



Caring and Sharing Foundation Inc.
P.O. Box 42132
Richmond VA 23224

August 10, 2021

The Honorable Richmond City Council
900 E. Broad Street Suite 305
Richmond VA 23219

Greetings Richmond City Council,

The Caring and Sharing Foundation, Inc. was founded in 2018 by members of Second Baptist Church to improve the health and wellness of Richmond residents. Second Baptist Church started an urban farm in 2016 to provide fresh fruits and vegetables; however, demand in the community exceeded supply.

The neighborhoods surrounding Second Baptist Church have limited access to fresh, locally grown produce. In 2019, Virginia State University (VSU) surveyed neighborhoods around the church to determine whether residents would shop at a farmers' market sited in the church parking lot. 85% of participants responded, "definitely yes" and 80% of respondents indicated they would "buy more produce directly from growers."

The Caring and Sharing Foundation received a special use permit from the City of Richmond for the Broad Rock Farmers Market; however, the current permit allows only produce to be sold. Therefore, the market cannot recruit farmers who sell meat/dairy/eggs or value-added products such as salsas, jellies, baked goods, etc. This limitation (no meat/dairy/eggs) also means that the Broad Rock Farmers Market is not eligible to accept EBT/SNAP. This special use permit would allow The Caring and Sharing Foundation to expand the offerings and hours of the Broad Rock Farmers Market and accept SNAP. In addition, the Foundation will leverage the infrastructure of Second Baptist Church (over 5 acres of parking, classrooms, and a commercial kitchen) to host food safety workshops for regional farmers and entrepreneurs. We will also make space available for health services, social services, and community awareness organizations.

The market **WILL NOT**:

1. be a detrimental to the safety, health, morals, and general welfare of the community involved.
2. create congestion in streets, roads, alleys and other public ways and places involved in the area.
3. create hazards from fire, panic, or other dangers.
4. tend to cause overcrowding of land and undue concentration of population.
5. adversely affect or interfere with public and private schools, parks, playgrounds, water supplies, sewage disposal, transportation or other public requirements, conveniences, and improvements: or interfere with adequate light and air.

The 375-vehicle parking lot with three entrances/exits can accommodate the growth of the market on the 6.5-acre complex. The operating hours on Saturdays from 8 am to early afternoon, will have considerably less traffic than daily traffic. This area has a daily average of 15,000 vehicles.

The special use permit for the Broad Rock Farmers Market will enable it to accept EBT/SNAP payment and provide training for regional farmers on food safety and processing for state certification. This permit will allow the expansion

and operation of the market, not only increasing access to high quality locally grown food, but also providing an additional high-traffic market with a bus stop across the street, for farmers to sell their added value products. Eden's Garden, the church's USDA registered urban farm, will offer training to the community residents on how to prepare in-season fruits and vegetables they may not be familiar with.

Please support this request so that the Broad Rock Farmer's Market can serve our community which is in a food desert.

Please contact me at 804-356-2679 if you have questions or would like to discuss the project. We appreciate your support of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marc A. Jolley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marc" being the most prominent.

Marc A. Jolley

Caring and Sharing Foundation Inc.