

Statement
William Schmale
BAR Items #2021-00236 & 2021-00261

I am writing as President of the Lee Mews Council of Co-Owners to comment on BAR items BAR #2021-00236 & 2021-00261 and on the Staff Report filed on February 12.

Lee Mews is a condominium development of 20 townhouses and English basement units that abuts the subject property at 413 North Washington Street. We have an easement over a portion of 417 North Washington to access our parking lot. There are also easements that provide parking in our lot to the properties at 411, 413 and 417 North Washington.

We are glad to have an Italianate building like 413 restored to its original condition as a residence on North Washington. It joins the restoration of its Richardson Romanesque neighbor 417 to enhance what the 1997 zoning report identifies as the gateway to a residential neighborhood extending east to the river. Our properties benefit greatly from our location near such outstanding historical buildings as the Lee-Fendall House, the Delaney property at 407 North Washington and the Potts-Fitzhugh-Lee house with its twin on Oronoco Street. In fact, Lee Mews was designed to complement these buildings as "A grouping of superbly designed...Townhouses in the Federal Manner."

That is why we are concerned that the application proposes and the staff recommends that the eastern elevation be replaced by a contemporary three story floor to ceiling window unit. The original application filed last year described the work on the east wall as follows: "Carefully remove entire painted, damaged brick wall. Rebuild using salvaged historic bricks and new windows set in new white painted metal structure." The current application increases the size of the window by nearly 50 percent, leaving little in the way of salvaged brick rebuilding.

We find that such a massive use of glass is entirely out of keeping with the surrounding historical neighborhood. The staff statement that there is only limited visibility of this contemporary construction is too dismissive. The rear of the building (the white wall in the photo) is plainly visible from the cobblestone block of Princess Street and the garden of the Lee-Fendall house. It can also be glimpsed from the Potts-Fitzhugh-Lee house. Furthermore, we object to the total discounting of the view from our property. That eastern wall is in full view of our upper courtyard and nearly half of our units. The courtyard has been used by members of the public for formal pictures seeking to feature the charm of Old Town as a setting.

