richmond City Council

900 East Broad Street, Suite 305

Richmond, Virginia 23219

Office: 804-646-5724

Email: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Warren Jr., Richard A. - Clerk's Office

From: Pippa Holloway [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, December 22, 2021 7:23 AM
To: Gleason, Christopher M - Police Captain; Saunders, Lincoln - CAO; Stoney, Levar M. - Mayor; Gray, Jeff L. - CAO; Sawyer, Michael B. - DPW; Vincent, Bobby - DPW; Robinson, Torrence S. - DPW; Khara, M S. - DPW; Lynch, Stephanie A. - City Council Office; Robins, Amy E. - City Council Office
Subject: Semmes Avenue

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Dear City Council and Mayor Stoney,

I moved to Richmond this past summer, to a house at 26th and Semmes Avenue. I am appalled by the traffic situation on Semmes Avenue, so I am writing to request that you take this issue seriously and take action. In the five months that I've lived here, I have witnessed so many serious accidents within two blocks of my house, including three serious accidents directly in front of my house and several more fender benders. The car that flipped and hit the house yesterday hit the house next door to us. You can see our white brick house in the news photos, but unfortunately you can't see the PLEASE SLOW DOWN sign that our Rudolph decoration is holding. <https://www.msn.com/en-us/lifestyle/home-and-garden/vehicle-crashes-into-front-porch-of-richmond-home>

I'm grateful for the increased police presence on this street, but it's not enough. Cars regularly go 50 mph up and down this road. I am sitting at my breakfast table writing you right now at 7 am and they are racing by. After 10 pm they go even faster -- we regularly hear cars that must be going around 70 mph especially on weekends.

Architectural barriers on Semmes to calm traffic on Semmes would be a game changer but I understand that's complicated since it's a state route. A traffic light at the new (and growing) development at Belle Heights is going to have to happen as that site expands. Is there any chance of putting it in sooner rather than later? Photo speed ticketing would also be huge, especially if it helped with the situation at night.

A 20 mph speed limit on side streets might help also. We almost got hit the other day by a car coming up 26th and turning onto Semmes at a green light. By "almost got hit" I mean that we screamed and ran and just barely avoided being hit. Cars stopped to check we were ok. We certainly support RES. 2021-R065.

Please help us fix this situation. I love Richmond and love my neighborhood but frankly I'm appalled that the traffic on our street is so out of hand. You have the data that documents this is a high injury site and a problem. Please address it.

thanks
Pippa Holloway
[REDACTED]

From: Elena Zweerink
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Vote yes to Ordinance 2021-348
Date: Friday, January 7, 2022 12:57:12 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I would like to submit the following public comment for the January 10th Council meeting:

I am writing to urge you to vote yes to Ordinance 2021-348 to create a formal Office of Sustainability to coordinate and implement the adaptation, mitigation, and sustainability efforts undertaken by the City. Richmond city needs an official office to focus on matters of sustainability, environmental justice, and climate change. Richmond is already facing many consequences of climate change, including dangerous air quality, flooding, storms, and heat waves. We need an office with the ability to make swift changes in our energy systems and prepare Richmond for a more extreme climate. As a young person in my 20s, I am terrified of a future where these preparations are not made. Additionally, we need an office that will put our most vulnerable, marginalized communities first when it comes to climate adaptation efforts.

Thank you,
Elena Zweerink

From: Meg Lessard
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Written Comment in Support of Ordinance 2021-348 (Office of Sustainability)
Date: Sunday, January 9, 2022 7:58:02 AM

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Hello,

Please see my comment below in regards to Ordinance 2021-348, that is being discussed on 1/10. I would appreciate it to be incorporated into the written public comments. Thank you!

I am a Richmond resident (district 6), mom, and health researcher. I am writing to support the creation of the Office of Sustainability. The effects of the climate crisis are being felt everyday and our city should continue its efforts to implement education and action to mitigate the effects. I appreciate the work of the RVAGreen2050 plan and hope the creation of this office can provide the plan with the measures necessary for implementation and further generate the action needed in the public and private sectors to make the changes and investments needed. Our work today will dramatically impact the lives of our children and I would encourage the City Council to consider future impacts in the health of our city and community when they reflect on this, and all, proposals.

Best,
Meg Lessard



From: Sacred Burial Ground Historical Reclamation Project
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Comments on Shockoe Bottom for City Council 10 Jan 2022
Date: Sunday, January 9, 2022 11:22:03 PM
Attachments: [Comments on Shockoe Bottom for City Council - 1.10.22.docx](#)

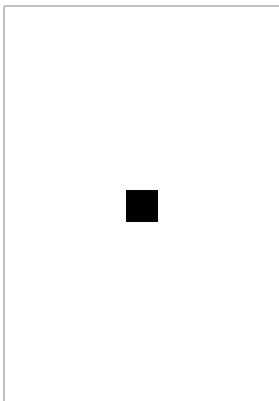
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Please see the attached comments in reference to Items 1 and 5 on the Consent Agenda for tonight's meeting.

Thank you,

Ana Edwards, Chair

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The Sacred Ground Historical Reclamation Project was established in 2004, an initiative of the Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality. Learn more at SacredGroundProject.net
#sacred_ground_project #[defenders.va](#)

To: The Honorable Members of Richmond City Council:

At its regular meeting on January 10, 2022, Richmond City Council is expected to approve two ordinances dealing with funding for Shockoe Bottom, Richmond's downtown district that once was the epicenter of the U.S. domestic slave trade.

The ordinances are:

Number 2021-270, which would add "\$1 million to the Heritage Campus for the purpose of procuring design services and associated community engagement."

And Number 2021-337, which would give "\$300,000 to the National Slavery Museum Foundation for the support of planning and fundraising activities for the establishment of a national slavery museum at the Lumpkin's Slave Jail / Devil's Half-Acre site in Richmond."

We have not come here tonight to oppose this funding. Rather, we applaud the fact that the City is posed to finally begin the concrete work of reclaiming and properly memorializing the sacred ground of Shockoe Bottom, something we have spent the past 20 years trying to encourage the city government to do.

But we do have some concerns, and some suggestions for addressing those concerns.

Let's first address the \$1 million intended for the Heritage Campus.

We have spent the last two years actively and in good faith participating in the Shockoe Alliance, a collaborative process initiated by Mayor Stoney that produced a "small area plan" for Shockoe Bottom that is supposed to guide future development of the area.

