

Saunders, Richard L. - PDR

From: Jill Barden <jill.barden@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 6, 2021 10:55 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: Concerns about Proposed Buildings at 1505 and 1520 W Main St

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Mr. Saunders,

This is to express my concern with the proposed buildings at 1505 and 1520 W Main St.

I own 4 N Lombardy Street and have been here for 6 years. Parking had been an issue for years until Baja Bean closed in Oct of 2019. I have no issue with restaurants and apartments going into the existing building as long as those establishments adhere to any noise ordinances and not operate outdoors after 10 P.M. I am hoping that the establishments won't cater to college age kids. My main issue with any of the new development is around parking.

If the new buildings are built over existing parking lots, where will these new tenants park? We already have very limited parking on Lombardy as we can only park on 1 side of the street and are restricted to time limits on Main St. The tenants of the building will likely park on Lombardy as it gives them easy access to the building, which will limit parking for our properties. I know that this concern is shared by many others on the block.

Can we extend parking restrictions on Lombardy so that a permit is needed most of the time?

Please consider the impact that these new buildings will have on parking in the area and the impact to all property owners.

Thanks,

Jillian Barden

Saunders, Richard L. - PDR

From: Daniel Crisler <daniel.s.crisler@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, September 3, 2021 10:07 PM
To: Saunders, Richard L. - PDR
Cc: Scottresetar@gmail.com
Subject: 1505 and 1520 W Main St.

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Mr. Saunders,

My name is Daniel Crisler. My wife and I purchased the home at 23 N. Lombardy St. on July 30 of this year, and live here with our 3-year-old daughter. My home is the nearest residence on the east side of Lombardy to the proposed development at 1505 and 1520 W Main Street.

This email is to express our concern and echo the concerns of our neighbor Nancy Desper about the proposed Mixed Use 3 and 4 story townhouse style building next to the historic Stonewall Jackson School at 1520 West Main St. and the proposed building at 1505 W. Main St., now a parking lot next to the Beauvine Burger Concept restaurant at 1501 W. Main.

Given that many residents of N Lombardy Street between Floyd and Main are young families and older empty-nesters, we feel it is inconsistent with the character of the neighborhood, particularly the block between Main and Floyd of which we are residents, to allow any establishment, especially an outdoor bar/restaurant, to operate past 10 p.m. for the reasons outlined in Mrs. Desper's letter.

I will not be able to attend the meeting this coming Tuesday, the 7th in person, as I am traveling for business, but would like to register my strong opposition to any plan which will allow a bar/restaurant or nightclub to operate past 10 p.m., particularly as the building, as it stands, will have a large patio which will increase noise and foot traffic in the early morning hours. I am particularly concerned that my property, being situated closest to the establishment, will be a prime area for inebriated patrons to gather, relieve themselves, discard bottles and trash, vomit, and generally disturb the peace once the establishment has closed.

Thank you for your careful consideration.

Regards,

Daniel Crisler

Saunders, Richard L. - PDR

From: Nancy H Desper <nncdesp@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 5, 2021 4:51 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: Additional comments about proposed buildings on W. Main St.

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September 5, 2021

Richard Saunders, Secretary to the Planning Commission
PDRLandUseAdmin@richmondgovcom

I have received your e-mails and now have additional comments and concerns about the proposed buildings in the 1500 block of W. Main St. Please include them in the packet for the Planning Commissioners.

First of all, the letter about the proposed buildings did not go to so many people who will be impacted if the proposed changes are approved. Also, there are people I have talked to who will probably write letters but have not yet done so. We really haven't been given a lot of time to respond, especially with the meeting taking place on the day after a long holiday weekend. People have been busy getting ready to send their children back to school and some had already made plans for a late summer vacation or end of summer "get togethers" with family and friends during the last holiday weekend of the summer.

