



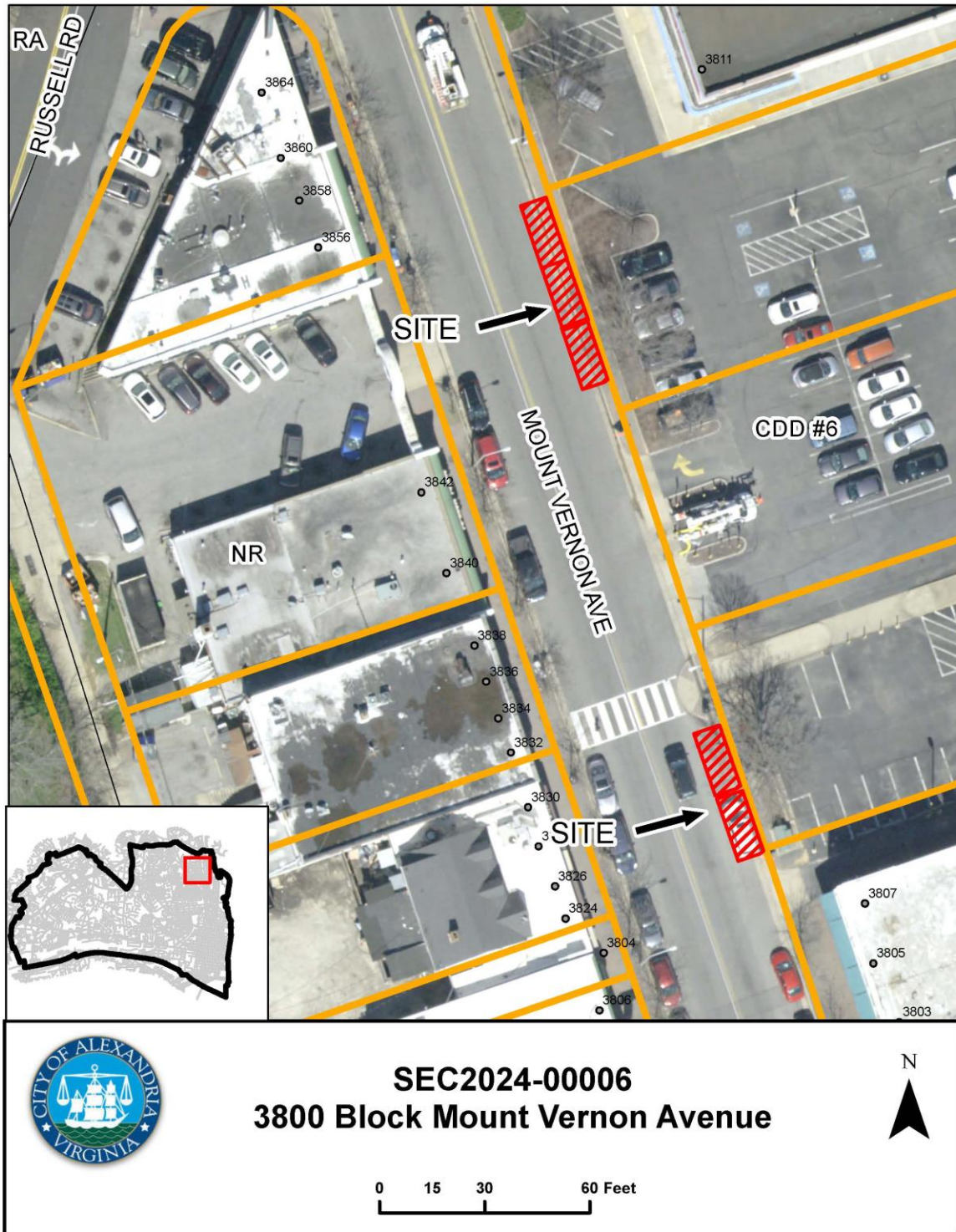
***City Charter Section 9.06 Case #2024-00006***  
***3800 block of Mt. Vernon Avenue***