That plan for a 10-block Heritage Campus incorporates the community-generated proposal for a nine-acre memorial park that would include the Devil's Half-Acre, site of Robert Lumpkin's slave jail; the African Burial Ground, once covered by a state-owned parking lot; and two more blocks east of the CSX railroad tracks where slave jails owned by Silas Omohundro, William Goodwin and other slave traders once stood, along with many trader offices and supporting businesses.

The Heritage Campus would be much more than just a much-needed urban park with landscaping and walking paths. Proposed ideas include a museum or interpretive center, public art, interactive kiosks, genealogy center, conference and performance spaces, a symbolic recreation of Shockoe Creek and more, as money becomes available.

Thanks to the relentless advocacy work carried out by dozens of organizations and hundreds of individuals, it is now well-known that so many people were sold out of the 40-50 auction houses of Shockoe Bottom that today the majority of African-Americans could likely trace some ancestry to this small historic area. There are few places in the country that could claim to be as important to understanding the history of today's Black community and, indeed, the United States as a whole - and few places that could draw more tourists to explore this story.

That is why we are deeply concerned that the City's attention could turn away from the Heritage Campus proposed by the Shockoe Alliance to an up-to-\$220 million national slavery museum being promoted by a private foundation about which the public knows very little.

In July of 2000, Mayor Stoney held a press conference to announce that he had \$3.5 million available for moving ahead with developing the nine-acre Shockoe Bottom Memorial Park, the proposal for which came out of an open community process sponsored by our organization, the Sacred Ground Historical Reclamation Project of the Virginia Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality.

It later came out that the amount available was actually \$1.7 million, and that was to go for procuring the privately-owned lots located within the proposed nine-acre memorial park. Now we have recently learned that that money was never spent and the privately owned lots were never acquired.

As advocates, we have been left to first applaud the announcement of the \$3.5 million, then express concern that that amount was reduced to \$1.7 million, and now to state our further concern that the private lots have not yet been acquired. This is not an example of municipal transparency and does not lay the groundwork for community trust going forward.

Further, the \$1 million now being proposed is to go “to the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities' Enslaved African Heritage Campus project ... for the purpose of procuring design services and associated community engagement.”

Procuring design services from what entity? Another virtually all-white company like SmithGroup JJR that has received most of the money already spent on design for the slavery museum?

And what kind of community engagement? The same kind of previous public meetings that allowed residents to express opinions but without any real decision-making power?

Then there is the issue of the National Slavery Museum Foundation.

This entity was founded in 2011 by a few executive board members of City Council's Slave Trail Commission. Sometime in 2019, without public notice or input, those board members dissolved the commission, leaving Richmond, for the first time in decades, without an official body tasked with preserving local sites related to slavery and the slave trade.

The commission itself had operated for years without producing legally required meeting minutes or detailed financial reports. It refused to process applications from people asking to join the commission. In the end, all its few remaining members had exceeded their term limits as laid out by the City.

As for the museum foundation, after its first few years it was “suspended” by the IRS for failing to file tax returns. Today the foundation seems to have no online presence, no public list of its board of directors - if there is one - or any financial reports. This is not a record of openness, transparency or competency.

The only thing we know for certain is that the foundation's three directors were members of the former Slave Trail Commission's executive board, and that its president is the former commission chair - the same chair who previously promoted putting a baseball stadium in Shockoe Bottom.

The foundation's stated mission is to design, build and operate a slavery museum on the site of Lumpkin's jail, known as the Devil's Half-Acre, one of a half-dozen similar jails once located in Shockoe Bottom. Neither the Slave Trail Commission nor the foundation have shown any interest in memorializing the rest of Shockoe Bottom. In fact, to this day, a decade after a long community struggle resulted in reclaiming the African Burial Ground, that site still has no protective zoning.

The proposed museum was originally estimated to cost \$100 million. That's \$30 million more than the International African American Museum being built in Charleston, South Carolina, to explore that city's central role in the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. Now we are told that the actual cost of the Richmond museum will be between \$180 and \$220 million, because someone finally remembered that the museum is to be built in a floodplain - something that advocates have been pointing out for years.

The private, for-profit company chosen by the City to come up with a plan for the proposed museum is SmithGroup JJR. Museum promoters have touted the fact that SmithGroup worked on the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. What they don't mention is that SmithGroup was one of four companies that worked on that project, and while the other three are Black-owned, SmithGroup is a virtually all-white company.

In fact, out of 49 principals listed on its website, only one is African-American. One. This demonstrated lack of commitment to internal diversity and inclusion alone should have been enough to disqualify the company from leading the effort to tell the story of slavery and the slave trade. Instead it has already received more than \$2.5 million in City money, and is poised to receive much more.

We want to make it clear that we are not opposed to creating a museum in Shockoe Bottom devoted to exploring the city's role in the domestic slave trade. What we are questioning is both the cost of the proposed museum and its location.

No one denies that memorializing the site of Lumpkin's jail, which after Emancipation became the first meeting place for the school that would eventually become the HBCU Virginia Union University, must be an important part of any Shockoe Bottom memorialization. The Smithsonian Magazine called its discovery in 2008 the most important archeological find in the country in a decade. The proposal to remove the fill now covering the site in order to reveal the still-intact stone foundation is a good one and should be a significant part of the Heritage Campus.

But that does not mean the site requires a \$220 million structure, built in a floodplain.

Both the museum proponents and the Shockoe Alliance small-area plan call for an interim "interpretive center" or museum to be constructed in the Main Street Station Train Shed, which already exists within the footprint of the Heritage Campus.

The Train Shed was part of the \$51 million federally-funded project that in 2003 renovated the Main Street Station. It's a majestic building that provides a panoramic view of the proposed memorial area and overlooks the Devil's Half-Acre. The City describes it as "Richmond's premier venue, an expanse of steel and glass that's two football fields in length." It's a beautiful space that can accommodate thousands of guests, and the City has yet to assign it any permanent use.

And it's already elevated above the floodplain.

On Nov. 16, 2021, NSMF board members Rev. Ben Campbell and Rev. Sylvester Turner made a presentation about their museum project to the Virginia House of Delegates Appropriations Committee, whose membership includes NSMF chair Delegate Delores McQuinn. In their presentation, Campbell and Turner included the estimated cost of "the development of pilot and experimental exhibitions which can be sited in the Main Street Station in advance of the construction of the museum building."

Their estimate? \$350,000 - \$700,000.

As of the end of 2021, SmithGroup JJR had already received more than \$2.5 million in contracts for just the “pre-design” stage of the museum project.

