

From: Grace W. Hillsman gonwh@comcast.net
Subject: Woodland Rezoning
Date: October 1, 2019 at 2:30 PM
To: Trinh.Dang@harrisonburgva.gov Trinh.Dang@HarrisonburgVA.gov

Honorable Mayor, Vice-Mayor, and Council Members

We are Marvin and Grace Hillsman, who reside at 756 Woodland Drive, Harrisonburg, VA. We represent only ourselves in strongly opposing the re-zoning request of Willie Lanier, Jr. and Kathy Hite, regarding property adjacent to our Subdivision.

Our grounds include the following:

1. Traffic is already heavy on Reservoir Street and the proponents now request an exit onto Woodland Drive in our residential Subdivision. It would be located only 90 feet from the Reservoir/Woodland traffic light in order to give 378 college students access to Reservoir. Even its construction would be problematic because it would be built virtually against the rear property lines of the homes on White Oak Drive. This is not reasonable because it would create more congestion and safety concerns and impede us from reaching the light.
2. The City's Comprehensive Plan does not support such re-zoning, but, in fact, encourages more reasonable uses as opposed to high density. Mr. Lanier attempts to evade this by maintaining that mixed use is desirable at this location. His argument fails since there is an abundance of the businesses he mentions as close as Neff Avenue and University Boulevard, e.g. restaurants, bars, convenience stores, and retain.
3. Noise from the six-story high rise would be inescapable with the number of residents and its swimming pool on the roof, including live music. Imagine the reality of that on weekends! We already have the very large Sunchase complex on the other side and the Charleston Townes complex on the opposite of Reservoir. We would be virtually surrounded by college apartments.
4. There is already a water problem in our Subdivision; witness the recent construction of the holding pond at the corner of Woodland and Reservoir. That pond has not been effective, since residents on White Oak and the lower portion of Woodland still have significant flooding. Adding a 400-car paved parking lot uphill from our area would be a disaster.
5. This re-zoning would be an obvious and unlawful spot zoning. The Supreme Court of Virginia has clearly given its definition. If the re-zoning is only to serve one's PRIVATE interests, it is arbitrary and capricious. However, if it is to further the welfare of the ENTIRE city, it is lawful. Mr. Lanier has not met this burden of proof and would never be able to meet it. His project only furthers the welfare of college students, bars, restaurants, and Kline's Ice Cream.

Please follow the lead of the Planning Commission and deny this request. You are our family's only source of protection.

Marvin Hillsman *Grace Hillsman*

Marvin and Grace Hillsman
October 1, 2019

October 2, 2019

Mr. Fletcher:

I am a homeowner in the Woodland subdivision. My address is 720 Woodland Drive, at the corner of White Oak Circle and Woodland Dr. I have four major concerns about the rezoning and special use permits requested for the land identified as parcels 2150, 2152, 2156, and 2158 Reservoir Street and 717 Foley Road.

1. The existing flooding of Woodland will worsen.
2. The noise level in Woodland will increase.
3. The change of this zoning and sight of this monstrous building will cause a decline in my property value.
4. The resulting traffic issues and parking problems will affect the safety of our children.

Flooding in Woodland has been a problem for several years. It is a major concern to me, since my property is at the lowest point in the area. When I purchased my home in 2001, I was not required to have flood insurance, since my home was not in the flood zone. Due to the changes that were made to the land around Woodland, I had to purchase flood insurance when I refinanced my home. The same thing happened to Harry Chandler at 652 White Oak Circle. This area was named Woodland because it was originally surrounded by woods. Then the city allowed the Sunchase apartments to be built, and then Charleston Townes. This loss of permeable land has increased the flow of water into our neighborhood. These flooding episodes are worsening each year. I am talking serious flooding from just an uneventful thunderstorm. We have not had the remnants of a hurricane since 1996. I would hate to think what could happen if we get a tropical storm event. Last September several residents purchased sandbags when Hurricane Florence was expected to come this direction. We feared the water retention pond at the corner of Woodland Dr. and Reservoir St. would again overflow its banks and flood our neighborhood. I feared the water would again flow so fast down White Oak Circle it would bypass the storm drain and come up my driveway. Margie Kostel feared again the river of water that runs behind her home at 662 White Oak Circle might rise too far and flood her downstairs. Jeanette Kelly, at 732 Woodland, feared the water from Foley Rd would again wash into her crawl space or worse. Thankfully, the storm did not make it to our location. Water in the drainage ditch between Woodland and Sunchase has overflowed onto Woodland Drive around our mailboxes. The drainage ditch is not sufficient to handle all the water that flows into it. The floodwaters have been so forceful between 652 and 654 White Oak Circle, the large rocks in the drain there have washed into the

street. Residents had to clear these rocks in order to drive to their homes. I am sending you a video of one of these flood events that a neighbor made on their phone. I want you to see the force and amount of this water that came from just a small thunderstorm. Flooding on Woodland Drive affects all 53 homes in our subdivision, as this is the ONLY entrance and exit!!