I completely understand that I did not get the letter about the proposed building at 1505 West Main St. because it is not within 150 feet of my property. My CONCERN is that 150 feet within the proposed building sites is not a large enough radius to include so many residents who will be impacted by both of these proposed buildings. I'm sure that the people on several blocks of Floyd Avenue, Main St. and the side streets that run north and south would be interested in knowing about the proposed changes to the neighborhood. The people on Lombardy can only park on one side of the street, so they already don't have many places to park. I'm sure that the residents of the Warsaw Condominiums don't miss the drunken customers from the Baja Bean climbing the wall to jump into their private swimming pool.

I looked at the sign that indicates Zoning Changes PENDING at the 1520 W. Main location. There is NO sign at the 1505 location. I did not recall seeing a sign there, so I walked down there and looked to be sure. The word PENDING would seem to indicate that approval has already been given for the change. The sign did NOT say Zoning Changes REQUESTED pending approval. I was able to read the sign because I was walking, not driving by. However, the sign does NOT give a hint about what changes are pending. Many people driving by would not be interested even if they could read see the sign while driving. Those who would be interested would not likely have pen and paper to write down the number.

I do know about the Fan District Association, but I am not a member. I have no idea what the other two civic associations you mentioned are. So, how would their notification provide information to me or my neighbors who do not belong to them???

I also know that there is bus service in the area. However, I doubt very seriously that the people who could afford to live in these new buildings would be riding the bus. Even if some would ride a bus to work (for instance if they work downtown), most who would live there would probably have cars.

I am also concerned about the noise and distractions that will occur during the construction. There are people in the immediate area who work from home. We are used to the sound of lawn mowers during the day during grass cutting season or the occasional trimming or removing of trees. Even that can be distracting. There are also those of us who are

retired and at home during most days. I like to be able to concentrate while I am researching on my computer and I like to be able to hear my favorite soap opera. Another consideration for those of us who walk every day would be the closing of sidewalks where we walk. Vehicles used by the people for construction purposes and those who will be driving to the construction sites would be taking parking spaces too.

Another concern is the fact that my comments were shared with the owner of these properties. He has contacted me about meeting in person to discuss his plans in more detail. However, I already know that nothing he would say would make me support his plans. I know it would be of no use to try to convince him not to proceed with his plans. I have declined a meeting with him. I'm sure he has no idea about the frustration caused by returning home with a car full of groceries and no place to park and probably does not care. I'm trying to convince the PLANNING COMMISSIONERS that we don't want these buildings in our neighborhood.

If these proposals are approved, I'm also concerned about future changes that could be made, such as the addition of more restaurants that would be open until the wee hours of the morning and more people who don't know how to behave would be taking parking places in our neighborhood.

Nancy Desper

Saunders, Richard L. - PDR

From: Nancy H Desper <nncdesp@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, September 3, 2021 10:48 AM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Cc: Lynch, Stephanie A. - City Council Office
Subject: Concerns about proposed buildings on W. Main St. in the Fan

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September 3, 2021

Richard Saunders, Secretary to the Planning Commission
PDRLandUseAdmin@richmondgovcom

This is to express our concerns about the proposed Mixed Use 3 and 4 story townhouse style building next to the historic Stonewall Jackson School at 1520 West Main St. and the proposed building at 1505 W. Main St., now a parking lot next to the Beauvine Burger Concept restaurant at 1501 W. Main.

It is also VERY upsetting to learn that the residents on North Plum St. did NOT receive notification about the one next to the Beauvine. This proposed building would certainly have an impact on us even though we are not within 150 feet. We can see the restaurant at 1501 W. Main from the sidewalk in front of our house. We have no doubt that someone going to this location would park on North Plum St., just as they do when going to other places on Main St. It happens all the time. Yet, we just found out about this through my (Nancy Desper) conversation with you when I had called about another matter.

We love to see the preservation of old buildings and have no problem with the original school building being turned into apartments, provided there would be enough parking spaces for those who would live there.

