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Subject: Opposition to SSPA Nomination CPN-2025-III-SU-017
Date: 13 March 2025 at 12:31
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Cc: Franklin Farm Foundation foundation@franklinfarm.org



To Whom It May Concern:

My name is David Inkellis and I am a homeowner and member of the Franklin Farm community. My wife and I purchased our home on Autumn Hill Lane in 2017 and it was the best decision we could have made. The neighborhood is a wonderful place to raise our two young children: safe streets, nature and trails in abundance, nearby playgrounds, many families with young children, and excellent schools. Our world has been turned upside down by the Community of Faith UMC nomination to build a massive apartment complex immediately adjacent to our street. There has been significant stress placed on my family and my neighbors and everyone within the community, and that's without a shovel even being put into dirt. Simply put: if this project were to move forward, we would leave the County. It would be quite expensive to do so but we would have no choice: such is the impact that this nomination has on the neighborhood.

As I have previously expressed, this nomination makes no sense for a number of reasons, outlined below.

1. Lack of compatibility: The proposed SSPA concept with fifty foot, four story apartment complexes is not compatible with the scale of the long-established surrounding community of townhouses, single family homes, and community retail.
2. Traffic: the proposed SSPA would add 157 housing units and parking for 250 cars, creating major traffic bottlenecks on our neighborhood streets. Franklin Farm Road is simply not designed to carry traffic for an additional 250 vehicles.
3. Impact to local school population: Adding 157 new housing units into a single school pyramid would place a significant burden on our already-strained school systems.
4. Environment: The proposed development would destroy mature woodland and marsh environments that are already few and far between in the County. The Church itself has a sign in the woods it proposes to destroy, identifying numerous native birds that can be found.
5. Lack of logical growth pattern: The proposed development is neither transit-oriented nor located near higher density commercial zones. Approval would set precedent for placing high density housing anywhere and everywhere in the County.

In addition, I wish to directly counter the nominating document for the proposal. The below are lifted directly from the nomination, with my response in bold.

1. Policy Plan, Land Use Objective 4: The county should encourage a diverse housing stock with a mixture of types to enhance opportunities for county residents to live in proximity to their workplace and/or in proximity to mass transit.
The Project will provide affordable multifamily rental housing in an area of the County dominated by single-family homes. The Property is proximate to retail and employment opportunities at the Franklin Farm Shopping Center and is served by Fairfax Connector bus service.

The retail and employment opportunities at the Franklin Farm Shopping Center are in scale to the existing community. This was planned by the original Franklin Farm developers for use by the residents. It is not intended to be a retail destination akin to Tysons Corner or Reston Town Center. The Franklin Farm Shopping Center is served by Fairfax Connector bus service. This is on the opposite side of Fairfax County Parkway from the location of the proposed apartment complex. It is not a particularly safe intersection to cross on foot and one that I would not allow my children to cross. There would likely be significant pedestrian injury if a large apartment complex is put in. The

fairfax Connector bus stopped service to our side of franklin farm road due to low ridership numbers. The proposed project is located far from the Silver Line or VRE and would require residents to drive to and from those mass transit nodes. This project is not placed in a logical location for transit-oriented growth.

2. Policy Plan, Land Use Objective 8: Fairfax County should encourage a land use pattern that protects, enhances and/or maintains stability in established residential neighborhoods.

The Project will be constructed on vacant land owned by the Church with primary access through the Church Property with minimal impacts on the adjoining, established neighborhoods.

This project has massive, destabilizing impact to the established neighborhood. The Church property is within the Franklin Farm Foundation and its deed is subject to the Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions of all properties within the Foundation. The Foundation covers all properties from West Ox Road in the east to Centreville Road in the west. The Church sits directly in the middle of the 45 year old neighborhood on a parcel that was meant to only have a Church for the religious worship of the community. This parcel was not meant to have any housing on it, whether single family or multi-family. The property values of the established community would decrease with the placement of this complex. My neighbors and I have already determined that this project would necessitate moving away from the area. That is certainly destabilizing! The project would not be constructed on vacant land but on established woodlands and marsh that connects to the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. This is not keeping with the policy land use objective to protect, enhance, or maintain stability, but instead the exact opposite of this policy objective.

