

PARTNERSHIP  
FOR A NEW  
PHOEBUS

September 1, 2015

Ms. Gay LaRue  
Chair,  
Hampton Planning Commission  
22 Lincoln Street  
Hampton, VA 23669

Dear Ms. LaRue:

This letter relates to zoning ordinance amendments no. 167-2015, 171-2015, 172-2015, 173-2015, 174-2015 and 174-2015, and rezoning application no. 15-00004, all relating to changes that would directly affect Phoebus.

By way of background, changes in zoning ordinances and the creation of special purpose district for Phoebus that recognizes our community's historic nature and unique character have been discussed since the second Phoebus master plan was adopted in 2007. In 2013, one of the first implementation items accompanying a revised Phoebus master plan addressed those needs.

Beginning in 2014, the Partnership participated in a series of conversations with Hampton's planners regarding the creation of a Phoebus District. In turn, those conversations led to a meeting in September, 2014 to which all commercial property owners who might be affected by any changes were invited. At that time, Mr. Michael Hayes and Mr. Jeff Conkle discussed proposed boundaries and changes in property uses. They also solicited feedback, which was freely offered.

Since then, the Partnership has had additional conversations and several presentations made to its board by Mr. Hayes and Ms. Alison Alexander. Based on those conversations and refinements, a second meeting was held in August, 2015 to which all affected commercial property owners were once again invited. In the main, the meeting generated only a narrow set of concerns regarding definitions that were addressed.

Needless to say, change can be difficult and tedious.

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But in that regard, it's worth recalling the words of a resident with deep roots who spoke as we began planning for a new Phoebus in November, 2012:

"I know and you know that when it comes to new opportunities, there's no such thing as perfection. There will never be one right answer, and we will make mistakes.

"But if we work together, I have no doubt that we can secure our future.

"And so I ask you tonight to join us. Join with the city and our new Partnership as we work together to create a new Phoebus. . . a Phoebus whose future will be measured not by talk of what could have been. . . but by conversations of what can and will be."

In point of fact, Mr. John Lowe's comments set the tone for a process that has been made easier because of the contributions of Ms. Alexander, Mr. Conkle, Mr. Hayes and many others, and is now nearing an end.

There may, of course, be specific concerns that will merit attention at a later date, but the Partnership believes that taken as a whole, the package of proposed changes before you will only benefit Phoebus and reinforce its value as a historic asset.

Accordingly, the Partnership supports their approval, and asks that you share this letter with your fellow Commissioners at the appropriate time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Faith O. Jones', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Faith O. Jones  
President,  
Partnership for a New Phoebus, Inc.

cc: Mr. Terry O'Neill  
Mr. Keith Cannady  
Mr. Michael Hayes