However, the proposed buildings would not be in keeping with the historical characteristic of the neighborhood. Many buildings in the neighborhood are over 100 years old. Our house was built in 1881. There is also a privacy issue if people living in these proposed buildings can look down into our back yards where we are used to a degree of privacy, especially in the yards where children are playing. We have no idea who could be looking at the neighborhood children for no good reason.

A BIG issue would be parking. It is our understanding that zoning requires only one space for every four apartments. This could easily lead to a parking "nightmare." Where will all the residents park????

My (Nancy Desper) grandparents bought the house we live in about 1924. I doubt that anyone in the neighborhood owned a car at that time. Now there are at least 10 vehicles that belong to the residents of the first block of North Plum St., and there are houses on only one side of the street. People from Floyd Ave. also park on Plum because there are often no spaces on Floyd. Each year we have to pay \$25 for a Fan parking permit for each vehicle due to restricted time limits in this area, and if you live in Zone 1 you cannot park in Zone 2 (which is one block away) if there is no available space in Zone 1.

Most of us also pay an additional \$35 yearly for a guest permit (or \$70 for the limited two) to keep our family and friends from getting a ticket. Then we have to remember to get the guest permit back when they leave. People going to

restaurants and other business places in the neighborhood frequently park on Plum too. Yet there are often vehicles that do not have a permit that are parked all day (sometimes more than one day) and are not ticketed.

There are also many "guests" who visit and often stay overnight. This is especially bad after 6 p.m. on Fridays and on weekends when the parking permit restrictions do not apply.

Many times when we move a vehicle, someone parks in the vacated space within minutes. We hardly ever go out at night because there may not be a place to park when we get home. This is especially frustrating when we have a car full of groceries. There have been times when we have asked someone getting ready to leave a parking space to remain until a family member or neighbor who had driven around the block could get back around hoping that someone had left a space.

We have a son with special needs who attends a day support program. He is picked up and returned by special van transportation. There have been many times when the drivers have had to park way down the street or go around the block because there is no place near our house. We try to watch for his ride whenever we can. However, these drivers are not always on schedule because they are having to deal with handicapped clients who encounter problems and also cannot be left unattended. One morning the van driver had to double park at the same time that a school bus came through in the opposite direction.

Both the van driver and the school bus driver said they were not allowed to back up, and the police had to be called to direct them.

The parking situation was somewhat relieved when Baja Bean closed. We certainly don't miss the emptying of bottles and trash in the wee hours of the morning after the restaurant had closed. People leaving were often talking and shouting to each other as if it were the middle of the day. Even with double-pane insulated windows, we could hear them clearly. Some would be leaving in cars, others would walk through the neighborhood, leaving trash, talking loudly and urinating on the sidewalks or areas between the houses. Now we understand that the "patio" area may again be used as a gathering place for people to meet, drink, and sometimes play music. A restaurant or area where people meet to socialize and any commercial space would also need parking spaces.

The City of Richmond has the highest real estate tax rate in this area of the state. We recently received notice of a general reassessment that will again increase the real estate taxes we have to pay although when we leave our home there may not be a place to park when we return. The addition of more tenants, a restaurant and an outdoor area used for social gathering until the wee hours would make it even worse. We would also probably have to hear once again the emptying of bottles and trash about 2 a.m. when we are trying to sleep.

We certainly hope that the "F**K 12" that is painted on the sidewalk in front of the steps of the Main St. entrance of the Stonewall Jackson school building will be removed. I (Nancy Desper) walk by there almost every day. One day there was a female (I hesitate to call her a lady) who appeared to be an employee of the basement store doing some work in front of the building. I asked her if anyone had thought about removing this writing from the sidewalk. Her response was, "Oh, we love it. We're going to keep it." Apparently she thinks it is good for business. It certainly does not add any "class" to the neighborhood.

It is our hope that you will consider the problems that the new buildings would create for the homeowners who must pay extremely high taxes to live in the Fan and then have to be concerned about a place to park and the noise and other distractions that would be created by an outside gathering place where inconsiderate people drink, curse, play loud music, and litter our neighborhood while people are trying to sleep.