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<b>Application</b>	<b>General Data</b>	
<b>Request:</b> Review whether the change in use of a public street in the 3800 block of Mount Vernon Avenue by the City of Alexandria is consistent with the City of Alexandria Master Plan pursuant to Section 9.06 of the City Charter.	<b>Planning Commission Hearing:</b>	January 9, 2025
	<b>City Council Hearing:</b>	n/a
	<b>Zone:</b>	NR
<b>Address:</b> East side of the 3800 block of Mt. Vernon Avenue (generally between 3809 and 3811 Mount Vernon Avenue)	<b>Small Area Plan(s):</b>	Arlandria-Chirilagua

<b>Staff Reviewers:</b> Karl Moritz – Director, Planning & Zoning, <a href="mailto:karl.moritz@alexandriava.gov">karl.moritz@alexandriava.gov</a> Carrie Beach – Division Chief, Planning & Zoning <a href="mailto:carrie.beach@alexandriava.gov">carrie.beach@alexandriava.gov</a> Katherine Carraway, Principal Planner, Planning & Zoning, <a href="mailto:katherine.carraway@alexandriava.gov">katherine.carraway@alexandriava.gov</a> Jose Delcid – Urban Planner, Planning & Zoning, <a href="mailto:jose.delcid@alexandriava.gov">jose.delcid@alexandriava.gov</a>
<b>Staff Recommendation:</b> Staff recommends that the Planning Commission <b>approve</b> this request, finding that the proposal is consistent with Section 9.06 of the City Charter of Alexandria, Virginia, and with the City’s Master Plan.
<b>PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION, JANUARY 9, 2025:</b> On a motion by Commissioner Koenig, seconded by Commissioner Brown, the Planning Commission voted to find the proposed change in use of a public street in the 3800 block of Mount Vernon Avenue consistent with the City of Alexandria Master Plan pursuant to Section 9.06 of the City Charter. The motion carried on a vote of 3-2.

Project Location Map



## **I. DISCUSSION**

The City proposes to temporarily create five on-street spaces on the east side of the 3800 block of Mt. Vernon Avenue to implement a one-year pilot program for street vending in the Arlandria-Chirilagua neighborhood. This area of Mt. Vernon Avenue is located within the boundaries of the [Arlandria-Chirilagua Small Area Plan](#).

Section 9.06 of the City's Charter requires that the Planning Commission review any changes to the use of a public street for consistency with the City's Master Plan. For the purposes of this review, the Planning Commission should consider this proposal as both a temporary and potentially permanent change.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

The 3800 block of Mt. Vernon Avenue is a two-way street running north and south with a mix of commercial uses, on-street parking and private parking lots serving businesses in the Del Ray North shopping center.

For several years, street vendors have been enlivening the sidewalks of Arlandria-Chirilagua, selling a variety of goods to help earn a living while serving the needs of their community. This activity is occurring primarily, but not exclusively, on the 3800 block of Mount Vernon Avenue. The Arlandria-Chirilagua Small Area Plan recognized street vending as important to the community, economically and culturally, but also noted that a program would need to be established to allow it to continue.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the City launched the Parklet Program to expand opportunities for retailers and restaurants to use sidewalks and parking spaces for vending. However, the program does not specifically permit vendors without an adjacent brick-and-mortar location to sell in the public right-of-way, though many continue to do so.

Over the last year, an interdepartmental staff group has been exploring a legal pathway for vendors currently operating on the sidewalk along this section of Mt. Vernon Avenue to continue. Following considerable exploration of various options, staff is proposing a one-year pilot program that allows vendors to sell whole, uncut produce and/or limited small non-food items in designated on-street spaces. These spaces are located on the east side of Mt. Vernon Avenue and front existing private parking lots for commercial uses in the Del Ray North shopping center.

Individual vendor spaces will be limited to a 10'x6' area, allowing portable tables and umbrellas. Acceptance into the program will be on a first-come, first-served basis as space allows and successful applicants will agree to comply with all requirements including food safety regulations, annual licensing and liability insurance fees, ensuring that items fit neatly within the allotted space and monitoring the area for cleanliness.

