

## Summary of Second Neighborhood Meeting for 708 S. Summit Avenue

This meeting was held on March 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at The Open Kitchen Restaurant. Sixteen citizens signed the attendance sheet. Two City Council Members attended the meeting, along with two members of the Zoning Commission. The meeting began promptly at 6:00 p.m. The attendance sheet is attached hereto.

Jason McArthur, the project's developer, welcomed the attendees and asked them to state where they live. Those who answered were primarily from the adjacent development to the west, Grandin Heights Condominiums. Two homeowners present indicated that they lived on Grandin Avenue on the two lots immediately north of the subject property. One homeowner stated that he lived on Walnut Ave.

Mr. McArthur then presented the project using two 24"\*36" comparative site plans, three (3) 24"\*36" colored elevation boards, and several 12"\*18" perspective renderings of the property. Tony Miller of Miller Architecture was also present to answer questions of a technical nature. Mr. McArthur provided an overview of the project, including its timeline from last summer to the present. The attendees were then invited to ask questions and to express any reservations about the project. **There were three reservations relating to this specific project that were expressed and three broader neighborhood concerns expressed at the meeting. More detail on these concerns is provided below:**

### Project Concerns

**Concerns number one and number two:** A resident living at 763 Grandin Road expressed concern about this project negatively impacting his property value because (1) it will be an apartment project and because (2) it will affect his views of Uptown.

A woman who owns a condo at Grandin Heights stated that when she purchased her home in 2004, the developer of Grandin Heights told her that the subject property at 708 Summit Ave would always be a gravel parking lot. She made it clear that she does not want her view of Uptown to be taken away.

### Applicant's Response

Jason McArthur acknowledged that certain homes on Grandin would lose their Uptown view, if this project is built. He did not attempt to soften this reality. Mr. McArthur plainly stated that any type of building (homes, town homes, apartments, etc) constructed on this site would impair views from Grandin Heights. **Ms. Emma Allen, who is a member of the Zoning Commission, stated that she felt that Mr. McArthur wasn't hearing these concerns. Jason immediately apologized for any behavior on his part that was disrespectful or dismissive. He went on to state that there were types of concerns he could attempt, in earnest, to mitigate but that certain objections do not leave room for compromise.** Mr. McArthur also stated that he did not believe that nearby property values would be hurt by his project. Mr. McArthur stated that this project will strengthen the area's restaurants and retail spaces and contribute to a walking environment. Mr. McArthur also stated that the value of these apartments measured on a price per square footage basis will likely exceed the price per square foot of homes in Wesley Heights. Professional appraisers compare residential values on a square footage basis.



**Concern number three:** The same resident of 763 Grandin Road then stated that he would prefer that this project be developed in a manner substantially similar to Grandin Heights, which contains duplexes and townhouse styled condos. This resident pointed out that Grandin Heights is a project of similar total square footage to the subject development but with a smaller total number of substantially larger units.

Applicant's Response

Mr. McArthur responded that the current market demand is for much smaller units. Grandin Heights' units are approximately 1,500 s.f. Mr. McArthur's proposed apartment building will contain 32 to 35 units averaging approximately 600 s.f. Mr. McArthur also stated that he did not believe that a development plan for this site with large units was economically viable today.

Neighborhood Concerns

**Parking:** A resident living at 609 Summit Ave asked about the future plans for parking in the area. She noted that an increasing number of people are parking along Summit Avenue during the day time.

Applicant's Response

Mr. McArthur responded that only a portion of the existing property is used for parking. Much of it remains wooded or grassed. Nor are there any striped parking spaces in the existing lot. The proposed project offers approximately 48 parking spaces and the ownership intends to allow the general public to utilize the property for day time parking. However, the owners reserve the right to implement parking restrictions should the tenants living at 708 Summit Ave complain that parking has become difficult. Councilman Mitchell also directed her to the small area plan for more details on the long term vision for this area.

**Poor Communication:** A resident of Grandin Heights was disgruntled that they were not invited to the initial meeting Mr. McArthur held with Wesley Heights residents prior to submitting his rezoning application. She went on to complain that Wesley Heights seems to ignore them routinely.

Applicant's Response

Mr. McArthur stated that he reached out to the Wesley Heights HOA President back in the Fall of 2012 seeking a meeting to present his idea for 708 Summit and to elicit feedback from the neighborhood. The outgoing HOA president used the existing HOA e-mail list to invite neighbors to a meeting that was held at his house. About nine residents attended that initial meeting. The VP of the HOA was in attendance at last night's meeting at The Open Kitchen. The VP stated that the HOA had not been meeting regularly over the past year. Mr. McArthur promised to share the attendance list with the HOA VP so that the Grandin Heights neighbors could be added to the Master HOA e-mail list. Mr. McArthur has already provided the list to Brad Yeary, VP of Wesley Heights HOA. Mr. Yeary also stated that he was supportive of the project and that he had attended several meetings on it. He stated that he felt that the developer had done an admirable job of reaching out to the neighborhood.

**Future development:** A resident stated that he was favorably disposed to development in the area and then asked the developer to predict the future development pattern for this area. The resident went on

to state that he was concerned that the area might start to attract people who patron bars and night clubs. He would like to see more restaurants, but not as many bars as are in Plaza Midwood.

#### Applicant's Response

Mr. McArthur responded that he could not guarantee what the future would hold, but that his observations were that the area consists of many small parcels with distinct ownership and that such a situation did not lend itself to mass redevelopment. Mr. McArthur noted positive momentum in the W. Morehead corridor and stated that he doubted that the corridor would become primarily a night life destination.

#### Questions that were asked and answered

##### **Q. Councilman Mitchell asked the developer to name other projects he had developed in the area.**

The Nook on Central, 1225 South Church Street (phase II) in South End, 330 West Tremont Apartments in South End, Cranford Apartments in South Park and South End Towns in South End.

##### **Q Councilman Mitchell asked what the exterior materials would be.**

The project is in the Historic District and is subject to further approval by the Historic District Commission. The first two stories of the building are contemplated to be brick. The upper floor will use some form of siding to be approved by the HDC. The windows will also have to be approved by the HDC. The roof will use architectural grade 30 year shingles.

##### **Q. How many parking spaces?**

The current site plan contemplates 49 parking spaces, including 6 on street parking spaces on S. Summit Ave. Code requires at least one space per unit.

##### **Q. What is your timeline to build the project?**

A. We hope to secure zoning in April and we will then proceed with site plan approval and building permits. If all goes according to our hope, we will be underway in the Fall of 2013 with construction completion slated for late summer of 2014.

##### **Q. What is the next step in the rezoning?**

A. There will be a Zoning Workshop on March 27<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. at City Hall. The next potential date for City Council consideration is April 16<sup>th</sup>.

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The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m. The applicant and the architect stayed an extra 15 minutes to speak with several residents who were silent during the meeting.



## 708 South Summit Avenue

### Neighborhood Meeting Attendance Sheet

March 20, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. at The Open Kitchen Restaurant

Name	Street Address	Telephone No.	e-mail address
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JASON AHELY SPARKS	763 GRANDIN RD	704-756-8040	jasonm-sparks@yahoo.com
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