I have been calling city officials for years about the flooding problem. Gene Sly from Public Works has walked this neighborhood with me to identify the problems. He has been very diligent about keeping the storm drains clean before any major storm is forecast for our area. Rebecca Stimson has listened to our concerns, and is presently working with us through the new Drainage Improvement Program. There is no guarantee that our neighborhood will be selected for this program. If our neighborhood is selected to receive help with stormwater runoff, it will be minimal and not immediate. There is nothing in any plan to divert any of the water already coming this direction. There is no plan in place to improve any drainage problem that already exists. I believe city officials should take care of the problems that have already been created, before allowing any more new construction on land surrounding our neighborhood.

When I first moved into my home, Norland Bodkin was moving out of his home at 743 Woodland Dr. due to the noise coming from Sunchase apartments. He passed the paperwork on to me for the neighbors to sign in order to get Blue Zone parking. Before we got the Blue zone parking, it was hard to find a parking space on our streets because the students at Sunchase and their visitors were parking in front of our homes. It was hard to sleep at night due to all the noise, especially at 2 am - 3 am. People coming to parties at Sunchase trashed our neighborhood. They urinated in our flowerbeds. They yelled and screamed in the middle of the night. If you asked them nicely to be quiet, they drove up and down the street blowing the horn yelling F___ you! I invite you to check all the complaints to the police department during that time. Thankfully, Kurt Boshart of the police department was instrumental in getting the managers of Sunchase, the police department, and Woodland residents together to help resolve these issues. These problems are much better now, but not totally gone. We still need to be vigilant to report any cars parked here illegally. We also call the nonemergency number of the police department when the noise gets too loud late at night. A lot of the noise issues come from the construction design of Sunchase. These apartments tower over our homes. The stairwells echo the noise. All of this should have been taken into account before these apartments were built. When Charleston Townes was built, more noise was created on Reservoir Street. A lot of this noise comes from groups of students walking along the street yelling at cars or people over on decks of the townhomes. Students walk through our neighborhood going back and forth to parties at Sunchase and Charleston Townes. The construction of more student housing in this area of Reservoir Street is only going to add more noise to a problem that already exists here.

I am concerned the value of my property will decrease due to the influx of student housing around my neighborhood. If another building housing college students is built, we will be surrounded by large, unsightly buildings that overpower the look of our neighborhood. The noise and unsightly trash are constant problems. These problems do not go away once a building is finished or once a complaint is filed. I work hard to maintain my property. I pick up trash from our streets most mornings while walking my dog. There will definitely be more flooding once construction begins on this land. This is going to affect the resale of my property. People will think twice about buying a home that requires flood insurance when they can go elsewhere and buy one without that requirement and the extra payment required .

Since the Woodland subdivision is comprised of cul-de-sacs, most of the neighbors here know each other. We are a close knit neighborhood. We help each other. Woodland is a wonderful place to walk and bike. I often talk to people from other neighborhoods or nearby businesses who come here to walk and ride bikes. People often drive into Woodland looking for a home to buy in this neighborhood because of its location and its streets with limited traffic. We have JMU professors living here and other residents that walk to work. Some ride the city transit. Now that we have the light with the crossing signal on Reservoir Street, I can walk to my doctors and other appointments. This is a great neighborhood to live in. It is a great place for families. The children play in our cul- de -sacs. Parents walk their children to the Arboretum at JMU and the Dream Come True playground on Neff Ave. I hope you will preserve the safety of our children by not allowing traffic from these proposed businesses to exit into our neighborhood. Since I am at the corner of White Oak Circle and Woodland Drive, I see many cars enter Woodland and then spin around at the area near the mailboxes because they realize there is no outlet. They often drive too fast. We are going to have much more of this traffic if a new development borders our road.

In conclusion, I cannot support the rezoning or special uses permits of these properties on Reservoir Street. The addition of more student housing around Woodland is going to add more noise to our neighborhood. I feel endangered by the change of more permeable land to the creation of more impervious land because of the flooding problems that already exist. I am concerned about the effect it will have on my property value and the safety of our children. Thank you for understanding the concerns I have presented here.

Sincerely,

Victoria G. Harris

September 29, 2019

Thanh Dang, AICP
City of Harrisonburg
Department of Planning & Community Development
409 South Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Dear Ms. Dang,

I am writing to express my concern over the proposed rezoning of the plot near Woodland Drive. As a home owner and resident on Woodland Drive, I believe that this proposed six-story building would be a negative addition to our community. This area of Harrisonburg is very resident-friendly with safe and quiet streets and a solid neighborhood community. Very few structures in Harrisonburg are this large and we feel that this addition would be an eye-sore for this part of town, add much more traffic to the area and it would inconvenience many residents who use Woodland Drive daily to access their homes. Please reconsider this rezoning so that we can maintain the neighborhood feel of Woodland Drive.

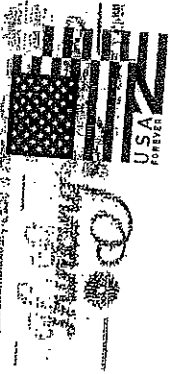
Sincerely,

Thomas Abrams
Woodland Drive Resident

Thomas Lee Abrams
753 Woodland Dr.
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

RICHMOND VA 22801

30 SEP 2019 09:31 L



Ms. Thanh Dang, AICP
City of Harrisonburg
Dept. of Planning + Community Dev
409 S. Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

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