It seems obvious that the Main Street Station Train Shed would be the best permanent site for any museum or interpretive center, starting modestly and expanding as public and private funding becomes available.

And in public meeting after public meeting, the community’s clear preference has been for an expanded memorial site, not a single museum building.

At the Appropriations Committee meeting, a handout made available to the committee members stated that “The Smith Group was hired to lead us through a process for development of the Lumpkin Jail Site, over 500 people from every community group engaged in a series of workshops and focus groups. (sic) The overwhelming consensus was that we should build a museum.”

That assertion is a total misrepresentation of public opinion on this matter.

Beginning in 2015, five organizations held more than 20 public hearings on the future of Shockoe Bottom. First were the five public meetings hosted by the Sacred Ground Historical Reclamation Project of the Virginia Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality, a process that produced - by unanimous vote - the proposal for a nine-acre memorial park. Then another series of meetings was held under the name of Richmond Speaks, organized by then-Mayor Dwight Jones. Then came the hearings sponsored by the Rose Fellowship at the request of Mayor Stoney; the meetings held by the Center for Design Engagement, associated with the University of Massachusetts-Amherst; and finally the meetings held by SmithGroup JJR.

We attended virtually all of these meetings, and in not one - including those organized by SmithGroup - was there “overwhelming consensus” for a museum. Instead, concerns were raised about the cost, the floodplain and competition for visitors and funding with existing Richmond museums, especially the nearby Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia.

Rather, the overwhelming sentiment was for the community-generated proposal for the nine-acre Shockoe Bottom Memorial Park. The popular view was that the City should acquire the nine acres, impose protective zoning, landscape the site and then move to create the other park features **as money became available**.

This still seems to us to be a reasonable plan, expanded to the 10-block Heritage Campus proposed by the Shockoe Alliance.

These are our proposals for addressing what we view as serious flaws in the present process for memorializing Shockoe Bottom:

First: Going forward, there must be complete public transparency about what decisions are being made, how they are being made and who is benefiting from them.

Second: There must be a formal mechanism for meaningful participation in the decision-making process by representatives of the Black community and its allies who have demonstrated a long-time commitment to the reclamation and proper memorialization of Shockoe Bottom.

And third: There must be a firm commitment that any financial benefits to be realized from the planning, construction and operation of a physical memorial in Shockoe Bottom - contracts, construction jobs, operational jobs, internships, marketing opportunities, etc. - go primarily to the descendant community.

We applaud Mayor Stoney, City Council President Cynthia Newbille and former Slave Trail Commission Chair Delores McQuinn for finally, in July 2020, endorsing the community proposal for a nine-acre Shockoe Bottom Memorial Park. We recognize the leading role that the former Slave Trail Commission played in the construction of the Richmond Slave Trail (which advocates refer to as the Trail of Enslaved Africans); in the erection of the Reconciliation Statue at 15th and East Main streets; and especially the excavation of the Devil's Half-Acre.

However, it also must be remembered that some of these same former members of the commission, including its chair, regrettably worked to undermine the long community struggle that ultimately succeeded in forcing Virginia Commonwealth University to remove its parking lot that desecrated the African Burial Ground; actively promoted Mayor Jones' proposal to build a commercial baseball stadium on the site of slave jails in Shockoe Bottom; and for years ignored the community demand for a nine-acre memorial park.

While these individuals deserve a place at the table, the future of Shockoe Bottom cannot be left solely in their hands.

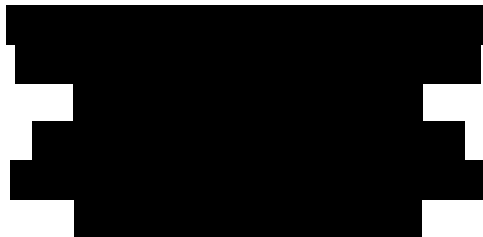
We respectfully ask members of council to consider our concerns and our proposals for addressing them. Together, we can ensure that future generations will applaud our collective efforts to reclaim and properly memorialize one of the most important and as yet undeveloped sites in the entire country, not only for the Black community, but for the country as a whole.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

ANA EDWARDS - Chair, Sacred Ground Historical Reclamation Project of the Virginia Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality

PHIL WILAYTO - Editor, The Virginia Defender newspaper

Virginia Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality



From: Stanley M. Baker
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Cc: [John & Lauren Trotta](#)
Subject: 3101 E Marshall St
Date: Monday, January 3, 2022 12:58:33 PM

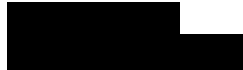
CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

To the members of city council,

I am writing to let all city council members know that I am vehemently opposed to the proposed design for 3101 E Marshall St. It breaks so many zoning violations that it is laughable not to mention completely ugly. It is also a vicious attempt to satisfy the greed of the developers at the expense of the neighbors. We have rules for a very good reason and this is a perfect example.

There are plenty of other GOOD examples of appropriate development even on the very same block and right across 31st St!

Stan Baker



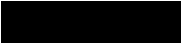
From: Lucie Blanchard
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Ordinance 2021-208
Date: Monday, January 3, 2022 3:57:03 PM
Attachments: [Letter Ordinance 2021-208.docx](#)

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Ms. Reid, City Clerk:
Would you please see that this letter gets to City Council Members before Jan 10th meeting.
Thank you so much,
Lucie Blanchard

--

Lucie Blanchard



For December 10, 2022 meeting
Ordinance 2021-208

Dear City Council Members:

It has taken a long time for this Ordinance to reach you. It has been stressful for all parties; and although the developer has made some compromises it isn't enough and I encourage you to vote no on **Ordinance 2021-208** (3101 East Marshall); for you to encourage the developer and owner to make some real changes to the proposed plan.

