

March 16, 2025

BY EMAIL & FIRST-CLASS MAIL

Kathy L. Smith, Sully District Supervisor
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
4900 Stonecroft Boulevard
Chantilly, VA 20151
sully@fairfaxcounty.gov

Jeffrey C. McKay, Chairman
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 530
Fairfax, VA 22035
chairman@fairfaxcounty.gov

RE: SSPA Nomination CPN-2025-III-SU-017 –
Owner: Community of Faith United Methodist Church
Address: 13224 Franklin Farm Road (Tax Map 0351-0419-C2)

Dear Supervisors:

We are the Board of Directors of the Franklin Farm Foundation (“Foundation”), which is the property owners’ association governing the Franklin Farm development (the “community”) located in the Sully District of Fairfax County (the “County”). The property that is subject to the above-numbered Site-Specific Plan Amendment Nomination for the 2025-26 Plan is located within the Foundation’s boundaries and is subject to the Franklin Farm Declaration of Covenants and Restrictions.

We are writing to convey our serious concerns with the nomination for a site-specific plan amendment and the overall proposed plan for the development of this property. First, the Foundation was not consulted in any way prior to submission of the nomination. The Foundation only became aware of the owner’s proposed plans when it was alerted to them by community members. No approval has been given for the project and the Board does not believe that the project can be approved under the Foundation’s Declaration.

Equally important are the community’s concerns about what the proposed development would mean for those residing in the community who have made homes in Franklin Farm based on the nature of the community. Franklin Farm is a mostly single-family home community with a few townhouse developments. Multi-family residential developments were not a part of the

development plan when Franklin Farm was created, and no multi-family residential developments have been approved or constructed since that time. The community is characterized by its natural wooded areas, ponds, and relatively low density. Any person visiting the community would immediately see that the community is not suited for high-density, multi-level residential development, and that multi-family development would stand out in stark contrast to the surrounding areas. Many families came to Franklin Farm to enjoy the peace and quiet that a low-density neighborhood offers. While there is a commercial center and a few churches, none of these interfere with the character of the community in the way that a multi-family development would.

This sentiment is reflected in the current comprehensive plan for this area which focuses on low-density, single-family residential development, to the exclusion of higher-density residential development. The plan expressly states that any “[i]nfill development in these neighborhoods should be of a compatible use, type and intensity in accordance with the guidance provided by the Policy Plan under Land Use Objectives 8 and 14.” Objective 8 of the Policy Plan provides that the County “should encourage a land use pattern that protects, enhances and/or maintains stability in established residential neighborhoods.” Approval of a multi-family residential development within Franklin Farm will not advance the County’s stated objectives and instead will serve to harm, degrade, and destabilize a residential neighborhood that has been established for decades. Objective 14 of the Policy Plan provides that the County “should seek to achieve a harmonious and attractive development pattern which minimizes undesirable visual, auditory, environmental and other impacts created by potentially incompatible uses.” Again, approval of a multi-family residential development within Franklin Farm will not advance this objective and instead will create significant incompatibilities leading to undesirable visual, auditory, and other impacts. The County’s own established policies say that this use is not proper for this area. While we understand that the Church is asking for those policies to be changed, or even ignored, those policies were established to guide the development of the County in a way that makes sense for everyone. Those policies were well thought out and should be kept in place.

We further note that this is not a slight increase in density that is being proposed. The proposed development would increase the density from 2 units per acre, to up to 27 units per acre, and consisting of 157 units in a relatively small space. The reasonably foreseeable effects of this increased density include:

- Traffic Increase. Significant increases in vehicle traffic, detrimentally impacting the peace and quiet of a neighborhood characterized by open streets. Traffic to and from the Church already presents significant congestion issues on certain days of the week. Adding vehicles for 157 units is simply not something that this location will allow for, especially given that the only points of access will be a two-lane road and an exit onto a community street.
- Safety Concerns. Notably, two daycares are adjacent to the property and we have significant concern about increased traffic in the area creating danger for children, many of whom are residents of the community. In addition, cars will be directed on to neighborhood streets through a back entrance; these streets do not have sidewalks are not designed for significant traffic, creating more potential for

pedestrian/vehicle issues. At present, many community members are able to allow their children outside without significant concern for their safety because of the low volume of traffic and the intimate nature of the community.

- Decreased Sense of Community. Even with the community's size, neighbors know their neighbors. Adding 157 new units in a multi-family building will significantly impact the sense of community within the Foundation.
- Aesthetic Concerns. The development will significantly decrease the aesthetic appeal of the neighborhood. The construction of a large multi-family structure will require the removal of countless trees. Nearby homes will go from wooded seclusion to having apartment windows looking down on them. Moreover, the stark difference between single-family homes and multi-family residential will create aesthetic discord, breaking up the consistent character of the community.

These concerns cannot be addressed by simply shrinking the proposed development to an acceptable size. They can only be addressed by maintaining the current comprehensive plan for this site and prohibiting multi-family development in the midst of a low-density residential area. For these reasons, the Foundation requests that the Board of Supervisors decline to accept this nomination for a site-specific plan amendment.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

The Board of Trustees of
Franklin Farm Foundation

cc: County Board of Supervisors