Nancy H. Desper
Larry D. Desper
12 N. Plum St.
Richmond, Va. 23220



Attn: Members of the Planning Commission

Re: SUP Ordinance No. 2021-217 New construction of Three- and Four-Story Building at 1520 W. Main Street
Ordinance No. 2021-216 and 1505 W. Main Street.

My name is Catherine Farmer; I have lived directly across the alley from 1520 W. Main Street since 1975; I am a retired architect and love adaptive reuse of historic buildings. I Love the Stonewall Building!

I worked for Johannas Design Group, for five years, including on nearby projects, such as Cary Mews and the Trolley project in the 1600 block of West Main Street. I love the Fan District and embrace the changes that have brought restaurants to the East-West blocks of Main and Cary, and to cross streets like Lombardy, Meadow and Robinson. I am much in favor of sensitive renovation of historic buildings and good design in new construction. I support the City's goal of increased density and infill development and reducing the use of private cars within the city core. I am not opposed to the architectural design of the new construction proposed by 1520 W. Main LLC. I am, however, strongly opposed to these SUP applications.



Stonewall Jackson LLC, owned by John and Cathy Conrad, purchased 1520 West Main St building, sixteen years ago. I can speak to the use and management of this property since they purchased it in 2005. During their ownership, 1520 has had a mixed effect on the neighborhood. The office use has a positive impact. However, The Baja Bean restaurant became a nightmare, a college bar. There was late-night karaoke on the patio; audible for a block away. Patrons parked in our parking spaces, shouted, fought, urinated on the sidewalks and in our yards, and threw trash everywhere. The proposed restaurant sounds ideal, but so did the James River Bistro, twenty-five years ago. Unfortunately, restaurants close ALL the time. There will be inadequate parking and patrons will go elsewhere. Baja closed two years ago and the patio has been a shambles since. The neighborhood holds the owners responsible. The owners' application claims the project will bring "vibrancy" to this block. Their track record says otherwise.

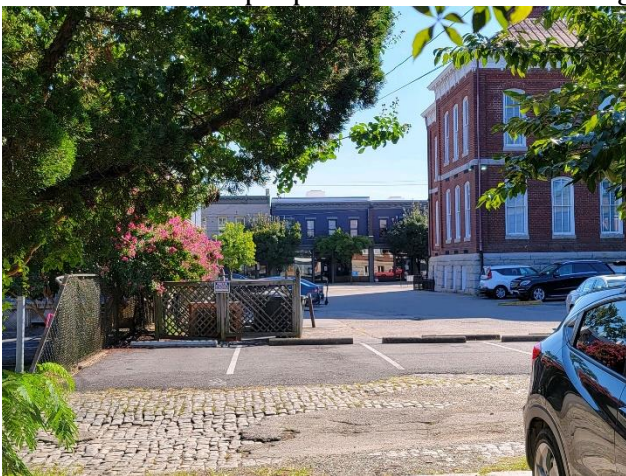
I object to "the bait and switch" of increasing the intensity of use if the SUP is approved. The modest-sized restaurant, "Le Jardin", if successful, will quickly grow and will be allowed, by this SUP, to do so. Staff writes that "the parking requirements are being waived for any commercial use permitted in the UB District in order to provide flexibility of future tenants" Restaurants, of course, are allowed, though if

submitted without the SUP, would require twice the parking of retail or offices. Perhaps, it will be joined by another or two, in either 1505, 1518 or 1520 W, Main Street. Parking is a problem NOW, without the impact of these projects.. Most of the new tenants will have cars and so will the patrons of the restaurants. They will again park in our private off-street parking and force long time residents to walk blocks looking for parking..

I am opposed to dividing the property into two parcels; neither of which can meet the needs of the zoning. use, by themselves. What instrument will be in place to address ingress and egress or trash storage and car and bicycle parking?