1. The proposed project will have a “*substantial impact*”, per letter from City Planning and Commission of Architectural Review sent 2019-2020 mailed to neighbors within 150 feet.
 - Parking issues: 9 units and 16 tenants.
This is a block and half of cars. In reality only 3 parking spots provided because of column holding up cantilevered part of building.
 - Parking/traffic: Patrons of proposed restaurant/proposed yoga studio.
 - Extra traffic: private garbage collection, grease barrel pickup, and food delivery.
 - Height and balconies in back reducing privacy for neighbors south and east, and shading yards east of it.
2. Zoning is commitment of the city to protect a neighborhood's character by building within guidelines of zoning requirements.
 - Proposed project doesn't meet most features of R63 zoning. This is a predominantly residential neighborhood of two story buildings.
 - Not compelling enough to ask for all the waivers and SUPs.
 - Could be a smaller project and meet requirements of City's future plans.
3. Property is in the Church Hill/Chimborazo Historic District.
 - Is not compatible with historic features of the area in regard to size, scale and proportion. Will overshadow 2 story houses.
4. No overwhelming consensus to support building project- 2 plus years of back and forth- developer just moving chairs around on the deck.
 - At least 3 meetings with Church Hill Association HPLUC.
 - At least 3 meetings with CAR.
 - 3 meetings with City Planning- vote to recommend a close 4-3.
 - A less than enthusiastic staff report supporting SUPs.
 - No substantial letters of support. “Good infill project”

There is no compelling reason to overbuild on this corner. I am excited about new commercial endeavors and improvements on this corner. I would like to encourage the investor to respect the zoning and build something that is at least half the size, fits in better with the neighborhood, will not aggravate the parking situation, and provide larger apartments that might attract long-term tenants.

Thank you for your consideration and time,
Lucie Blanchard

████████████████████

From: Andrea Sidari Kost
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Cc: [Kevin Kost](#)
Subject: Re: Agenda Item #43 -
Date: Friday, January 7, 2022 10:32:09 AM

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Hello,

Thank you for all the work you do for our city. Kevin (copied on this email) and I are Richmond residents and home-owners, and write to you today in opposition of the 3101 E Marshall Street project -- ordinance #2021-08 and agenda item #43 on Monday's city council agenda. Thank you for your time and attention.

We oppose this special use permit because it is too expansive for the corner. It remains a large, multi family, multi use property without adequate parking on a small plot of land in a historic district.

It breaks many development construction zones for this zone. It is inappropriate in scale and style. It will negatively impact neighbors in many ways. In addition, this planned expansive mixed-use building is located at an already hazardous round-about intersection - which is in front of an elementary school. It will limit visibility -- and add parking, pedestrian, and traffic challenges.

This is very concerning given the proximity to the elementary school, student pedestrians and other pedestrians alike.

As you know, a special use permit creates expectations to zoning regulations and ordinances, and we feel the use of 3101 E Marshall is not compelling enough to warrant this exception.

Thank you again for your attention and for all the work you do,

Andrea & Kevin Kost


From: Melissa Newel
To: [City Clerk's Office; Campbell, Eva B. - PDR; Newbille, Cynthia I. - City Council](#)
Subject: Ordinance # 2021-208 - Letter of Opposition and Appeal of CAR Decision
Date: Friday, January 7, 2022 3:06:31 PM
Attachments: [Ord. #2021-208. Newel Opposition \(1.7.22\).pdf](#)

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Please see my letter of today's date attached. Thank you.

January 7, 2022

VIA EMAIL: [REDACTED]

City Council
City of Richmond
900 E. Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Re: **Opposition to SUP - 3101 E. Marshall St.; Ordinance 2021-208**

Dear Councilmembers:

As a property owner within 150 feet of the proposed development project at 3101 E. Marshall Street within the St. John's Church Old and Historic District, I am writing (1) to urge the City Council to deny the Special Use Permit ("SUP") requested; or, (2) to postpone the vote on the requested SUP to allow the Commission of Architectural Review ("CAR") the opportunity to address the developer's response to outstanding conditions imposed by CAR and to review the developer's recent (in the words of the developer's representative) "significant changes."

This letter also serves as an appeal, pursuant to city ordinance Chapter 30, Article IX, Division 4, Sec. 30-930.8, of CAR's issuance of "Approve with Conditions". I have provided the required \$500 fee associated with such an appeal.

Opposition To Requested SUP

At the outset, it is important to recognize that I am not opposed to the mixed-use development of the existing building and empty lot at 3101-3105 E. Marshall Street. Rather, I oppose the proposed project due to the developer's current design which seeks many variances from City codes to create a building that is incompatible with the Historic District and would contribute to the environmental and public health issues facing Church Hill.

- ***Granting An SUP To Allow The Developer To Not Comply With Height, Lot Area and Width, Lot Coverage, and Open Space Requirements Will Result In A Building That Has A Mass And Scale Not Compatible With The Historic District***

The proposed project is in an area of two-story residential structures with rear yards, and two-story commercial spaces on the opposite corner of E. Marshall St., within the St. John's Church Old and Historic District. The proposed design is in excess of three stories in height and has a mass of 5,400 square feet extending to the edge of the two property lots with no green space. The result is a massive rectangular box which would dwarf the surrounding historic residential structures and is not in keeping with the Old Historic District. Such a development is contrary to Richmond 300's Goal 3 of historic preservation.

- ***Granting An SUP To Allow The Developer To Not Comply With Yard And Open Space Requirements Will Increase The Urban Heat Effect And Associated Heat-Related Illness In Church Hill***

As a formerly “red-lined” district, Church Hill has less planted trees and greenery than other neighborhoods in the city. Given its proximity to downtown, Church Hill also suffers from the urban heat effect of downtown’s higher temperatures due to the density of asphalt and buildings. The result is Church Hill residents suffer higher temperatures and have a higher rate of heat-related illnesses than other areas of Richmond. I have included the following links for further information: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/08/24/climate/racism-redlining-cities-global-warming.html>. <https://www.epa.gov/green-infrastructure/reduce-urban-heat-island-effect>; <https://toolkit.climate.gov/case-studies/where-do-we-need-shade-mapping-urban-heat-islands-richmond-virginia>.

We know that green space and trees help protect people from the effects of climate change – they filter greenhouse gases and cool the surrounding area. However, the developer’s proposed project removes all existing green space and trees (including an existing sidewalk city tree) to create a 5,000+ square foot building which extends to the property line of both lots. No side, rear, or front yards are included in the design. The proposed development serves to both **remove** existing green space and shade canopy while **adding** a heat-generating structure. The proposed project is contrary to Richmond 300’s commitment to environmental justice and its Goals 15, 16, and 17.

