

Thanh Dang

From: Robin Lester <robinlester88@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2023 3:25 PM
To: Thanh Dang; Meghan T. Rupkey
Cc: David Mac
Subject: Special Use Permit 1111 & 1123 N Main St

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

Hello,

My name is Robin Lester and I am the new owner of the Dollar General on 49 Tyco St. which is adjacent to the property that is seeking zoning for parking space for a possible future homeless shelter.

I will say we are very disheartened to hear of this news. We recently purchased this property because of the many nice townhomes in the area and thought it would be very accommodating to the residents. We were also optimistic that the building would grow in value or at least hold it's value as this is an investment for our retirement. We do not have a 401 K.

We believe that a homeless shelter and parking will drastically decrease the value of this property. We also believe that a homeless shelter and parking will decrease the number of customers for Dollar General which could lead to Dollar General deciding to no longer lease the property which could cause us to end up with an empty building with much lower value. Empty buildings typically end up as an eye sore to the community.

We are fearful that a homeless shelter will draw more homeless people to the area going in and out and walking the nearby premises as well as introducing drugs to the area. People are not going to take their children into a retail store in these surroundings. I also wouldn't think residents would want to live near this environment.

I would think the city would consider a location that would not be close to so many residents and a retail store that is dependant on the residents. There has to be other locations that would be more suitable.

People in general are trying very hard to work, invest for their future, and make it safe for their families and I would only hope the City of Harrisonburg would be sensitive to that.

I am in no way dismissing the value of the homeless population. They are important people who do need help and programs to educate and support their medical needs. However, It is unfortunate that areas designated for the homeless population can negatively affect the residents and the businesses around them. Again, it should be the city's responsibility to be sensitive and respectful for the citizens working so very hard to keep their homes nice and pay their taxes. There has to be other locations that are not adjacent to a business that the local residents use. Do not misunderstand me please. I think it is commendable what you desire to do, I just think it should be another location.

With all due respect, we are very much opposed to this special use permit.

Please consider the things I have stated and put yourself in our situation and the residents in the nearby area.

Thank you,

Robin Lester