I oppose the unrestricted use of the patio, on the corner of Main and Lombardy. The noise ordinance says that no music or public address system shall be audible beyond the property. That ordinance was in place when I was repeatedly woken by karaoke on that patio. The Conrads owned the building, then, too. The noise ordinance is not enforced then, nor is it enforceable now. The patio should operate no later than 10:00pm on weeknights, and perhaps until midnight on the Friday and Saturday.

I object to again having an unscreened dumpster directly opposite my parking area. There will be overflowing garbage, rats and filth in our alley, as there was during James River Bistro and Baja Bean's tenancy. Now will be added the trash of twenty apartments; mattresses and furniture blocking the alley or thrown on our properties. Instead of a long view to Main Street, I will have a short view to a wall of



garbage, unscreened unless a gate is required. A former restaurant left the very large dumpster 4' in the alley, reeking and overflowing. The Conrads, regardless of the name they do business under, have proved NOT good neighbors and nothing indicates that they will change.

I've read the UB and PO3 ordinances, the application report and staff recommendations and I am deeply disappointed in staff recommendations. The SUP discounts, entirely, the neighbors who have invested and supported the City for decades or those who recently purchased their homes. Two houses within this block recently sold for over \$600,000. Young couples with

small children have purchased houses here, to raise their families. We're all standing here, hoping to be acknowledged and heard. I hope that the Planning Commission will consider our concerns, and NOT approve this application until they are addressed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Catherine Farmer'.

Catherine Farmer
1519 Floyd Avenue
Richmond, Virginia
(804)363_7659
jiterdancr@msn.com

Floyd Ave



1500 block of Floyd Avenue
& first block north of Main Street of Plum and Lombardy Streets

R-6 Attached Residential

23 N. Lombardy

1529

1527

1525

1523

1521

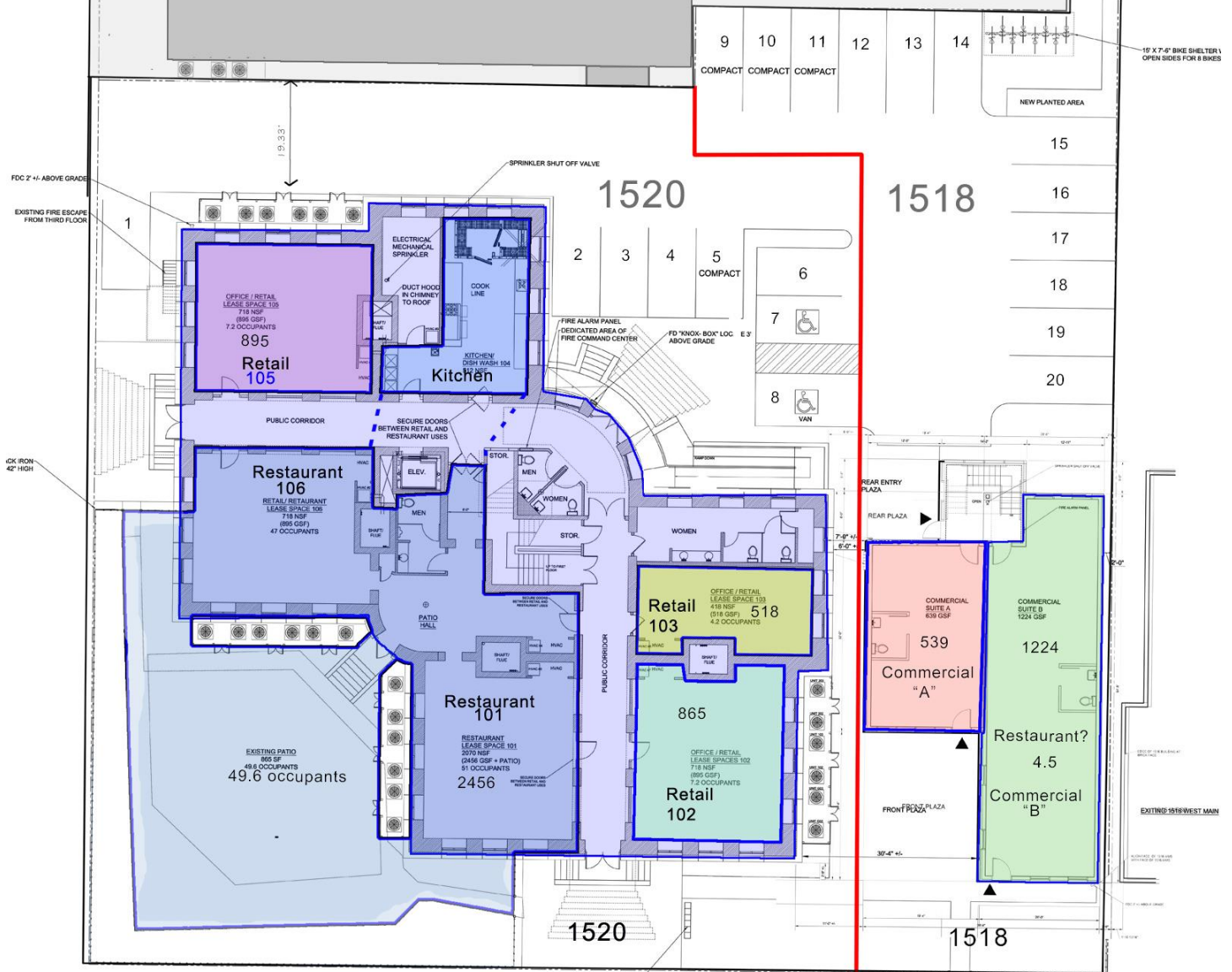
1519 Floyd 30'-0"