- ***Granting An SUP To Allow The Developer To Not Comply With Yard, Open Space, Height, Building Mass, And Setback Requirements Will Increase The Potential For Flooding Issues***

Green space, tress, and shrubbery also serve to absorb rainwater. Since this proposed development’s SUP process was initiated in 2019, the increased intensity of rainfalls in Richmond have been well-documented. The prediction is for more intense rainfalls to come. The proposed project’s design removes existing trees and greenery, thereby decreasing natural rainwater absorption. The fact that the proposed project’s roof water run-off is designed to be directed to the city’s sewer system does not alleviate the issue. Because the design eliminates all green space for rainwater to filter into, the result is an **increase** of water being directed to the City’s fragile sewer system and adds to flooding issues as the sewer’s capacity is exceeded. Development in RVA must be a balanced effort of increasing housing and commercial opportunities while minimizing the environmental and public health concerns of its citizens. Were the proposed project to contain four or five residential units – rather than the requested nine -- and maintain the City’s current requirements for yard space, the available housing on the lots would still be more than doubled.

Appeal of CAR’s Recommendation of Approval With Conditions and Postponement of Vote

CAR issued an “Approve with Conditions” notice in 2020 specifying **17** conditions to be met, at least three of which were to be submitted to the CAR Chair and Vice-Chair for review and approval, in connection with the proposed development. To date, CAR has failed to specify whether all necessary conditions have been met. Moreover, the developer has proposed “significant changes” to the design at the most recent Planning Commission meeting concerning the project (October 18, 2021) which CAR has not yet had the opportunity to review.

As the Councilmembers are aware, CAR is charged with “reviewing all exterior changes to structures within the city’s Old and Historic Districts” and advising City Council and property owners “in matters involving historic resources relating to appropriate land use, zoning, and other issues” including whether a proposed project is “compatible with the design, scale, materials, color, height, setback, and other pertinent features of the old and historic district in which it is located.” Section 30-930.7. By issuing an “Approve with Conditions” - with no citizen involvement or review of the developer’s response to CAR’s imposed conditions - RVA residents (and Councilmembers) are denied the opportunity to view the *actual* proposed development prior to the vote on the SUP. The lack of transparency surrounding this project is troubling.

The 15-day appeal period from CAR’s issuance of a decision has arguably been waived, or at a minimum, tolled. RVA citizens were not given the opportunity to appeal CAR’s conditional decision as a multitude of the conditions imposed remained outstanding. Such a process effectively works as an end run to prevent an appeal of concerned neighboring property owners and should not be condoned.

The City Council should be fully informed of the proposed project prior to a vote on a SUP. As of now, the final form of the proposed project is an unknown. A postponement of the vote on the SUP for the 3101 E. Marshall St. project to allow CAR sufficient time to address, with public involvement, the outstanding 17 conditions - and now the new “significant changes” to the proposed design - is both warranted and appropriate.

Thank you for your consideration of the above.

Regards,



Melissa Newel

Cc (via email):

The Honorable Cynthia I. Newbille, Council President (7th Voter District);

[REDACTED]

Commission of Architectural Review; [REDACTED]

From: Dan Montgomery
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: City Council Ordinance No. 2021-208 -- 3101 E Marshall Ave.
Date: Friday, January 7, 2022 3:44:34 PM

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 City Council:

While I would be thrilled to see 3101-03 E Marshall St. developed and/or renovated, I oppose the proposal in Ordinance No. 2021-208 for several reasons, and I urge you to vote against it. The proposed construction is too tall and covers too big a footprint. I also believe that the new construction is unattractive and a poor fit for the Historic District, but let's set that aside.

The solution here is simple and fair: Build within the existing zoning regulations and ordinances.

In addition, whatever is built here will increase and speed the flow of rainwater to the stormwater system at the corner of East Broad and 31st St. The undersized drain there clogs and backs up routinely, and water floods over the East Broad sidewalk, down the sides of my house to my basement, to my and multiple neighbors' backyards, and to the alley behind our properties. I have videos and photos.

This issue is not separate from 3101 E Marshall. Water from that rooftop, even if piped directly to stormwater pipes, will flow directly to the same backed-up corner. I ask that you take this flooding situation seriously and make necessary upgrades at this time.

Thank you,

Dan Montgomery



From: Catherine Walker
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Ordinance 2021-208
Date: Saturday, January 8, 2022 12:40:16 PM

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Catherine Walker, 

Vote NO on special use permit for 3101 East Marshall Street!

From: trottr50
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: 3101 e. Marshall street (ordinance number 2021-208)
Date: Saturday, January 8, 2022 5:44:38 PM

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There are to many units in this project and there is no provided parking. This empty lot should be a single family house as was done across 31st street from this project. I also cannot see how this project meets the joining ordinance as it covers the entire lot with no green-space or setbacks.

Steve and karin mckay



From: Faye Ferguson
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Ord 2021-208: 3101 East Marshall
Date: Sunday, January 9, 2022 7:47:36 PM

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Dear City Council Members,

I write to ask you to stop this project from moving forward as currently presented. The plan anticipates as many as 16 people living in the building along with several commercial establishments and yet only provides 3 parking spaces. The neighborhood suffers from congestion and limited parking without this project. The quality of day to day life for those who live in that neighborhood will be seriously adversely impacted.

The mere fact that there has been so much opposition to date is a clear indicator of dissatisfaction with this project. The current iteration being presented does not responsibly address the impact on the neighborhood. The project needs to be recast with neighborhood impact at the forefront.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,
Faye Ferguson

From: John Trotta
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: 1/10/22 #43 - 3101 East Marshall Street
Date: Sunday, January 9, 2022 10:43:42 PM
Attachments: [3101 East Marshall - J Trotta 1-9-22.docx](#)

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.

City Council,

In the event that I am not able to attend the 1/10/22 meeting, I would like to submit the attached comments to oppose the current plans for 3101 East Marshall Street.

Respectfully,

John Trotta


Dear Councilwoman Newbille,

I oppose the 3101 East Marshall Street project as currently designed. My name is John Trotta, and I am the owner and occupant of [REDACTED] (direct neighboring property to the south). In the event that I am not able to attend the public hearing on January 10, 2021, I want to communicate concerns that I have with the proposed project.

Overall, I do not believe that this design will improve our immediate neighborhood or the St. John's Historic District. The changes made to the design since introduction have not been material enough to address the concerns raised by neighbors.

My specific concerns include the following:

- Building Setback on 31st Street – This block of 31st Street is located in the St. John's Historic District, and all homes are set back from the sidewalk. To maintain continuity with the homes on this block (and to add back some greenspace), I request the SUP waiving the setback on 31st Street to be denied.
- Trash Management – Although a screened trash collection area has been added to the design, there is concern that the space will not be sufficient to collect the amount of trash generated by 9 residential units and two commercial units. Especially if the commercial units provide food service.
- Parking - Developer and owner have claimed that impact to street parking will be mitigated by future tenants' use of public transportation and bicycles for personal travel. I believe this is false, as tenants, despite using public transportation, will more than likely own a vehicle that will need to be parked on the street. Richmond's public transportation system is not yet mature enough to expect individuals to solely rely on it.