## **Outreach**

Over the summer and fall, staff engaged with the existing vendors and 20 nearby brick-and-mortar businesses and organizations to discuss the parameters of the pilot and gauge vendor interest in the program. Through these discussions, staff learned that vendors strongly prefer to remain as close as possible to their current location on the 3800 block of Mount Vernon Avenue. To date, three vendors have expressed interest in participating in the pilot. Most surrounding businesses support finding a solution that allows vendors to continue operating, provided they relocate from the sidewalk in front of existing storefronts. Three businesses raised concerns about moving vendors to the proposed on-street spaces, particularly regarding the pilot's implementation and vendor compliance with the proposed rules. The property owner of the Del Ray North center shared concerns that vendors and their customers will illegally park in their lots, which they have indicated is an ongoing issue.

The proposed pilot includes a dedicated program manager who will serve as a resource to vendors and the surrounding business community and, along with relevant interdepartmental staff, will ensure compliance with program parameters. While several businesses indicated concern with some of the current unregulated vending activity, they support the coordinated interdepartmental approach that has begun and is planned for the pilot. Staff is continuing to engage with the community to address questions and ensure a smooth rollout and implementation of the pilot program.

On December 9, the Traffic and Parking Board reviewed and made a recommendation to the Director of Transportation and Environmental Services supporting the temporary designation of vending spaces to the on-street spaces necessary to implement this pilot program.

In February, the City Council will consider an ordinance approving the temporary designation of on-street parking spaces in the 3800 Block of Mount Vernon Avenue for vending and will consider the feedback from the Planning Commission.

## **III. CONSISTENCY WITH THE MASTER PLAN**

The proposed change in use of a public street in the 3800 block of Mount Vernon Avenue by the City of Alexandria is consistent with the goals of the Arlandria-Chirilagua Small Area Plan chapter of the City's Master Plan.

Recognizing the benefits that street vendors can bring to the Arlandria-Chirilagua neighborhood including providing access to affordable fresh food and economic opportunity for neighborhood entrepreneurs, the small area plan recommends that a pilot program be considered to allow "small-scale street vendors to sell items such as food, art, crafts, and other items within specified locations in the public right-of-way" as long as the operations do "not block the pedestrian zone" (SAP, page 45).

SAP Recommendations (SAP, page 65):

**Entrepreneurship + Street Vendors**

- 63. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow small scale street vendors to sell items such as food, arts, crafts, and other items subject to all Health Department and City requirements.
- 64. Work with community stakeholders to develop the parameters of the new street program to be implemented in Arlandria-Chirilagua consistent with the intent of the Plan to provide economic opportunity for neighborhood entrepreneurs, affordable products to residents, and preservation of the culture and diversity of the neighborhood.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission find that the proposed change in use of the identified on-street spaces in the 3800 block of Mt. Vernon Avenue is **consistent** with Section 9.06 of the City Charter of Alexandria, Virginia and with the City’s Master Plan, including specifically the Arlandria-Chirilagua Small Area Plan.

STAFF: Karl Moritz, Director, Planning & Zoning  
Carrie Beach, Planning & Zoning  
Katherine Carraway, Planning & Zoning  
Jose Delcid, Planning & Zoning



# SHERWIN-WILLIAMS.

7 Great Valley Parkway  
Suite 200  
Malvern, PA 19355  
(484) 913-2531 Office

**January 3, 2025**

**Arlandria Center LLC**  
C/o Steve Weinstock  
802 Holly Drive East  
Annapolis, MD 21409-5518

Dear Mr. Weinstock,

**Re: Sherwin Williams Store #703345-2, 3809 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria, VA**

I am writing to express our opposition to the proposed pilot program to create five on-street vending spaces on the east side of the 3800 block of Mount Vernon Avenue. While the intention to support local street vendors is commendable, we believe this initiative will negatively impact local businesses, including the Sherwin Williams Store.

First, the introduction of on-street vending spaces will significantly worsen the already problematic parking situation in the area. The 3800 block of Mount Vernon Avenue is a **busy** commercial zone with limited parking availability. Allocating these spaces for vending will reduce the number of parking spots for customers, leading to increased congestion and frustration among patrons who may choose to take their business elsewhere due to the inconvenience.

