

**From:** [Christine Beinhacker](#)  
**To:** [PlanComm](#)  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL]Special Use Permit (SUP) and subdivision applications for 635 Upland Place- June meeting  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 28, 2024 5:05:01 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)

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Lanning,  
Thank you for doing that.  
-Christine

On Tue, May 28, 2024, 4:59 PM PlanComm <[PlanComm@alexandriava.gov](mailto:PlanComm@alexandriava.gov)> wrote:

Thank you for sending this letter on behalf of SUB2024-00003 at 635 Upland Place. I will send a copy of this letter to our Planning Commission Staff and I will upload a copy of this letter to the docket for this item. Since the final docket has already been published, this letter will be attached under the staff report and presentation and will be listed as additional materials.

Thank you,

Lanning Blaser  
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Department of Planning & Zoning  
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703.746.4666 – Main

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**From:** [cbvahome@gmail.com](mailto:cbvahome@gmail.com) <[cbvahome@gmail.com](mailto:cbvahome@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 24, 2024 6:09 PM  
**To:** PlanComm <[PlanComm@alexandriava.gov](mailto:PlanComm@alexandriava.gov)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Special Use Permit (SUP) and subdivision applications for 635 Upland Place- June meeting

You don't often get email from [cbvahome@gmail.com](mailto:cbvahome@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Planning Commissioners

I'm interested in this application because my husband and I own one of the abutting properties on Upland Place. We've lived at 715 Upland Place for almost 25 years; our home is marked with a star on the map below. Please note, I've attached the same map in a few file formats in case the image below doesn't work since it is critical to understanding some of my concerns below.

The application proposes to:

1. subdivide this lot and also requests a special use permit to allow
2. insufficient frontage on both lots.

The application claims that the plan is compatible with the neighborhood and that there are no negative impacts to the neighborhood. Both claims are untrue.

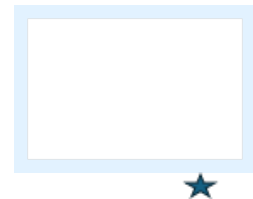
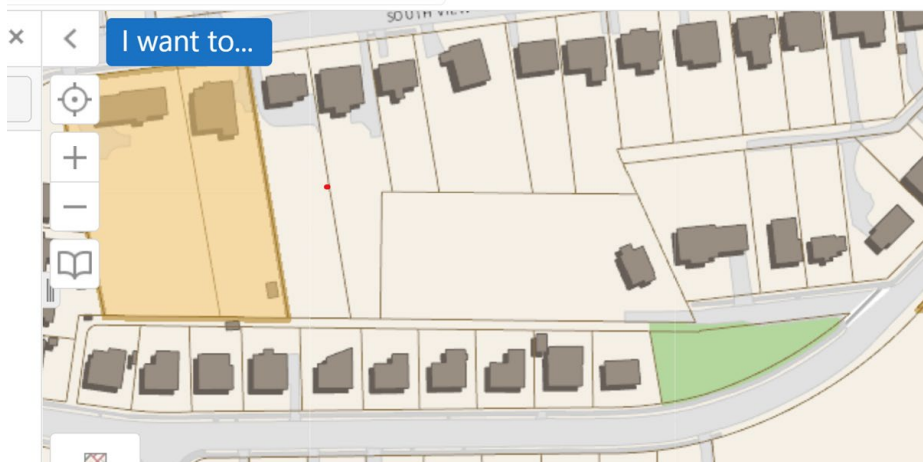
I attended the virtual community meeting held by the developer on March 7<sup>th</sup> and on May 21<sup>st</sup>. Based on the meeting and my review of the plans that were provided by the developer and distributed during the May meeting, I have several concerns related to the subdivision of the lot and the SUP. I took a screenshot of the map on the City's website to illustrate my concerns (sorry

my depiction of the wetlands is so crude):

### NOT IN KEEPING WITH THE NEIGHBORHOOD

- There are no other homes in the neighborhood that have as little frontage as proposed here.
- There are no other properties in the neighborhood which would require emergency access through a passageway this narrow.
- The orientation of the structures on Lot 505 and 506 is not in keeping with the nearest neighbors, nor any abutting properties.
- Cramming the houses toward the northeast side of each proposed lot avoids the wetlands, but pushes the homes further and further away from harmonizing with the neighboring homes. There aren't any homes anywhere near us that do this so these would stick out like two sore thumbs.
- The structure on the proposed Lot 505 is also at a bit of a weird angle to the existing neighbors.
- The structure on Lot 506 is completely out of keeping with Upland Place.
- The size of the proposed houses are out of proportion to the neighborhood.

On that last point, what all the diagrams omit is the layout for homes on each of the abutting lots. The missing information obscures the perspective of the relative sizes of the nearby homes on Upland Place, like mine. The map attached to the permit request conveniently fades out so the size of our homes is not clear. I added the map below to show that the homes on Upland are small, relative to the two proposed houses. Again, those two houses are not in keeping with the size of houses in this neighborhood. The attorney for the developer said they would be **at least** 3,300 square (Lot 506) feet and **at least** 2,800 square feet (Lot 505)...but could be bigger. That's just too big for this neighborhood. In our case, when we bought our home in 1999, the total square footage was about 1,000 square feet. In 2011, we did a BIG renovation that brought our square footage all the way up to 1,753 square feet. Please consider this a part of the context in which you make your decisions.



### THEY HAVE FRONTAGE TO USE

The proposal also seems to claim it is unfair for this property owner to be held to existing frontage

requirements, but there is an existing stretch of asphalt on the property that could be used as frontage. The proposal likely doesn't mention it because it would require reworking the plans, reducing the size of the houses, or perhaps eliminating one planned house.

#### LACKS EMERGENCY VEHICLE ACCESS

There is a direct risk of fire to a home built on either lot due to the limited frontage and lack of direct access for emergency vehicles. Access is difficult at best with frontage this small (this is a risk for the current house as well), so the Commission should not compound the problem by allowing an additional house. In fairness, I think the current house could and should be grandfathered in to allow them to use the current undersized frontage, since it has been in place since the 1930-40's, but any additional structure should adhere to all the same standards as any other new construction. Both safety and fairness call for upholding the current frontage requirements for a new structure.

#### TRANSFERS STREET PARKING TO PRIVATE PARKING

Everyone on Upland Place currently has the benefit of street parking, but if this plan were to be approved, the two properties would gain two off street parking spaces each, for a total of four spaces, while taking away existing street parking for neighbors on Upland Place. This isn't fair and it's a negative impact that should prohibit approval of both the subdivision and the special use permits.

#### STORM WATER MANAGEMENT INADEQUATE

This is a critical issue for the neighbors on Upland Place and has been for decades. Please verify that the plans adhere to City standards because the downhill slope of the property means that any non-permeable surfaces, like these houses and driveways, are likely to cause significant runoff toward the homes of neighbors downhill. The bio-retention ponds in the diagrams shown onscreen during the May meeting seem too small and poorly placed to handle our increasingly stormy weather. This is yet another reason to hold the owner/builder to the current City standards. There were no drainage pipes or sewers shown in the diagrams provided in the materials we saw. As a practical matter, gravity will pull any storm water downhill and we can't rely on a builder to mitigate it months or years down the line. We need assistance from the City to make sure runoff from 635 Upland doesn't land in our basements and exacerbate existing problems. *Now* is the time to prevent further water damage.

Please consider the points above and reject both the subdivision and the Special Use Permits.

Thanks very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Christine Beinhacker

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