In addition, no parking has been provided for employees of the two commercial units, further contributing to the off-street parking congestion. Parking near the elementary school is restricted for neighborhood residents.

Our block already experiences congestion from patrons of Grisette and Alewife on Marshall Street.

- Water Run-off – Flooding is currently experienced by both neighboring properties during periods of rain. Other neighbors have complained of flooding near the corner of Broad and 31st Streets. I am concerned that the removal of all greenspace on the Marshall Street lot will exacerbate this issue. Further, the alley would have to be paved to support the removal of trash by truck, adding to the run-off issue.
- Green Space – The New York Times ran an article in August 2020 highlighting Church Hill as a neighborhood with higher temperatures than other areas of the city due to lack of trees and open greenspace. This project will not help us combat rising temperatures in our neighborhood.

Considering the concerns above, and the lack of support from surrounding neighbors, I ask that City Council deny the special use permits that will allow this project to be built as designed.

Thank you for your consideration,

John Trotta

[REDACTED]

From: Michele Lord
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Cc: [Brandon Walton](#)
Subject: 3101 E Marshall
Date: Sunday, January 9, 2022 11:10:58 PM

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 Members:

Re: Ordinance 2021-208 (3101 E Marshall)

We are deeply concerned about the impact of this development and against the plan, particularly as it currently stands. The implications to parking are problematic and not in line with the neighborhood or our expectations when we purchased our home. We felt the stress of the short term inconveniences brought on by construction during the recent addition of the two homes on the corner and can only imagine the longer term impact of this development.


The foot traffic is also an issue. As it stands, when going around the block we already have a restaurant taking up the entire width of the sidewalk on Marshall and 32nd Street, and are forced to walk our dog in the street at night.

Additionally, we are concerned about the aesthetic of this stick built construction style. The proposed design is both unattractive and not in line with the rest of this historic neighborhood. In short it is an eyesore.

In addition to the very real impacts we foresee for our family and neighbors, we also need to acknowledge the larger implications for the Richmond landscape. While we support the unique diversity of carefully curated local businesses, gentrification is one of the most egregious practices that Richmond suffers from, and there is a responsibility to be more thoughtful about how development perpetuates the structural inequalities at play.

Thank you for your consideration,

Michele Lord & Brandon Walton (Isabela age 4, Sebastian age 2)



From: David Starling
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Ordinance 2021-208 (3101 E Marshall St)
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 8:55:39 AM

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Dear Council Members

Concerning Ordinance 2021-208 (3101 E Marshall St)

I am concerned about the impact of this development on my block.

Thank you

David Starling



From: Joseph Flynn
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Ordinance 2021-208
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 9:12:48 AM

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 President Newbille and Council Members,

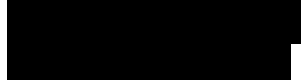
I am writing concerning 3101 E Marshall. I ask that you please vote NO to the special user permit for this property.

As much as I like the growth of the city and the new development, the design is too much for the area. My main concern is the added traffic on a corner adjacent to the Elementary school. The area is already a cut through for travelers and the added construction will add even more safety concerns for children, pedestrians in an already congested intersection. The design does not fit the neighborhood.

Please vote NO, and do not allow this design to continue.

Best Regards,

Joseph Flynn



From: Lorri Montgomery
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: 3101 E. Marshall Street
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 9:34:17 AM

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Members of City Council,

I'm writing to express my concern about and opposition to the Special Use permit application for 3101 E. Marshall Street. I urge you to vote no. I want to be clear that I would support a project under the existing zoning conditions – the conditions in which the developer purchased the property. I'm opposed to the City making an exception for a development that asks for exceptions that appear to do little to contribute to the good of the community.

I oppose a special use permit for the project as it has been submitted for many reasons, but I appreciate your consideration for my main objection that I believe is to the detriment of the Church Hill community.

Church Hill is identified as an urban heat island.

www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/08/24/climate/racism-redlining-cities-global-warming.html

Knowing this, City Council and the community's efforts need to focus on providing more green space and trees, not taking away the little existing green space that's there. The proposed project calls for building up beyond current zoning guidelines and eliminating the remaining green space that exists to the side and back of the existing building, including removing the few trees along the shared lot line with an adjacent 31st Street property.

Special use permits need to be used for projects that address the urban heat island problem, not exacerbate it. There just doesn't seem to be a compelling reason – other than to the benefit of the developer – to approve the special use permit.

With your decision, please support the Church Hill community by supporting solutions to existing problems, not by overlooking them.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lorri Montgomery



From: Lauren Calhoun
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: PETITION IN OPPOSITION to 3101 E MARSHALL STREET Development Project : City Council Meeting, January 10th
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 9:35:32 AM

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Dear Council,

My name is Lauren Trotta. I live at [REDACTED]. My 1851 home will be a direct neighbor to this proposed project. I write today to submit our **neighborhood's petition against this project**. Please follow this link: <https://chnq.it/WZ7Smh4P9v>.

Personally, I would like to say that I have followed this project from meeting to meeting and watched the CHA, CAR, and the Planning Commission **push this project along out of fatigue versus true support**. If you look at the timeline of this project you will see that the path has been difficult. It is because the design is bad. The developer is trying to force something into a space where it does not fit - physically or aesthetically. As a result, there has been wavering support from the City and no support from the neighborhood.

- At the last CHA HPLUC meeting it was said that the design was bad.
- At the last CAR meeting it was said that they should have stopped the project sooner.
- At the last Planning Commission meeting, the vote was called with the line "so that we can all get back to our lives, I vote in favor of this project"

This is not true support, this is passing it along so it can be someone else's problem. So now it sits with you. I ask that you restore my faith in this process. That you honor the voice of the community that will have to live with this building. That you demand better for our historic district.

Thank you,
Lauren Trotta

[REDACTED]

From: Jim Dedie
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: City Council Meeting; January 10th at 6PM - comments on ordinance number 2121-208
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 9:53:37 AM

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Hello,

My understanding is that the vote for special use permits for 3101 E. Marshall Street comes for final vote in today's City Council meeting.