3. Policy Plan, Land Use Objective 14: Fairfax 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.

Through intentional placement of the buildings and limiting their height to fifty (50) feet, the Project will be compatible in terms of use and scale with the existing, residential community.

The existing residential community consists of single family homes and townhomes no more than two stories tall. Creating a four story apartment building is massively out of scale with the existing community and absurdly incompatible with existing development. The proposal claims that because the Church is 50 feet tall then an apartment can also be 50 feet tall next to it. However, they are counting the height of the Church's steeple in that 50 foot tall building. It is my understanding that a high church steeple is designed to be a call to worship for the surrounding community to identify the space as one in communion with God. Building apartments to the same height as the Church steeple would dwarf the Church and block anyone from seeing the Church at all! Would the Church need to advertise its existence by putting signage on their apartment complex?

They claim that the intentional placement of buildings would make the project compatible with the existing community, but their design renderings call for a building and parking lot to directly abut their neighbor's backyards on Autumn Hill Lane. The project developers clearly were not interested in harmonizing with the established neighborhood. If they were, they would have done neighborhood outreach to establish rapport and buy-in from their neighbors. Instead, they intentionally submitted this project in an attempt to bypass our scrutiny and obvious objections.

4. Policy Plan, Appendix 1 – Guidelines for Multifamily Residential Development, 1: Multifamily sites in designated Suburban Neighborhood areas should be in close proximity to community-serving retail. In addition, multifamily sites should be centrally located with respect to community services such as libraries, houses of worship, park/recreational facilities, and schools.

The Project is across the Fairfax County Parkway from community-serving retail in the Franklin Farm Shopping Center. The

The project is across the Fairfax County Parkway from community serving roads in the Herndon Town Shopping Center. The area is well served by houses of worship such as the Church and Epiphany Episcopal Church. Local schools and parks include Oak Hill Elementary, Franklin Middle School, and Franklin Farm Park.

As stated above, the project is across the Fairfax County Parkway from retail that is there to serve the existing community, not a massive new influx. The Parkway is not safe to cross for pedestrians. The Church is so divorced from its own community that it does not know that it is zoned for Navy Elementary School rather than Oak Hill. The local park, Franklin Farm Park, is located a mile away on the other side of the Parkway from the proposed site. It is far more likely that residents of the apartment would utilize the Franklin Farm Foundation amenities, such as trails, parks, and tot lots, that are for the private usage of members of Franklin Farm Foundation.

Logical Planning Area: The Property constitutes a logical planning area as the surrounding area consists of stable residential neighborhoods and existing commercial development.

By the County's own policy plan, this makes the site incompatible for this usage, as the policy plan states, "Infill development and redevelopment should work to avoid destabilizing or adversely affecting older residential neighborhoods. Efforts should be made to promote compatible residential development and redevelopment and/or revitalization in mixed-use centers, where appropriate." An apartment complex dropped into the middle of a 45 year old neighborhood of single family and attached townhomes is the very definition of destabilizing and adversely affecting the older residential neighborhood. This project would be far better suited in a mixed-use center, per the policy, and closer to existing nodes of mass transit such as the Silver Line or VRE.

Next Steps: If the Project receives positive community feedback, we intend to proceed with a rezoning application in the near future.

There has been massive negative community feedback to the proposal. A petition against the proposal has nearly 1,500 signatures at this time and the number is growing by the day. The Franklin Farm Foundation, upon whose land this project would be placed, has come out strongly against the proposal. I am not sure what further negative feedback could be received for the Church to reconsider their application.

Community of Faith United Methodist Church is being led into the abyss by a consultant developer seeing dollar signs. Do not allow the community to be bulldozed by a developer who doesn't even live in the County. I understand and agree with the need to provide affordable housing in Fairfax County, we know it is a wonderful place to live. But there are far better sites for this type of development than dropping it in the middle of a long-established community.

Best Regards,
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