

April 9, 2019

Lexington-Fayette Urban County Planning Commission
200 East Main Street
Lexington, Kentucky 40507

Re: Rezoning Proposal – Winners Circle (The Silks Club)

Dear Commissioners:

Please be advised that I represent Easley & Faust Properties, LLC. My client desires to rezone approximately 13.83 gross acres from the Single Family Residential (R-1B) zone to the Planned Neighborhood Residential (R-3) zone in order to construct a townhome development on the property. We submit that this proposal is in accord with the recently adopted “Imagine Lexington” Comprehensive Plan, and request your approval of this map amendment request.

Winners Circle is a loop street located off of Versailles Road near its intersection with New Circle Road, within but near the border of the Urban Service Boundary (“USB”). These parcels are presently zoned R-1B, but have failed to develop as a single family residential development. Our proposal is to rezone these lots into a townhome development, with an eye towards marketing these units towards Lexington’s aging population. As you are certainly aware, as our population ages, many residents are looking to downsize their homes and reduce maintenance obligations (such as yard work). We believe this site is appropriate for rezoning according to the guidance provided in “Imagine Lexington.”

We think this development is a highly appropriate development that activates underutilized land along an important corridor (Versailles Road) in our community, while minimally impacting adjacent development. This proposal provides for additional residential density without negatively impacting existing neighborhoods. It provides for density along corridors, a key component of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan. And it is a well-designed single-family attached residential development that provides for housing choice in an area that presently presents no options aside from single-family detached residential.

In sum, we are excited to present this proposal to the Planning Commission for consideration. We think it meets numerous goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan, and further complies with relevant standards articulated in the “Placebuilder” included as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

We submit that this proposal comports with the 2018 Comprehensive Plan in the following ways:

Theme A – Growing Successful Neighborhoods

We submit that this proposal comports with Theme A of the Comprehensive Plan. In reviewing Theme A, we maintain that this development comports with the applicable design policies articulated, and is appropriately dense. We further submit that it meets the following goals and objectives articulated in Theme A:

Expand Housing Types

We believe this proposal meets objectives (b) and (c) of Goal 1 of Theme A, in that the development is designed for pedestrian utilization of an adjacent undeveloped park, and that it minimizes disruption of natural features inasmuch as it utilizes infrastructure placed for a previously unsuccessful development. In this area of our community, there is virtually no housing variety, as all surrounding areas are single-family or agriculturally zoned. However, we think this development appropriate integrates with that existing design, inasmuch as this development does not require utilization of existing community infrastructure that could be considered problematic for current residents – i.e., the development is self-contained and does not require utilization of existing neighborhood streets, for instance.

Support Infill & Redevelopment throughout the Urban Service Area as a Strategic Component of Growth

We also believe that his proposal meets objective (a), (b), and (c) of Goal 2 of Theme A, in that it utilizes a presently underutilized area that is ready for development, that it is context sensitive development, and that it permits utilization of a large community greenspace area in the adjacent park. Our proposal provides an additional housing option in the area – namely, single-family attached residential development. The development is located along Lextran Route 21, which would permit residents to utilize public transit. And we are providing pedestrian infrastructure to connect to the adjacent park, as well as maintaining the existing structure and pool on the property for resident use, which will meet the needs of the anticipated residential population.

Provide Well-Designed Neighborhoods & Communities

Finally concerning Theme A, we submit that this proposal meets objectives (a) and (b) of Goal 3, in that it furthers the commitment to provide mixed-type housing, and provides locations for safe, positive social interactions. As mentioned above, the development intends to provide access to the open greenspace on the adjacent parcel, and to maintain a community “center” in the form of the clubhouse and pool for residential use. Our plan will permit residents of the community to engage in positive social interactions with their neighbors. It also preserves existing neighborhoods while providing additional residential density in their general vicinity without overburdening or really even impacting their existing infrastructure.

Theme B – Protecting the Environment

Reduce Lexington-Fayette County's Carbon Footprint

We submit that this development comports with the above-referenced goal of Theme B. This site is located very near Versailles Road's intersection with New Circle Road. New Circle Road has historically been considered the gateway to the inner-core of Lexington, and along virtually every other corridor, has dense development adjacent to it. Versailles Road is one location where development has lagged. However, because of its closer proximity to the core of our city, and its adjacency to an existing Lextran route, this development provides for an opportunity to reduce our carbon footprint. Residents of our development can be in the urban core in ten (10) short minutes and are less than five (5) miles from the urban core, which is a rare feat for new residential developments in our community.

Theme D – Improving a Desirable Community

Work to Achieve an Effective & Comprehensive Transportation System

We submit that our proposal meets objectives (a) and (c) of Goal 1 of Theme D. Our development will incorporate pedestrian facilities within the development, as well as provide a pedestrian linkage to the adjacent undeveloped park, and will further provide additional density along our corridors, thus potentially facilitating an expansion of mass transit on the Versailles Road corridor. As the proposed site is along a major corridor of our community, the public infrastructure already in place will be efficiently able to serve the proposed development.

Protect & Enhance the Natural & Cultural Landscapes that Give Lexington-Fayette County its Unique Identity & Image

We further submit that our proposal meets objectives (a) and (b) of Goal 3 of Theme D. As part of our proposal, we are requesting to retain the existing home on the property that was constructed in 1930. We envision this serving as a community center, and represents an appropriate and effective reuse of an existing structure. This directly addresses the above mentioned objectives, which encourage retention and reuse of existing structures, and reflects our commitment to these goals and objectives.