20' Alley

Screen!

3 N. Lombardy

Parking
3 N. Lombardy



1520 and proposed 1518 W. Main St.

GROUND FLOOR PLAN
1/8" = 1'-0"

Saunders, Richard L. - PDR

From: MARGARET FRIEDENBERG <mjfbberg@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, September 6, 2021 11:57 AM
To: Saunders, Richard L. - PDR
Cc: Lynch, Stephanie A. - City Council Office; Robins, Amy E. - City Council Office
Subject: Ordinance No. 2021-217

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I am writing to express my strong opposition to this ordinance,

I have lived in my home on Plum Street for for over 35 years. I am very familiar with the implications of the proposed ordinance, having lived here through a prior period of time when there was a restaurant on the property. I and my neighbors were subjected to loud and obnoxious noise and cursing, damage to our front and back yards, and other willful damage to our properties. We were without recourse to address this needless, ugly, scary and expensive situation and were never contacted by the owner of 1520 W. Main, even as a courtesy.

Further, the density of the proposed ordinance is untenable. The nature of this neighborhood does not support the proposed number of apartments and residents. This is not New York City. Most of us have at least one vehicle and some families have several, depending on their family size. If the owner is allowed to to be granted this ordinance as it is proposed it will be at all of our expense. Parking is more than a convenience; it is vital to our life style, health, and safety.

In addition to my opposition to the mixed use application for 1520 W. Main Street, I am appalled that we were not formally notified of the proposed ancillary building by the same individual at the parking lot next to Beauvine on Main Street, 1501 W. Main St. Building more apartments inn such a limited space is clearly untenable for the same reasons stated above.

This proposal is clearly for the owner of 1520 W. Main's benefit and bank account with little to no appreciation, courtesy or even acknowledgement of the negative quality of life implications for home owners, or renters.

For the owner and proposer of this ordinance it is a matter of money; for us, it is a quality of life issue.

Margaret Friedenber

Saunders, Richard L. - PDR

From: Scott Layman <scott@laymannewmedia.com>
Sent: Monday, September 6, 2021 7:55 PM
To: Saunders, Richard L. - PDR
Subject: Opposition Ordinance 2021-216 for 1505 and Ordinance 2021-217 for 1520 West Main.