I have voiced questions/concerns in the past on that project (ordinance number 2121-208). My concerns remain the same:

- the proposed structure takes up the entire lot right to the sidewalk
- for the number of proposed units, resident parking does not cover this

Thank you,

Jim Dedie

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Sebastian Shetty
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Comment and Testimony for 1/10 Council Meeting
Date: Friday, January 7, 2022 2:05:59 PM
Attachments: [PSG Comment for Res. 2020-R026-2.pdf](#)

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Hello,

I'd like to submit written comment, as well as sign up to speak on, item 50 (RES. 2020-R026) during Monday's (1/10) City Council Meeting. The written comment is attached in the form of a PDF, and my details for testimony are as follows:

Sebastian Shetty, 5th District resident
[REDACTED]

No financial conflicts regarding this issue

Thank you!
Sebastian

Sebastian Shetty
Policy Coordinator
Partnership for Smarter Growth
[REDACTED]

PARTNERSHIP *for* SMARTER GROWTH

January 10, 2022

Richmond City Council

900 E. Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Re: Richmond 300 amendments, Res. 2020-R026

Dear President Newbille and Members of the Council,

We were among the organizations that suggested amendments to the Richmond 300 Master Plan. We did so after the Planning Commission failed to adopt what we thought were important and reasonable provisions regarding inclusionary housing policies which we had raised and developed throughout the process. We have also shared a number of other recommendations to strengthen the transit, climate, and equity provisions of the plan, and to remove a proposed downriver bridge that was never discussed publicly and would have negative effects on the city.

However, due to the extensive delay in taking up these amendments and the complex mix of proposals by others, including some that would undermine the plan's equity and sustainability goals, we think that the Council should table the resolution. At the same time, we hope that the Council, Planning Commission, and City staff will tackle the issues we have raised via other avenues.

In particular, the City urgently needs to adopt a strengthened and effective inclusionary zoning ordinance and to restructure its city-initiated rezoning approach to include incentives for providing affordable units or contributions to affordable housing at 60% of area median income and below. Pending small area plans including the City Center Innovation District and Shockoe Small Area Plan, as well as the upcoming Diamond District redevelopment plan, should explicitly include measures for affordable housing.

The amendments we had proposed and the courses of action we now recommend are as follows:

- 1) **Removal of downriver bridge** - The map on page 121 (Figure 28) shows a proposed interchange on I-95 along with a new bridge across the James River to a location east of Rocketts Landing and west of Varina. This bridge is not referenced in any other section of the plan, and would serve to undermine the plan's efforts to improve non-auto mobility and accessibility.

We request that this proposed bridge be removed from the plan.
Recommendation: Separate stand-alone amendment to remove.

- 2) **Rezoning and inclusionary zoning** - We are concerned that the rezoning of the city as laid out in the draft plan has the potential to essentially “give away” height and density concessions, which as of present can be rewarded to developers in exchange for community benefits--the most important of which is committed affordable housing. State legislative authorization for inclusionary zoning as a tool has required localities to offer density bonuses to provide additional economic value to developers to compensate for the costs for providing units at more affordable rents and purchase prices.
Recommendation: Adoption of a strengthened and expanded inclusionary housing ordinance.

- 3) **Transit expansion and enhancement** - PSG strongly supports calls within the master plan for greater alternatives to driving, primarily through transit expansion. We also recommend that steps to improve transit service be added, such as dedicated lanes for high-frequency bus routes, transit signal priority, queue jumping, and off-board fare collection. The cost-effectiveness and impact of a number of these measures is illustrated by the success of the GRTC Pulse. ***Recommendation: Create an updated transit expansion and service plan for the city.***

- 4) **Addressing air pollution and climate change** - City Council recently passed a resolution calling for the city to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. While we are glad to see this goal mentioned in the plan, clearer strategies are needed to achieve it. ***Recommendation: Adoption of a climate strategy with clear implementation mandates including transportation measures.***

Richmond 300 is a strong, forward-thinking master plan, and can be made even stronger through carefully considered and appropriate action. We thank you for your service to our community, and we look forward to engaging with you further on the important issues that the City faces now and in the future.

Sincerely,

Sebastian Shetty
Policy Coordinator, Partnership for Smarter Growth



From: Kendall Nordin
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: RESOLUTION No. 2021-R088
Date: Sunday, January 9, 2022 10:58:04 PM

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Dear City Council members,

As a resident of 4th District and a street that would be directly impacted by the increase in traffic due to this proposed development, I would like to state that I oppose this resolution. I believe there needs to be more time for authorities to determine if this development is in line with the overall strategic plan for the city. The amount of green space lost and its impact to the creek (and therefore the river) as well as the air quality, water table, and potential for a big increase in a heat island is concerning. Not only that but there are currently no studies or proposals regarding how the planned traffic flow will be supported and I am concerned that public funds would end up being spent to put in infrastructure that only serves this particular developer's needs and pocket when that money could be spent on infrastructure needs elsewhere that are current needs and provide services to citizens in their current locations. The plan for access to the apartments makes no sense based on the volume of people who would be coming and going and the fact that there is no direct entrance onto any major street that could support that level of traffic.

Please consider requiring the developer to find a location that is currently unused space. This land as it is is not unused but is used by coyotes, owls, snakes, and many other species. Not only that, this "unused space" is actually processing and cleaning the air which Richmond needs more, not less of. (<https://www.lung.org/media/press-releases/state-of-the-air-richmond-va>) That space takes an active role in making Richmond what people want. We desperately need affordable housing, it is true. Is this a good solution to that problem? I'm not sure.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.
Sincerely,
Kendall Nordin

From: Peter Hubbel
To: [City Clerk's Office](#); [Larson, Kristen N. - City Council](#); [Lynch, Stephanie A. - City Council Office](#); [Bond, Aaron A. - City Council](#); [Robins, Amy E. - City Council Office](#)
Cc: [Whit Clements](#)
Subject: Comments on Resolution 2021-R088
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 9:07:57 AM

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City Clerk's Office,

Please record the following comments on Resolution 2021-R088

As a 20+ year resident of the Forest Hill neighborhood, I'd like to register my opposition to this development as currently planned for the following reasons:

1. The immediate area already struggles with extremely high crime, including frequent gunfire and murders, due to the concentration of poverty, lack of police/community support, and negligence by absentee landlords. Adding yet more high density housing will not improve the lives of current residents, regardless of their current socio-economic status.
2. This is a misuse of the "Revitalization Zone" designation. This is clearly an attempt on the part of the developer, and perhaps members of city government, to maximize profit and tax revenue to the detriment of city residents. **How is a naturally wooded, run-off absorbing, climate-change mitigating, wildlife-harboring, noise-absorbing area considered "blighted"?** Every councilperson should answer this question publicly.

