

## Thanh Dang

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**From:** Alison Banks  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2020 3:57 PM  
**To:** Thanh Dang  
**Subject:** FW: opposition to right of way closure request

FYI...

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**From:** Rebecca Brannon <rebecca.brannon@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2020 3:47 PM  
**To:** Alison Banks <Alison.Banks@harrisonburgva.gov>  
**Subject:** opposition to right of way closure request

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

Dear Ms. Banks:

I am writing in response to a sign that recently went up in my neighborhood advertising a request to close a public right of way. The sign indicates that Christopher and Susan Versen wish to close a right of way between Monticello Avenue and Myers Avenue. That right of way is the path children and parents take between almost all of the Old Town neighborhood and Spotswood Elementary School, the public school in the area.

I am opposed to any effort to close, limit, or restrict that right of way that allows safe access to the elementary school. My children and I use to walk back and forth to the school and the exercise track for the school, which the whole family uses for exercise on the weekends and evenings. It is an important part of the neighborhood and has existed for a long time.

I understand after speaking to Ms. Banks on the phone that the effort is to limit the size of the right of way while still maintaining the right of way. I still believe the city needs to maintain the full right of way. The homeowners purchased a property whose price reflected the right of way through their property. There is no mystery here. An ample right of way is vital to allow many students to walk to school unmolested by homeowners. The school crossing guard is actually based at the end of the right of way to help students cross.

I want to also add I am surprised that this sign went up in the middle of a summer pandemic and while people would be less likely to walk that path. Further, it went up at a time when school in Harrisonburg has just been moved officially to online. It strikes me the petitioners sought to take advantage of a time when students would not be walking to school to try to push this change through without public notice. It is shady at best.

Please forward these comments to the planning commission when they meet. I appreciate your help on the phone today explaining the request.

Thanks,  
Rebecca Brannon

## Thanh Dang

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**From:** Joel Maynard <joelmaynard3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 31, 2020 10:01 AM  
**To:** Thanh Dang  
**Cc:** Rachel M. Drescher  
**Subject:** Re: Alley closure Monticello/ Myers ave

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

Good morning Than, I just looked at the application to close a portion of the alleyway between Myers and Monticello. I am pleased to see that the applicants do not want to close the entire alleyway and they recognize that it is used heavily by school children and locals as a access. My only comments are that I am in support of keeping these alleyways open in general and in particular this one is a very important one for the neighborhood. That being said I have no problems with the portion that the applicants want to buy.

Thank you again for the information. Take care,

Joel Maynard

On Fri, Jul 31, 2020 at 8:12 AM Rachel M. Drescher <[Rachel.Drescher@harrisonburgva.gov](mailto:Rachel.Drescher@harrisonburgva.gov)> wrote:  
Hi Mr. Maynard,

Attached is a copy of the application and included within are illustrations showing the area that the applicant is requesting to close. The applicant desires to close the portion of the right-of-way adjacent to the rear half of their property at 445 Myers Avenue. Note that the neighbor at 371 Myers Avenue uses the paved portion of the right-of-way to access a driveway that was recently constructed and therefore does not appear in aerial photos. Staff is recommending that at least 14-ft width of the ROW be kept by the City for continued use by people walking and biking through this area. (If you're interested in a little bit of history, the undeveloped right-of-way is about 35 ft. wide. In 1995, a 20-ft wide portion of the right-of-way adjacent to 410 Monticello Avenue was approved for closure while a 15-ft wide alley was reserved as a pedestrian walkway.)

This request is scheduled to be presented to Planning Commission on August 12 at 6pm and to City Council on September 8, 2020. Anyone wishing to comment on this request may do so by emailing their comments addressed to Planning Commission and/or City Council to [Thanh.Dang@harrisonburgva.gov](mailto:Thanh.Dang@harrisonburgva.gov), mailing a letter to Community Development, C/O Thanh Dang, [409 South Main Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22801](https://www.harrisonburgva.gov/409-South-Main-Street-Harrisonburg-VA-22801) or by calling the phone number listed on the meeting agenda when the request is being considered. The meeting agendas are posted about 5-7 days before the meetings at: <https://harrisonburg-va.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>.

Let us know if you have any questions.

Thanks,  
Rachel

Rachel Drescher  
Zoning Administrator  
Department of Community Development  
City of Harrisonburg  
540-432-7700

## Thanh Dang

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**From:** Penrod, Helen L. <helen\_penrod@merck.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 3, 2020 1:24 PM  
**To:** Thanh Dang  
**Subject:** RE: Undeveloped ROW closure between Monticello/ Myers Ave

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

Hello Ms. Dang,  
Yes, you may include my email as public comment for Planning Commission and City Council.  
Helen Penrod

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**From:** Thanh Dang <Thanh.Dang@harrisonburgva.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 3, 2020 9:02 AM  
**To:** Penrod, Helen L. <helen\_penrod@merck.com>  
**Subject:** RE: Undeveloped ROW closure between Monticello/ Myers Ave

**EXTERNAL EMAIL** – Use caution with any links or file attachments.

Thank you, Ms. Penrod. Would you like for your email below to be included as public comment for Planning Commission and City Council to see?

**Thanh Dang, AICP** | Assistant Director of Community Development

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**From:** Penrod, Helen L. <helen\_penrod@merck.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, August 1, 2020 1:44 PM  
**To:** Thanh Dang <Thanh.Dang@harrisonburgva.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Undeveloped ROW closure between Monticello/ Myers Ave

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

Ms. Dang,

Thank you very much for the history of the right-of-way between Monticello and Myers, and the ROW Closure application. I live in the neighborhood and was particularly interested in the pedestrian access to the paper alley. All the Penrod children have walked that way to Spotswood Elementary over the years and it is also a favorite walking route for myself.

I am very pleased to now know that the requestor and Community Development have already considered the pedestrian access. The desires of the requestor were well expressed in the application, and the aerial view and pictures were extremely helpful in conveying the intent. I think the proposal is a win-win for all involved – requestor, City, Community Development, and neighborhood pedestrians.

Thank you for sharing the information with me and for effectively gathering input from all involved.

Helen Penrod

## Thanh Dang

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**From:** Nora Anderson <nora.anderson341@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 6, 2020 4:09 PM  
**To:** Thanh Dang  
**Subject:** Fwd: Right of way between Myers and Monticello Avenue

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

>  
> Hi  
>  
> I read the proposed closure of the right of way sign posted. This is for closure between Myers Avenue and Monticello Avenue. Alison Banks left a voicemail regarding the proposed closure. I was told I could email this address to state my concerns. I am opposed to this. My reasons are:  
>  
> 1. My grandson uses this right of way to access Spotswood Elementary. It doesn't have vehicular traffic (except 2 driveways) which makes it safer than sidewalks and roads.  
> 2. Alison said the proposed right of way is to be 15 ft wide instead of 35 ft. The path that is used now is very narrow. It goes through people's yards. I don't see how it could be narrower.  
>  
> I believe if the right of way is granted the money from the sale of right of way should be designated for improvement of the walkway.

It should be stated that fences, shrubs, trees etc should not be used to block the right of way.  
>  
> I travel the country and urban areas are making more pedestrian pathways/biking trails. This would be an excellent place to show this initiative.  
>  
>  
> Nora Anderson  
> 517-256-2063