

January 19, 2018

Randall C. Webber
325 East Kentucky Street
Louisville, KY 40203

Laura Mattingly
Metro Development Center
444 South Fifth Street, Third Floor
Louisville, KY 40202

Re: Case 17ZONE1078
953 S. Clay St. (zoning change) and 952-956 S. Clay St. (CUP)

Dear Ms. Mattingly:

The case noted above is located in the community that I serve as neighborhood association president. Our organization canceled its January 15, 2018 meeting, owing to the holiday, weather, and road conditions. Consequently, I am expressing only my opinion and not that of any entity beyond myself.

I regret that I will be unable to attend the public meeting this coming Monday. For that reason, I am providing this letter to place my opinions and questions on the public record.

I spoke with Sarah Ferguson by phone yesterday and reviewed most of the content of this letter with her. In addition, I issued and she accepted an invitation to make a presentation at Smoketown Neighborhood Association's February 19, 2018 meeting.

One of my responsibilities at my place of employment is to manage the Wayside Expressions art gallery. Consequently, my perspective is informed by several years in the local visual arts community.

I am basically sympathetic to Sarah Ferguson's proposal to develop an art studio/gallery and parking area on the subject properties. My reasons are as follows: (1) The proposed studio/gallery potentially could increase the cultural opportunities for my low-income constituents and (2) the proposed usage is consistent with the current configuration of the properties. Regarding current configuration, 953 S. Clay St. is a commercial structure in size and design. It serves as a buffer between the former corner store facing Kentucky St. and the houses on Clay St. Across Clay St. from 953, the other properties already form an unpaved parking lot with three telephone poles.

I understand the need for a conditional use permit for the parking lot. However, I am unclear as to the rationale for the proposed zoning change. The 2006 land development code lists art gallery specifically as a permitted use for both Urban Neighborhood (2.2-8) and Office/residential (2.3-1). In any case, Smoketown is a mixed-use neighborhood, which makes consistent zoning difficult to achieve.

Regarding expected crowd size and parking requirements, I know from experience that studios and galleries require little parking at least 95% of the time. Attendance at their events fluctuates considerably.

Peak attendance usually is low, occasionally higher. I would guess that the parking lot plus some on-street parking on Clay, Caldwell, and Kentucky almost always would be sufficient for the gallery's needs.

I have the following four recommendations for Sarah Ferguson:

1. Obtain sufficient parking lot design consultation to minimize the possibility that customers might knock down any of the telephone poles in the parking lot. From the proprietor's perspective, this would be a prudent risk management strategy.
2. Explain the rationale for the proposed zoning change since both the current and the proposed classifications specifically permit the intended use of the facility.
3. Explain the rationale for the proposed corporate structure (two separate LLCs). What individual or entity is responsible for the operation of the facility, crowd control, situations in which there may be liability, and other issues?
4. Form a cooperative relationship with other art establishments, especially the Steam Exchange since it is located in Smoketown (Clay/Jacob). Given my experience in the local art community, I may be of some assistance. In any case, this is a normal business practice in the arts community and has the potential to help the new studio/gallery find its niche.

I look forward to discussing the proposal further with Sarah Ferguson on February 19, 2018. Meanwhile, if you have questions or concerns, you may contact me at 666@webberconsulting.org, 502-836-7661, or the snail mail address on this letter. I will be available by phone at the number above during the meeting this coming Monday.

Sincerely,



Randall C. Webber

Cc: Sarah Ferguson