

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: HarrisonburgVA.gov via HarrisonburgVA.gov <noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Friday, February 18, 2022 1:43 PM
To: Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Form submission from: Agenda Comment Form

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Submitted on: Friday, February 18, 2022 - 1:42pm

Name: Nate Brustein
Type of Meeting: Harrisonburg City Council
Date of Meeting: Tue, 02/22/2022
Agenda Item Number: 5.a
Comment:

I am writing to express my support for the proposed 80-unit affordable housing apartment complex on Lucy Drive. I admit that I am not deeply familiar with the details of the proposal, but I believe that it is very important that we improve the quantity of available housing in Harrisonburg, and it is appropriate, in my opinion, that such development happen throughout the city.

Contact: No
Contact Info:

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: HarrisonburgVA.gov via HarrisonburgVA.gov <noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Sunday, February 20, 2022 12:27 PM
To: Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Form submission from: Agenda Comment Form

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Submitted on: Sunday, February 20, 2022 - 12:26pm

Name: Scott Taylor

Type of Meeting: Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Meeting: Tue, 02/22/2022

Agenda Item Number: 6a

Comment:

Thank you for moving to end the local emergency. It is clear that the virus is now endemic. With vaccines performing admirably to prevent severe illness and death, even though they cannot prevent infection, it is time to return to normalcy for our community, businesses, and kids.

I encourage you lead by example in both resuming normal, unmasked in-person meetings of the councils and all supporting committees including the school board. It is a disservice to people in the community to not be able to interact in person to resolve concerns.

Contact: No

Contact Info:

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: Dany Fleming <fleming.dany@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 21, 2022 6:49 PM
To: Deanna R. Reed; Sal T. Romero Jr; Christopher B. Jones; George J. Hirschmann; Laura A. Dent
Cc: Ande Banks; Pamela S. Ulmer; Chris Fasching-Maphis; Gil Colman; Kevin Coffman; Luciano Benjamin; Shonda Green; Jody Johannessen; Michael Wong
Subject: Simms Pointe Development

WARNING: This email was sent from outside of your organization.

The Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority (HRHA) fully supports the Simms Pointe development. Simms Pointe will provide needed and improved housing to well over 100 Harrisonburg working residents from dozens of local businesses. It will provide a stable home for another 100 plus current Harrisonburg school children and the elderly. If those future tenants could, they would certainly support and appreciate City Council's approval of this project.

Simms Pointe is directly addressing the housing priorities as determined by the City and detailed more recently in your Comprehensive Housing and Market Assessment (Housing Study). Importantly, affordable housing has been identified as a top priority and critical need by many key Harrisonburg organizations, including:

Harrisonburg Rockingham Chamber of Commerce,
United Way of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County,
Faith in Action, and
The Arc of Harrisonburg.

It should be noted that the voices from these organizations represent dozens and dozens of city businesses and member organizations and thousands of city residents that have been consistent advocates and participants in building our healthy and vibrant community. There is unprecedented consensus on the need to address Harrisonburg's affordable housing crisis right now.

The Housing Study data indicates that in Harrisonburg City Public School elementary classrooms, at least one-in-three students are living in cost-burdened homes. Research also shows that 80-90% of new affordable housing built in Harrisonburg will be filled by current city families, including children already in our schools and the elderly already living here and who are both in desperate need of housing solutions. Approving the Simms Pointe project is a City Council action that directly addresses this critical need of Harrisonburg residents, businesses, and our schools.

A recent survey by HRHA (Jan 2022) indicates Harrisonburg vacancy rates for affordable rental units is now falling below 1% - less than 1/5th of what would be healthy for our community! We know that there is no location in Harrisonburg that will be perfect and free of issues or opposition. We also know that the critical need for affordable housing here is growing and will become even more damaging to our community if not addressed immediately.

By approving Simms Pointe, Harrisonburg City Council will be helping create a healthier community and take a positive step towards addressing a top priority and critical need in our community.

Respectfully,

Dany Fleming
on behalf of the Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority



HARRISONBURG - ROCKINGHAM
Chamber of Commerce

February 22, 2022

Dear Members of City Council,

As may you recall, the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Chamber of Commerce identified three priority areas as they relate to workforce development. Those topics are Transportation, Childcare and Affordable Housing. These are not new areas of concern. However, the collaboration, focused intensity, and commitment to solving them is new and palpable. We feel that by working together our community can bring about significant change.

We applaud the City's initiative and actions to address these matters, particularly in the affordable housing arena with the housing study and the zoning and subdivision ordinance project. This is the type of forward thinking and action our community needs in the ever-changing economic landscape.

The aforementioned housing study made clear the need for additional housing units within our community. We believe the lack of housing is a matter that can be addressed quickly through the multiple developments being proposed. This would in turn help alleviate another problem, a shortage in workforce. The lack of labor has been, and continues to be, a serious problem, with a shortage of housing being a contributing factor. This is something we hear from our members daily.

As new housing developments come before Council, we would urge you to view them through the lens of your study and use them as a catalyst to ensure our local economy remains strong. Like with any project, due diligence is needed, and we are confident that each development will be vetted as they present themselves and be weighed on their merits.

As you deliberate, please know that the Chamber is here to help, and we look forward to aiding your efforts to create more affordable housing throughout the entire community. At the end of the day, the Chamber's role is to help ensure local businesses have the workforce they need and that the citizens of Harrisonburg have the housing they deserve.

If you should ever have any questions, or would like additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out to us directly.

Sincerely,

Christopher Quinn
President & CEO
Harrisonburg-Rockingham Chamber of Commerce