

Item No. 6

Springhill Neighborhood Civic Association
c/o Janice Carter-Lovejoy
604 W 19th St.
Richmond, VA 23225

January 31, 2019

Attention: Richmond Planning Commission
Senior Planner David Walton
Richmond 5th District Councilman Parker Angelasto
5th District Liaison Amy Robins

On behalf of the Springhill Civic Association, I am writing to comment on the proposed Special Use Permit under consideration for the property at 1802 Semmes Avenue. The Planning staff summary states that the development will be for up to 111 attached single family dwellings, plus 3.54 acres for future B-6 uses.

Residents in the neighborhood have attended past meetings conducted by Will Allen of Harper Associates and his attorney, Preston Lloyd of Williams Mullen.

We kindly request that you consider the following comments when making your decisions to approve, reject, or approve with conditions.

- In general we support demolition of the vacant warehouse property and repurposing the land primarily for single family residential use, with a portion held in reserve for a future commercial use.
- We are hopeful for a small to midsize grocery store that would easily serve a hungry population living within a 3 mile radius of the site.
- We were pleased when the density was reduced from 145 units to 111 units.
- We support the construction of market rate single family units.
- We request that the SUP include a provision that individual dwellings be designed with neighborly congruity, including entrances and facades. The residential neighborhoods (Springhill, Swansboro, Woodland Heights) immediately adjacent to the proposed "Belle Heights" are comprised of many properties 100 years and older. A number of these are on the National Registry of Historic Places. The new development needs to be complementary to these neighborhoods, not contrasting. The facades need to blend, not detract. As such, we request that the builder be required to seek input from the adjacent civic association representatives *prior* to finalizing architectural plans.
- We request that 1 in 3 units have a front porch, at a minimum have a front porch.
- We request that quality building standards be used, including limiting siding to brick or cementitious at a minimum. No vinyl. Also, that the percentages of brick and stone usage be consistent with the renderings that Harper Associates provided at the community meeting.
- We request that native species be used for landscaping.
- We request that solar energy be considered for the units. (That was a huge plus for Fulton Village recently completed in District 7.)
- We request a pedestrian crossing light be included at W. 21st Street for crossover to Canoe Run and James River parks. The developer agreed that both parks will be a draw for the new residents.
- We request that a future traffic study be conducted to determine if more than a pedestrian crossing light is needed once the residential portion of the development is completed.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Carter-Lovejoy
jclrichmond@yahoo.com
804-898-2804

February 1, 2019

Attention: Richmond Planning Commission
Senior Planner David Walton
Richmond 5th District Councilman Parker Angelasto
5th District Liaison Amy Robins

Dear Mr. Preston Lloyd,

Thank you for your follow up email on your development plan for the Allegheny Warehouses at 1802 Semmes Ave. We wish you the best on the upcoming presentations to the Planning Commission and City Council. Due to the timing of your presentations and our next Woodland Heights Civic Association (WHCA) meeting later this month, we are unable to provide a letter of support without an official vote by our membership. We would appreciate more advance notice in order to be able to have a letter voted by our members ready. In respect to your needs for this Special Use Permit, below is a statement with comments and suggestions voiced by neighbors during your presentations to WHCA.

In general we approve the demolition of the warehouses at 1802 Semmes Ave for the construction of a new housing development to include 111 new single-family homes/structures. We thank you for lessening the density of structures and for preserving a space for future commercial property. Our neighborhood is in need of a grocery store and this site could have significant potential for a commercial location. We ask that you continue your good-faith work with the WHCA at the time you choose to move forward with a commercial property. We will provide comments regarding this commercial property in a later letter

Areas of concern listed by Woodland Heights Civic Association Officers:

1. With the addition of 111 new homes an increase in vehicular and foot traffic on Semmes Avenue is bound to happen. The future intersection at either or both W. 20th and W. 21st Streets and Semmes Ave needs to be carefully designed and constructed. WHCA believes that not only are turn lanes required but ask for the inclusion of a stop light with pedestrian crosswalks.
2. Light and sound pollution from units as well as new street lights will increase in this area. Therefore we ask that you design to include downward facing light poles and surface lights on these structures. We also ask that you consider remedies for sound pollution from the addition of 111+ new central air units.
3. Reconnecting the street grid in and around Belle Heights will give better access and flow around this area. For Belle Heights to feel apart of a larger community and not isolated, it is important to maintain the street names of : McDonough Street, Perry Street, W. 21st

Street, and W. 20th Street. We ask that you work with Council Member Agelasto's office as well as City Hall and design/reconstruct these neglected pathways.

4. The neighborhood is very interested in the future of the old trailer park in the Canoe Run floodplain at 2201 McDounough Street. We ask that you work with the city to fold this space into your plans and that you keep it from being developed, reverting the land back to a natural wetland and potential bioretention feature, e.g. wet pond.
5. Another important path for pedestrians and bikers is the old CSX rail line that abuts this property on the northeast. For many years our neighborhood has seen this part as an important next step to access the James River Park, the Tyler Potterfield Bridge, downtown, and to Hull Street. We ask that your designs integrate this historic and forgotten rail line, setting the stage for the city procurement of the CSX property.
6. We ask that any designs take into account the historic and aesthetic nature of existing homes in Woodland Heights and include the look and feel of our porches, wood slatted siding and roof dormers. We do not support vinyl siding. Central to our neighborhood is the feeling that we can connect with our neighbors and the "front porch" is a way in which this happens. Our paths leading to our homes are equally vital and beautiful. therefore we ask that your design includes a only native trees and vegetation lining the streets and in front and back yards.
7. Due to the high density of rental properties in this area we ask that the "Belle Heights" single-family structures be built as sellable properties and not offered as a rental community. (According to your own data increasing the number of home-owning families gives better chances of grocery chains moving into this area.) We also press that the single-family unit be sold using comparable prices related to current housing markets in-and-around Woodland Heights, Springhill, Swansboro and Manchester.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions or comments. We wish you the best and look forward to hearing from you when you move forward with developing the commercial component of this property.