Theme E – Urban & Rural Balance

Uphold the Urban Service Area Concept

Finally, we submit that the subject proposal addresses objectives (a), (b), (c), and (d) of Goal 1 of Theme E of the Comprehensive Plan. As I know you are well aware, maintaining the current USB and encouraging denser development within the existing USB is a chief goal of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan. We believe this is precisely the type of proposal envisioned by the Comprehensive Plan: it utilizes an underutilized area, provides density along a major corridor, and reduces further pressure on expansion of the USB by

providing additional residential density without negatively impacting existing communities. By permitting this type of development, the Planning Commission ensures that undue pressure is not placed on expansion of the boundary. We think this is particularly relevant along the Versailles Road corridor in this location, which has not previously significantly developed.

Maintain the Current Boundaries of the Urban Service Area

We further submit that this proposal meets the intent of Goal 3 of Theme E, which is currently in effect pending resolution of the study contemplated in Goal 4. Permitting additional density along a significant corridor that does not negatively impact neighborhood certainly assists in the maintenance of the existing boundary, while also providing crucially needed additional residential density. As this body is well aware, Lexington is currently projected to need thousands of additional housing units. The almost three-fold increase in density for this site from its present category to the proposed category will aid in maintenance of the boundary.

The Placebuilder

We have further evaluated our proposal under the design criteria in the Placebuilder. In consultation with Planning staff, we submit that this proposal should be evaluated as the Enhanced Neighborhood Place Type, and that the proposed development is appropriately classified as low density (notwithstanding that it increases the existing permitted density on the site). We submit that this classification is appropriate because the general area already has residential uses, and is providing new housing types in the area. R-3 is one of the suggested zoning categories for this place type.

Attached hereto is a color-coded reflection of how we have addressed the design criteria listed in that Placebuilder category. Items highlighted in green are represented graphically on our amended preliminary development plan; items in yellow are addressed in this letter, and items highlighted in orange we do not believe are applicable to our proposal.

Standards That Are Applicable to Our Proposal

A-DS5-3: The buildings are oriented towards the planned internal pedestrian improvements, and further, we intend to provide a pedestrian connection to the adjacent undeveloped park to create a more pedestrian friendly environment.

B-SU11-1: To the extent practicable, and as further contemplated upon submission of the final development plan and building permit applications, green infrastructure will be considered for inclusion.

C-LI6-2: We have discussed with staff and are open to consideration of alternative dwelling units (“ADUs”) being incorporated in the final development plan; however, since our proposal is intended to be marketed towards Lexington’s aging population, we are considering the most appropriate way this could be integrated and utilized as part of the development.

C-LI7-1: Because of the small size of our proposed project, we do not believe it is appropriate to incorporate commercial uses at this location. However, the development is located on a major corridor, and in reasonably close proximity to retail uses.

C-PS10-3: The development is not overparked and appropriate parking has been provided.

D-PL7-1: The adjacent Wellesley Heights Neighborhood has been consulted prior to filing.

D-PL9-1: The existing home on the property is proposed to be retained and reused.

D-SP9-1: As our development is intended to be marketed to a senior population, we think we meet this goal. Further, as listed above, we are open to continued discussion as to whether ADUs can be effectively incorporated in to this development.

A-DS4-1: This development is proposed along a major corridor that presently receives service from Lextran. We are open to working with Lextran to see whether a transit stop at this location is advisable as we further refine our development plans.

A-DS5-1: Due to the size of our development, we do not believe there will be significant traffic conflicts between various modes of transit; however, we will provide pedestrian infrastructure in the interior of our development.

D-CO2-2: Pedestrian facilities are proposed for use within the development. There are no existing pedestrian nor bike facilities along Versailles Road, and thus, we do not believe it would be appropriate for us to provide more than the proposed internal sidewalks.

Standards Not Applicable

A-DS7-2: Our development proposal is considered single-family attached residential. However, it is noteworthy that our parking areas are in fact buffered by our proposed townhouse units.

A-EQ7-1: No school is proposed for this site.

C-PS10-2: Our development does not feature a currently underutilized parking lot.

D-SP1-1: No school is proposed for this site.

D-SP1-2: No school is proposed for this site.

D-SP3-1: We submit that the existing right-of-way and facilities are adequate to support our development.

D-SP3-2: No cellular towers are proposed as part of this application.

E-GR9-1: Due to the intended residential occupants of our development, we have not sought to include live/work units in this proposal.

A-DS1-1: There is presently not a bus stop at this location; though, as stated above, we are open to working with Lextran to determine whether this is appropriate.

A-DS1-2: As above, at this time there is not a transit stop at this location; though, again, we remain open to discussion of this point.

A-DS5-2: Due to building setback considerations, suburban location, and the proposed HOA ownership of the front areas of the development, we do not believe this standard is applicable.

A-DS10-2: We are utilizing existing focal points (the existing home and pool and the undeveloped park), and thus, are not designing a new focal point.

A-DS13-1: There are no stub streets impacting this development, nor are any proposed.

B-SU4-1: Greenspace is located within walking distance of this development.

D-CO1-1: We are utilizing existing streets and infrastructure to support the proposed development.

D-CO4-2: We are utilizing existing streets and infrastructure to support the proposed development.

D-CO4-3: We are utilizing existing streets and infrastructure to support the proposed development.

D-CO5-1: We are utilizing existing streets and infrastructure to support the proposed development.

D-SP1-3: No school is proposed for this site.

B-PR2-2: There are no floodplain areas on this site.

B-PR2-3: There are no floodplain areas on this site.

B-RE2-1: There is not a greenway network in this area.

D-SP2-1: No school is proposed for this site.

D-SP2-2: No school is proposed for this site.

E-GR3-1: There is not a greenway network in this area.

E-GR3-2: We are utilizing the existing focal point.

Conclusion

In sum, we submit that our proposal is in accord with the 2018 Comprehensive Plan. We look forward to our continued discussions with staff and the Commission, and request your approval of our request. Of course, if I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very Truly Yours,



Jacob C. Walbourn