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To the members of the Planning Commission,
I am opposed to the Special Use Applications -Ordinance [2021-216](#) for 1505 and Ordinance [2021-217](#) for 1520 West Main.

I own and live at 4 N. Plum St. since 2007. I am concerned about the effects the proposed SUP applications, happening on by block and neighborhood. I do not have on-site parking and depend solely on street parking. Parking is already an issue here, adding dozens of apartments, restaurants and other uses will make it that much more difficult to park on my street. The proposed buildings 1505 W. Main and 1518, while shown as commercial, would allow higher density and restaurant use, and therefore create parking problems. Public transportation or bicycles will not solve this.

Another main concern is about the disruptive noise that comes with outdoor dining. I have experienced loud music and loud crowds that can go on until 2AM. The proposed restaurant, at 1520, may not immediately be a problem, but restaurants come and go. Baja Bean was a big problem for many years.

Another issue I have is with the property owners. They own the old middle school at 1520 and have done a terrible job in maintaining that property over the years. I don't see how they can build two large buildings on my block when they can't properly maintain the one they have.

Please email me if you have questions.

Thank You.
-Scott Layman

Saunders, Richard L. - PDR

From: Caitlin Minnick <cllminnick@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 6, 2021 3:25 PM
To: Saunders, Richard L. - PDR
Subject: Re: Note of Opposition: 1518/1520 proposed variance and SUP

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.

Hello again Mr. Saunders,

I also wanted to send in my opposition to the proposed new construction at 1505 Main St. When Mr. Conrad originally spoke with me about this location he assured me it would be only for his offices. Now I am finding out, from neighbors, that it could allow up to two restaurants on first floor, + (2) 2 bedroom apartments on 2nd and 3rd floors, with only 5 on-site parking spaces and 2 street ones. That parking lot could instead be used to mitigate the significant parking issues that will result from the renovations and new construction at 1518/1520 if that variance is granted allowing for over 20 new tenants. I am disappointed that a neighbor like myself who can clearly see that location from my house would not be notified. I understand this is because I am more than 150 feet away, but that seems like a great way to leave invested community members OUT of the conversation. I am feeling both purposefully left out of the conversation, as well as being misled by Mr. Conrad.

Sincerely,
Cait & Andrew Minnick

On Mon, Sep 6, 2021, 1:15 PM Caitlin Minnick <cllminnick@gmail.com> wrote:

Hello Richard,

I have attached the letter of opposition from my husband and I for the project on 1518/1520 Main. I have also attached images of the space as it is currently being cared for as part of that document. Please let me know if you have any issues opening it! I would appreciate a confirmation email if you have a chance to send one, so I know you received it. The first time I sent it bounced back as too big, so I have changed the file attachment size but want to be sure you receive it.

Best,
Cait & Andrew Minnick

Saunders, Richard L. - PDR

From: Bill Payne <bpayne6331@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 6, 2021 10:51 PM
To: Saunders, Richard L. - PDR
Subject: SUP Applications for 1505 and 1520 W Main

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 the Planning Commission,
I am opposed to the Special Use Applications for 1505 and 1520 West Main.
I have owned the property at 1525 Floyd Avenue since 1993. Though I no longer live there, I am concerned about the effects the proposed SUP applications, on the neighborhood. Parking is already an issue there, adding dozens of apartments, restaurants and other uses will make it that much more difficult. The proposed buildings 1505 W. Main and 1518, both could become restaurants, with the attendant parking problems. Public transportation nor bicycles will not solve that.
My other main concern is about the disruptive noise that outdoor dining, with sometimes loud amplified music causes. The proposed restaurant, at 1520, may not immediately be a problem, but restaurants come and go. Baja Bean was certainly a problem.

Thank you in advance for considering my concerns.

Bill Payne
11 N Arthur Ashe Boulevard

Sent from my iPhone