Secondly, the placement of vending spaces directly in front of storefronts/parking lots will obstruct business visibility and accessibility for businesses. Reduced storefront visibility can deter potential customers and negatively impact sales. Businesses rely on clear and unobstructed views to attract foot traffic, and any hindrance in this regard can be detrimental.

Thirdly, the increased pedestrian activity resulting from the vending spaces may pose safety concerns. The influx of pedestrians in an already congested area can lead to traffic hazards and accidents. The proposed plan does not adequately address these potential risks, which could have serious implications for both vendors and customers.

Moreover, the pilot program's implementation and vendor compliance with the proposed rules are unclear. There are concerns about vendors and their customers illegally parking in private lots, which is already an ongoing issue. The program's success relies heavily on strict enforcement and monitoring, which may not be feasible given the current resources especially on the weekends.

Considering these concerns, we urge you to oppose the proposed pilot program and explore alternative solutions that do not compromise the interests of local businesses and the community. We appreciate your attention to this matter and hope that a more balanced approach can be found.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe Walsh". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Joe Walsh  
Vice President-Real Estate



January 8, 2025

**MOM's Organic Market**

3831 Mt Vernon Ave  
Alexandria, VA 22305

Dear Mr. Weinstock,

I am writing regarding the proposed pilot to create on-street vending spaces. After reviewing the position outlined by Sherwin Williams, we want to express our full agreement and endorsement of their letter (see attached).

We share their concerns and oppose the pilot program. We believe this initiative will negatively impact our business and the surrounding retail ecosystem.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and urge you to reconsider the implementation of this pilot program. MOM's Organic Market remains committed to fostering a thriving local business environment. Thank you.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Nash', is written in a cursive style.

Scott Nash  
Founder/CEO  
MOM's Organic Market



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**Fwd: Planning and Zoning Meeting/Hearing**

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**From** Rose Ascencio <yourhome101@msn.com>

**Date** Wed 1/8/2025 5:05 PM

**To** Duncan Blair <dblair@landcarroll.com>; Steve Weinstock <weinstoc@his.com>

Please add this email letter to the others you have from Mom's and Sherwin Williams.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Rose Ascencio <yourhome101@msn.com>

**Date:** January 7, 2025 at 8:37:11 AM EST

**To:** Rose <yourhome101@msn.com>

Dear Members of the Planning and Zoning Committee,

I want to address the proposed change of use of a public street intended to relocate street vendors from sidewalks on Mt. Vernon Avenue, to the existing street parking spaces.

As a Salvadoran immigrant who believes in the American dream, I am deeply committed to ensuring that this dream is pursued through legal and responsible means. My family and I spent 18 months in Mexico awaiting asylum approval before we were granted legal entry into the United States. Upon arriving in Virginia, my parents worked multiple jobs to provide for our family and secure a safe and nurturing environment for my education. Their dedication instilled in me the values of hard work and compliance with the law.

While I respect the aspirations of individuals seeking to improve their circumstances, I am concerned about the implications of sanctioning the street vending program. It appears that the proposed changes will ultimately harm our community rather than benefit it. The lack of regulation of street vendors has persisted for far too long, and the city's response should not be to further protect those who operate outside of established laws. Cities such as Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles, and New York have recently intensified their regulations and elimination on street vending, highlighting the challenges that arise even in larger municipalities with greater resources. It raises concerns as to why our city, with its limited staffing and budget, would choose to take a different approach.

Feedback from clients and fellow business owners indicates that the presence of street vendors has led to a chaotic environment; the area appears disorganized and unsafe, with increased loitering contributing to a rise in crime. Over the past year alone, there have



been over 130 reported crime incidents on our 3800 Mt Vernon Avenue block. The chaotic presence of vendors enables individuals with malicious intent to blend in, posing a threat to established brick-and-mortar businesses. As a result, I have experienced a 60% decline in clientele due to safety concerns, compounded by the city's failure to enforce existing laws. This situation poses a significant threat to my business's sustainability, as well as the overall economic health of our shopping district. <sup>Letter #3</sup>

While I recognize the city's intention to support individuals seeking a livelihood, the implementation of this program disproportionately affects brick-and-mortar businesses within our community. Our area, Shirilagua, has served the Latin community since the early 1980s, hosting businesses (95% latin owned) that cater to its needs. The street vendors do not fulfill any unmet demands that our established businesses are not already addressing. These businesses contribute significantly to the local economy through taxes, permits, and fees, and operate under stringent regulations and oversight.