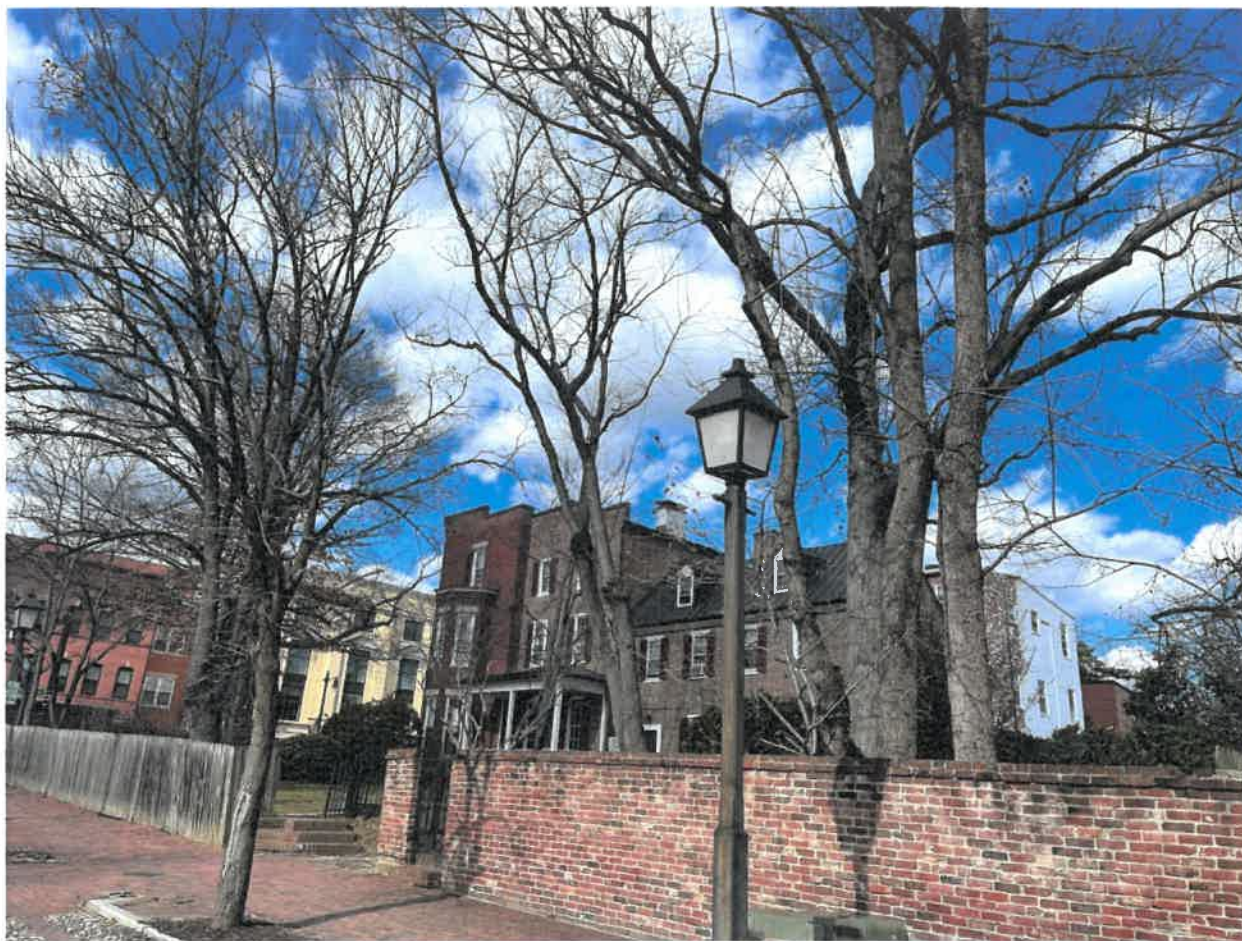


Photo of the back wall (*the white wall) of 413 North Washington as seen from Princess Street.

The staff correctly characterizes this construction as “a modern storefront fenestration system that extends from the first floor to the third floor with minimal muntins and including three operable portions.” They admit that this wall is not an “addition” but still finds it consistent with guidelines that allow additions to be clearly distinguishable from the historical portions of the building. We fail to see how this massive window can be said to comply with the *New and Replacement Window Performance Specifications*. We also believe that the proposed window wall will generate a great deal of glare during the day and light pollution to our community at night. That light pollution will also be highly visible from the cobblestone block of Princess Street mentioned above.

The original version of the application, posted on February 3rd, also proposed extensive rooftop solar panels, to be designed later. That proposal has been strangely downplayed in the version of the application included with the staff report, and there is only one reference on page 13, where Zoning states that the solar panels comply with zoning. The drawings in the original application showed an intrusive array of panels, and we are concerned about the vagueness of the design information.

The demolition and construction pose unique problems to our community, and we wish that the staff had acknowledged it in the report. Because of the unusual configuration of the lot of 413 North Washington, literally all the activities beyond the interior of the building must take place on our property or on the portion of the 417 property that provides access to the parking lot. That is why the wholesale demolition of the east wall and the installation of a huge metal framed window are so sensitive. There are 18 parking spaces for Lee Mews owners as well as spaces for the doctor's office at 411 and the house at 417, all of which depend on access through the driveway and the parking lot. Furthermore, the handicapped entrance to the doctor's office is reached from the parking lot. The driveway and parking lot also provide essential access for emergency vehicles.

We would like for the Board to know that we were not notified in advance of this application nor of its earlier version last June. We had heard nothing until we reached out to Ms. Toth after the BAR hearing was publicized in June. We did have one meeting with the design team before the application was postponed indefinitely. Again this month, we saw the hearing notice and circulated the application a full day before we heard from Ms. Toth about a proposal that had been submitted on January 13. We are committed to being good neighbors and look forward to a constructive dialogue to resolve the problems posed by this demolition and construction.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized first name and a last name, followed by a long horizontal flourish.

From: [James Cavanagh](#)
To: [Lia Niebauer](#)
Cc: [James Cavanagh](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Public Comment on BAR #2021-00236 & 2021-00261, Toth Property
Date: Monday, February 14, 2022 1:19:24 PM

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Ms. Niebauer:

Please include the following comments as part of the public record and for consideration by the BAR.

