



February 8th, 2022

Ms. Thanh Dang
Assistant Director of Community Development
City of Harrisonburg
409 South Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

RE: Response to “Due Diligence” Study

Dear Ms. Dang:

We are aware of a purported due diligence study that has been circulated to the members of the Planning Commission and City Council and would like to respond to what we feel is a very misleading document that intended to damage our reputation. Please include this letter to the members of the Commission for review prior to our upcoming meeting.

It is also worth noting that our maintenance staff at multiple locations reported to us that an unauthorized person was trespassing on the properties, attempting to enter non-public areas such as apartment units and maintenance rooms and attempting to interview staff and take pictures. We also have security camera footage of this individual as well. Presumably this individual also visited our property Liberty Pointe as would have been on the way between several of these properties but no photos appear from that location. In total, the subject properties consist of over 400 units spread across about 30 acres, and yet the majority of the images presented are do not actually show any issue at all, as is explained below. This should be taken into consideration when evaluating the credibility of the document presented.

Page 3 – Screenshot from BBB Website

This page highlights a 1 out of 5 star rating based on resident reviews. What is deliberately cut off (and provided in full below) is this is from a grand total of 14 negative reviews collected over the course of 3 years. Our company manages over 14,000 apartment units which are home to over 30,000 people. This equates to less than even 1 negative review for every 1,000 units we operate, or not quite 1/10th of a percent. The omission of the fact that this rating is based on a very small number of reviews is deliberate and intended to create a false impression of widespread dissatisfaction, whereas to the contrary we have an extraordinarily low rate of negative reviews in the context of the number of people who live at one of our properties. It also omits a B+ rating from BBB.

The screenshot displays the BBB profile for Woda Cooper Companies, Inc. The page header includes the BBB logo and navigation options. The main content area shows the company name, address, and contact information. A prominent message states 'Not BBB Accredited' with a rating of 1.07/5. The 'Customer Reviews' section shows a star rating and a link to 'Read Reviews'. The 'BBB Rating & Accreditation' section displays a 'B+' rating and a red warning: 'THIS BUSINESS IS NOT BBB ACCREDITED'. The 'Years in Business' is listed as 23. A cookie notice is visible at the bottom of the page.

Audubon Crossing Lawsuit

The \$10,000 unit modification requested by the tenant was installed approximately 18 months ago. The lawsuit is an attempt by an advocacy organization to claim damages and it is of note that this organization is claiming for itself nearly three times the amount it seeks for the tenant.

Freedman Pointe Photograph

At the time this photograph was taken, the main pump in the building's pump room had a suspected electrical issue. Out of an abundance of caution, our maintenance staff turned it off while waiting for an electrician to arrive and in put in a mobile temporary pump apparatus so when the sump filled it was pumped out rather than overflowing in the pump room.

This is proactive and responsible property management, in which care was taken to ensure a potential issue was handled by professionals and that there would be no damage to the building while awaiting the arrival of a 3rd party contractor. The 2nd photo shows a damp patch of earth from this arrangement, not anything that could be considered "flooding" or a life safety situation as implied by the document in question.

In respect to the images of the dumpsters, our staff reported that the individual who visited our property took this image in between when the trash contractor had lifted the dumpsters into the truck, which often results in trash falling out as the dumpsters are raised overhead, and when they are placed back on their pads. Staff picks up the spilled trash prior to the dumpsters being returned to their pads, and as the photos indicate themselves that this final step had not yet occurred because it can clearly be seen they are out of place. Therefore, this photo was taken in the middle of trash pick up and does not represent a standing condition.

As for the alleged trash on an adjacent parcel, this property is across an alley from our property that is frequently used as a cut-through, and there is no way to determine the origin of these items nor are we responsible for clean up on adjacent properties.

Brennan Pointe

Our dumpster enclosures are located at the back of the property in a gated area and not visible to the street. Our maintenance technician cleans up this area twice per day.

Bell Diamond

There was a storm the day prior to the date of the first photo, of a phone box cover that was blown out of place the following day. The second photo of items outside of a shed occurred while it was actively being cleaned by our staff, who had removed its contents to facilitate cleanup or disposal prior to putting those items back. This photo captures active property maintenance and care, although it is falsely portrayed as a standing condition. It is also worth noting that Bell Diamond is our largest property in the state and has about 10 acres of grounds. The fact that the author of this disparaging report only found a temporarily out of place phone box cover and tried to portray active winter housekeeping as something else entirely on a large property that presumably would have many examples of poor maintenance – if that were the actual case – is revealing.

Banks at Berkely

This property features a trash chute for residents to drop bagged garbage into rather than having to go outside to put it in a dumpster. The trash chute feeds into the trash room – which is the location of the photo – and which our staff cleans out daily. Again, the author of the “due diligence” report is trying to portray lax maintenance and entered a restricted area to do so, when what was actually being captured is a normal function of this property. The photos of the pallets show items someone had dumped at the property and which were cleaned up the same day as part of a routine sweep.

Brennan Pointe

This is an odd attempt to portray a normal occurrence on masonry as an issue of concern. Efflorescence is common on masonry because the salt that causes it is present in the bricks themselves. It does not pose any environmental or health hazards to people nor does it indicate any issue in respect to building integrity. It’s literally just a salt deposit.

City View

This property has had some issues with illegal dumping and our response was to activate a surveillance system in the problem area on January 28th. The images of damaged screens and blinds are routine maintenance issues that are addressed as they are found and the tenant is charged for replacement.