Furthermore, the proposal to eliminate parking spaces in an area already struggling with parking availability in favor of designated vending spots raises further concerns. I urge the city to consider alternative locations for street vendors, such as the farmers' market, where supervision and cleanliness can be maintained without further burdening local businesses.

The city's assurance of oversight for the pilot program is undermined by the history of non-compliance among street vendors with local regulations. It is inequitable for the city to prioritize the interests of street vendors at the expense of businesses that actively contribute to a well-ordered community. The presence of street vendors diminishes the appeal of our block and detracts from the shopping and dining experience for potential patrons.

In conclusion, I advocate for the preservation of our community's integrity and safety. Hard-working families deserve a secure and welcoming environment, regardless of income levels. Thank you for your consideration of my concerns regarding this matter.

Sincerely,  
Rose Irurozqui  
Fossal Inc.

Sent from my iPhone

January 8, 2025

Arlandria Center LLC

1725 DeSales Street, NW, Suite 900

Washington DC 20036

To Alexandria VA Planning Commission

We are writing to express our opposition to the street pilot program on the east side of the 3800 block of Mount Vernon Avenue. As shown in the staff plan in the Planning Commission docket presentation in item 4, there are 5 street vendor spaces to be placed in front of our property, 2 on the south side and 3 on the north side. Mount Vernon Avenue is a busy and congested street and these tables will increase said congestion. In particular truck access may be inhibited.

The plan shows the vendor tables in the street, which means the vendors will be in the street alongside buses and cars; and so will their customers who will be accessing the tables from the street side. This is not consistent with the Small Area Plan and endangers both the vendors and their patrons. Furthermore, there is minimal street parking for vendor customers.

Vendor tables and associated activity may obscure our retailer's storefronts. Reduced storefront visibility may result in fewer customers patronizing our stores negatively impacting sales. Ease of access and visibility are important to retailers.

Our retailers, El Cuscalatero, Sherwin Williams and Mom's have all expressed their concerns to you. We agree with their concerns. Please put the proposed pilot program on the shelf and explore alternative solutions.

Thank you,

Steve Weinstock, Managing Member

Arlandria Center LLC



January 9, 2025

*Via email:*

The Planning Commission of the City of Alexandria  
[PlanComm@alexandriava.gov](mailto:PlanComm@alexandriava.gov)

**Re: 1/9/2025 Public Hearing on City Charter Section 9.06 Case #2024-00006 3800  
Block of Mount Vernon Avenue (Street Vendor Pilot Program)**

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, Planning Commissioners and City Staff,

My name is Ingris Moran. I'm a lifelong resident of Arlandria-Chirilagua and the Lead Organizer of Tenants and Workers United (TWU). Our organization has been based in Chirilagua for over 35 years. For decades, we have organized and advocated for working class families of color on issues directly impacting them. TWU is unique because we are deeply rooted in the community.

We write to you to state we are in support of the City's proposed street vendor pilot program. We believe that this initiative will allow current residents who are street vendors to have more stability in their lives. This program to be permanent will allow them to be embraced through the city's economy and diversity. We are glad the city wants to follow up on its [2022 Arlandria Small Area Plan](#) that states, "The Plan recognizes the many benefits that street vendors provide for residents, the neighborhood, and for their own economic independence. These neighborhood entrepreneurs provide residents with affordable fresh food, connection to their motherland food flavors, and enable impromptu social gatherings in the public realm, contributing to a vibrant and colorful neighborhood."

We hope that as members of the Planning Commission, you can make a fair and equitable decision as we know that similar practices occur across the city. Street vendors should be treated with respect and dignity like any other small business. Street vending is an economic platform that allows our local residents and families to survive and thrive.

Sincerely,

Ingris Moran  
Lead Organizer