I recognize the need for the City to improve tax revenue, but if we haven't made sufficient progress in the last 10 years with the epic developments in Scott's Addition, Manchester, and elsewhere, then perhaps it is time for the City Council to review why these changes have not improved our fiscal position.

Please vote "No" on Resolution 2021-R088.

Regards,
Peter Hubbel



From: Wallis A Wheeler
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Development of The Mature Forest Next to Ashton Square
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 9:20:00 AM

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 Members:

I would like to express my strong opposition to decimating the natural area contingent to Ashton Square. As someone who has lived in this neighborhood for three decades, I have witnessed the changing character of the area over a long time.


Living on 47th Street, we have experienced periods when noise, gun fire, dangerous traffic patterns, and crime have threatened to override the quality of life here. Concentrating more housing in an area that already struggles to lower crime patterns and to support a safe flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic is a poor idea.

As all of us experience the damaging and increasingly catastrophic results of climate warming, to remove a most needed concentration of trees and the mitigation they bring to climate damage would be a foolhardy decision. In a time like this, it's imperative to think long-term, not only for short-term gain and profit.

Please act wisely and retain the vital and precarious balance in this beautiful area that serves so many so well.

Thank you for giving a full hearing to the experience of those of us whose day- to- day lives will be drastically impacted by your decisions.

Regards,

Ms. Wallis Wheeler


From: Seal, Clinton
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Reedy Creek/ Forest Hill revitalization
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 9:36:51 AM

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To whom it may concern:

This email is to express my opposition to the plan to place an apartment in the area around 45th, 46th 47th and Bassett. I live very close to this area. Our neighborhood is relatively peaceful and my neighbors and myself would like to keep it that way. Revitalization projects by their very definition are meant to fix run down or dilapidated areas. They are not meant to destroy what little forested land we have left in the city. There is already a problem with speeding and unsafe driving coming through our neighborhood to get to the existing apartments.

Alternatively, may I suggest focusing your efforts on combating the epidemic of gun violence that plagues our city. Unfortunately our neighborhood has already noticed an uptick in crime in the past year. The Walgreens at Forest Hill and Westover Hills was recently robbed and the Valero across the street from there has been robbed so many times in the past year that they have had to install a steel gate and start closing every day at sundown.

This new project ignores the existing problems in our neighborhood. It comes at the expense of the existing residents and offers us nothing in return. Please fix our existing problems before creating new ones.

Respectfully,

Clinton R. Seal

From: Jesse McCoy
To: [Larson, Kristen N. - City Council](#); [Lynch, Stephanie A. - City Council Office](#); [Bond, Aaron A. - City Council](#); [Robins, Amy E. - City Council Office](#); [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: 770 W 44th Development Plan
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 9:45:22 AM

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Council Members,

As a Richmond resident I want to express my view, and a view held by many (likely most) residents of the city on the plan to develop the 6.65 acres of mature forest at the end of W 44th street. In short, I'm very much opposed to clear cutting a mature forest to add more paved concrete and asphalt. As a resident in the Forest Hill area, I'm even more opposed to the continued removal of the forests the area is named for.

Not only does this development *DIRECTLY OPPOSE* the long term plans of the city, I can't believe the resolution includes incentives from the city to remove mature growth forest while the city claims it wants to increase green space through the green initiative.

Furthermore, the city is currently trying to increase the number of trees in the city for the long list of benefits they provide, yet again incentivizing the removal of 6.65 acres of mature forest, *DIRECTLY OPPOSING* the Re-Leaf program through this resolution.

I'm flabbergasted that as part of Richmond's Path to Equity program to reduce low-income housing density, this resolution made it to you to even discuss as it *DIRECTLY OPPOSES* the decrease by creating an even denser concentration of low-income housing - and by cutting the trees that aid in reducing the heat island currently created by the neighboring apartment complexes of Ashton Square and Rivertowne Apartments to boot!

This is all without mentioning the increased burden, in real dollars, this would put on the city services because there is no infrastructure at all to this area. There hasn't needed to be as it's been a forest since the city started, and the existing infrastructure in the area is already stressed as shown by the numerous complaints, studies, and calls for service in the neighboring areas. Increasing the density in the area will do nothing but increase these demands, and subsequent costs...and the city is incentivizing this plan?

Lastly, the idea that this somehow is an area that needs revitalization is laughable at best, as it currently is the last bastion of environmental benefit to Reedy Creek and beloved by the residents of the surrounding area, as well as the rest of the citizens of Richmond, and is currently doing a great job of providing it's vital role as a greenspace to be enjoyed immediately, and in the future, by providing filtration of runoff to the creek, and subsequently the James River, flood reduction during weather events, carbon capture and sequestration, oxygen production, temperature regulation, and the other myriad of benefits a mature forest provides and urban landscape.

I urge you to do what's right - by the letter of the laws, the eyes of your constituents, and the future of the city - and vote to save this parcel of land from development.

Thank you,
Jesse McCoy
Forest Hill Resident

From: Katie Lemmert
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Do not support RES 2021-R088
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 9:48:33 AM

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Hello Councilpeople,

Happy New Year! I hope this finds you well.

Res 2021-R088 is on the agenda today to remove one of the only old-growth forests in Richmond that are left and to "revitalize it". We don't want it revitalized with an apartment complex. **Please vote no.**

Yall already allowed the old-growth forests to be removed in Manchester, and Powhite Park and elsewhere in the city. **Please leave this one alone!**

This land should be designated part of the James River Park System. It adjoins Forest Hill Park already via the creek and would tie the Reedy Creek Greenway and could remain an oasis for nature lovers, park users, and let's not leave out the wildlife. With all the deforestation that has happened in the last 5 years, there is no place for the animals to go.

Also right after the demolition of the forest above Powhite Park, we saw one of the extreme rain events which flooded that park, the creek and the Powhite Expressway.

Reedy Creek needs this forest as a buffer during extreme rainfall. Reedy Creek is a class V creek during heavy rains - **and if you remove the trees and replace them with impervious pavement and buildings there will be a tremendous amount of flooding events downstream in the Forest Hill Park - where taxpayers have already spent tremendous amounts of tax dollars to repair previous flooding events.**

Thank you for reading and voting what your constituents want, not what developers want.

Best,
Katie Lemmert