Sincerely,



2/1/19

Vaughn W. Garland,
Vice President, Woodland Heights Civic Association

312 West 25th Street.
Richmond, VA 23225
(804) 869-0065

Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR

From: citygarden@comcast.net
Sent: Monday, February 04, 2019 11:03 AM
To: Watson, David F. - PDR; DCDlanduseadmin@richnondgov.com
Cc: Robins, Amy E. - City Council Office; Agelasto, Parker C. - City Council
Subject: 1802 Semmes Ave Rezoning

To whom it may concern,

As the only two members of the Swansboro neighborhood (where the property is located) to attend the planning meetings, my husband John and I would like to give our blessing to the project.

That being said, the developers and the contractors are put on notice that the residents of Swansboro and adjoining neighborhoods will be watching this project like hawks and expect all involved to hold as close as possible to the spirit of the plans that were shown to us in the meetings. If there is a large divergence from the materials and design that we were shown, expect Swansboro, and the other adjoining neighborhoods, to be less welcoming to future projects.

Best,

Laura Fisher

John Kalyan

54 W 29th St.

Richmond, VA 23225

Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR

From: Missy Neff [neffmissy@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 04, 2019 9:17 AM
To: Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR
Subject: Letter in Support re. ORD. 2019-013 (1802 Semmes Avenue SUP)

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I write in support of the proposed special use permit for 1802 Semmes Avenue. I am unable to attend the public hearing of the Planning Commission today. I am a homeowner and resident of the Woodland Heights neighborhood and I support the project being proposed in the form of 111 townhomes. The proposed designs that I've seen give me confidence that this project will deliver a high quality product that will complement the surrounding neighborhoods.

This influx of new residents will generate new demand for commercial uses, such as a grocery store, that our community has desired for years. The current metal warehouses on the site reflect an outdated use that is inconsistent with our neighborhood. It is my understanding that the City has evaluated the traffic impacts of the project and that the current road infrastructure can handle the additional vehicles generated by the project. I view this type of growth and reuse of an already developed site as a positive.

I appreciate the Applicant's willingness to listen to the community and make revisions to the project in response to feedback received at community meetings. This will be a positive project for Richmond and we urge the Planning Commission to recommend its support to City Council.

Thank you for your consideration.

Missy Neff
303 W 30th Street
Richmond, VA 23225

Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR

From: Millar, Brent [BMillar@nvrinc.com]
Sent: Monday, February 04, 2019 7:48 AM
To: Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR
Subject: 1802 Semmes Avenue

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I write in support of the proposed special use permit for 1802 Semmes Avenue, as I will be unable to attend the public hearing of the Planning Commission on Feb. 4. As a resident of Forest Hill, I support the investment being proposed in the form of 111 townhomes. The proposed design renderings give us confidence that this project will deliver a high quality product that will complement the diverse range of housing in Spring Hill, Swansboro, Woodland Heights and Manchester.

This influx of new residents will generate new demand for the commercial uses, such as a grocery store, that our community has desired for years. The current metal warehouses on the site reflect an outdated use that is inconsistent with our neighborhood. We understand that the City has evaluated the traffic impacts of the project and that the current road infrastructure can handle the additional vehicles generated by the project.

We appreciate the Applicant's willingness to make revisions to the project in response to feedback received in connection with several community meetings. This will be a positive project for Richmond and we urge the Planning Commission to recommend its support to City Council.

Thank you for your consideration.

Brent Millar
Home address is 4017 Dunston Ave, Richmond VA 23225.

Message classified as *NVR - Business Use Only* on Monday, February 04, 2019 7:47:25 AM

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Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR

From: Eric Hundley [eric.b.hundley@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 04, 2019 11:08 AM
To: Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR
Subject: Letter in Support re. ORD. 2019-013 (1802 Semmes Avenue SUP)

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I write in support of the proposed special use permit for 1802 Semmes Avenue, as I will be unable to attend the public hearing of the Planning Commission on Feb. 4. As a resident of Woodland Heights, I support the investment being proposed in the form of 111 townhomes. The proposed design renderings give us confidence that this project will deliver a high quality product that will complement the diverse range of housing in Spring Hill, Swansboro, Woodland Heights and Manchester.

This influx of new residents will generate new demand for the commercial uses, such as a grocery store, that our community has desired for years. The current metal warehouses on the site reflect an outdated use that is inconsistent with our neighborhood. We understand that the City has evaluated the traffic impacts of the project and that the current road infrastructure can handle the additional vehicles generated by the project.

We appreciate the Applicant's willingness to make revisions to the project in response to feedback received in connection with several community meetings. This will be a positive project for Richmond and we urge the Planning Commission to recommend its support to City Council.

Thank you for your consideration.

Eric and Kristen Hundley
615 W 33rd St, Richmond, VA 23225