Bailey’s Court

These photos appear to show natural moisture on brick as snow melted after a winter storm. The missing piece of siding’s replacement had been ordered for replacement prior to this photograph, and the rest show minor maintenance issues.

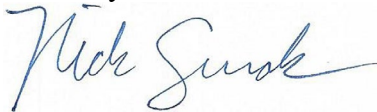
Summary

The author(s) of the due diligence report deliberately left out information from the BBB site that places the scope and scale of the reviews in proper context, inaccurately and deliberately portrayed active efforts at responsible property maintenance as areas of concern, highlighted naturally occurring issues such as efflorescence and moisture below gutters after snow melt as poor maintenance, and even tried to imply maintenance issues at other properties were our responsibility with not a shred of proof.

It is worth noting that after traveling to at least 7 properties that are home to over 400 units and more than 1,000 people, the authors had to manufacture false narratives about us to generate the 'report' that has been presented. This actually shows just what a weak argument they have that our rezoning application should be denied because we are not an effective operator of multifamily housing. We are an industry leader precisely because of the quality of work that we do – if we were the bad actors remonstrators claim, there is no way we would have grown to the size we have nor would we have multiple properties in many of our markets because our past performance would have turned local authorities against us.

We believe that it is appropriate to have a debate about whether a given change in zoning is suitable and meets the needs of the community and are content to have a discussion on that basis. However, having reviewed the comments and documentation against our proposal, it is clear that many will not have a good faith discussion of these issues and have resorted to misrepresentation and rumors. It should be further noted that prior to our original meeting date we proactively reached out to neighbors and offered to organize a virtual meeting to hear and hopefully address their concerns. That invitation was declined and it is clear to us why our efforts were not accepted.

Sincerely,



Senior Vice President
Woda Cooper Companies, Inc.

Woda Cooper Companies Affordable Housing Industry Awards

- Osborn Commons, Sault Ste. Marie, MI
 - **2021 Michigan Green Building of the Year – Homes, USGBC**
 - **2021 Best Rural Development, Affordable Housing Finance (AHF) Readers' Choice Awards**
- The Livingston, Columbus, OH
 - **2021 Best Senior Property, Charles L. Edson Award, Affordable Housing Tax Credit Coalition**
- Douglas Greene, Kodak, TN
 - **2021 Best Family Development, AHF Reader's Choice Awards;**
- North Avenue Gateway II, Baltimore, MD
 - **2020 Green Building of the Year Finalist, USGBC-MD**

Woda Cooper Companies Affordable Housing Industry Awards

- Prospect Yard, Cleveland, OH
 - **2021 Heritage Ohio Award for Best Adaptive Reuse**
 - **2021 Downtown Development Award, Downtown Cleveland Alliance**
 - **2020 Best Adaptive Reuse, Finalist, NAHB Multifamily Pillars of the Industry Awards**
- Boury Lofts, Wheeling, WV
 - **2020 Best Apartment Community in the Ohio Valley**
 - **2017 Best Use of Historic Tax Credits, Preservation Alliance of West Virginia**
 - **2017 Best Adaptive Reuse, NAHB Multifamily Pillars of the Industry**
- Fairwood Commons, Columbus, OH
 - **2020 Ohio Project of the Year, USGBC**
 - **2019 Property of the Year and Best Green Property, AHF Readers' Choice Awards**

Woda Cooper Companies Affordable Housing Industry Awards

- Nelsonville Commons, Nelsonville, OH
 - **Rural Category Winner, 2019 AHF Readers' Choice Award**
 - **2019 Heritage Ohio, Best Residential Rehabilitation, Annual Preservation and Revitalization Awards**
- Bell Diamond Manor, Norfolk, VA
 - **2018 Best Acquisition/Rehabilitation, NAHB**
- Atz Place, Kendallville, IN
 - **2018 Best Rural Property, Finalist, AHF Readers' Choice Awards**
 - **2018 Rural Impact Winner, Novogradac Development of Distinction**
 - **2018 Honorable Mention, Charles L. Edson Awards, Best Rural Property, Affordable Housing Tax Credit Coalition**

Woda Cooper Companies Affordable Housing Industry Awards

- Mallalieu Pointe, East Point, GA
 - **2018 Green Award, Outstanding Residential Project, USGBC –Georgia**
- Portland School Apartments, Portland, MI
 - **2018 Best Historic Rehabilitation, Finalist, AHF Readers' Choice Awards**
- Kreider Commons, Lebanon, PA
 - **2017 Green Property of Year, AHF Readers' Choice Awards**
 - **2017 Best Affordable Apartment Community up to 100 Units, NAHB**
 - **2017 Architecture and Design Award, Senior Housing News**
 - **2017 Forever Green Project of the Year USGBC-Central PA**

Woda Cooper Companies Affordable Housing Industry Awards

- Stanton Oaks, Atlanta, GA
 - **2016 Fulcrum Award, Southface Energy Institute**
 - **2016 Honorable Mention, Charles L. Edson Awards, Affordable Housing Tax Credit Coalition**
 - **2016, Winner Preservation of Existing Affordable Housing, Novogradac Developments of Distinction**
- Washington School, Washington Court House, OH
 - **2015 Merit Award, State Historic Preservation Office Awards**
- Lloyd House, Menominee, MI
 - **2015 Governor's Award for Historic Rehabilitation**
 - **2015 Finalist, Historic Rehabilitation, AHF Readers' Choice Awards**