RE: BAR #2021-00236 & 2021-00261, Toth Property

I reside in the Lee Mews Condominium complex, which abuts the proposed demolition and reconstruction project under consideration by the BAR.

My concerns include:

- **Failure of Applicant to comply with required property owner notifications**

The Board should know that none of the residents of Lee Mews were properly notified on this application. Last June, we had heard nothing until we reached out to the property owner after the BAR hearing was publicized. After that, we did have one brief meeting with the design team before the application was postponed indefinitely. Again this month, after we saw the BAR hearing notice, and the application had circulated amongst our residents, it was a full day before we heard anything from Ms. Toth about the proposal that had been submitted on January 13. This is not proper notification to effected neighbors.

- **New construction of modern/contemporary design incongruous with surrounding Italianate buildings and inconsistent with prior application.**

I am concerned that the application proposes that the eastern elevation be replaced by a contemporary three story floor to ceiling “storefront” window unit. The original application filed last year described the work on the east wall as follows: “*Carefully remove entire painted, damaged brick wall. Rebuild using salvaged historic bricks and new windows set in new white painted metal structure*”. The current application dramatically increases the size of the window by nearly fifty percent, leaving little in the way of salvaged historic brick rebuilding.

- **Inadequately justified move to install large “Wall of Glass” overlooking Lee Mews Condominiums will generate significant glare during the day and significant light pollution at night.**

The new east wall diagram with the increased, massive industrial glass windows is

“justified” on the basis that it is needed because the "house doesn't have any exterior space" when the proposal includes a rather extensive roof deck. Clearly, the roof deck will provide adequate “exterior space.” Plus, the footprint of the house and its lack of exterior space surrounding it was well known when the property was purchased and when the original application was submitted and acted on by the BAR.

The BAR should explain how this massive window can be said to comply with the *New and Replacement Window Performance Specifications*.

I also believe that the proposed industrial window wall will generate a great deal of glare during the day and excessive and intrusive light pollution on my home and to several others in our community at night.

- **Incongruous new construction clearly visible to general public from Princess Street (see below), and to selective public (residents of Lee Mews Condominiums) from LM property**

Such a massive use of glass is entirely out of keeping with the surrounding historical neighborhood. The staff statement that there is only limited visibility of this contemporary construction is not accurate. The rear of the building is plainly visible from the historic cobbled block of Princess Street , as shown below

- **Undisclosed siting and design of Solar Panels on roof**

The original version of the application posted on February 3rd proposed extensive rooftop solar panels, to be designed later. That proposal has been strangely downplayed in the version of the application included with the staff report, and there is only one reference on page 13, where Zoning states that the solar panels comply with zoning. The drawings in the original application showed an intrusive array of panels, and I am concerned about the vagueness of the design information.

Wall of Glass will be clearly visible from 600 Block of Princess Street



For these reasons, I urge the BAR to deny the Application, as submitted.

James Cavanagh
[424 North Saint Asaph Street](#)
[Alexandria, VA 22314](#)

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From: [Jacob Clark](#)
To: [Lia Niebauer](#)
Cc:
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Hearing 02/16/22 re 413 N Washington St, Alexandria
Date: Tuesday, February 15, 2022 5:55:48 PM

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Dear Ms Niebauer:

I own 411 N Washington Street, the property next door to (and sharing a common wall with) 413 N Washington. I understand the Board of Architectural Review will have a zoom hearing in which the renovation of the 413 N Washington Street property will be addressed.

I am a physician and conduct my medical practice at 411 N Washington. Besides our front entrance with steps on Washington Street, we have a rear entrance with a ramp to allow persons with mobility issues to enter and exit my office more easily. I am concerned about restrictions to access to the back of my building during business hours due to the renovation at 413 N Washington St. I am hoping that assurance will be given that the access alley and immediate back of my property will not be affected during construction.

I will log into the meeting 02/16/22 to get a better understanding of the process. Please let me know if you need any other information.

Thank you,

Jacob Clark MD
411 N Washington St
Alexandria, VA 22314
office 703-548-5588

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From: [Laura Beattie](#)
To: [Lia Niebauer](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]For B.A.R. Items #2021-000236 & #2021-000261 on February 16th
Date: Tuesday, February 15, 2022 9:36:33 PM
Attachments: [image4.png](#)
[image2.png](#)

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RE: The east elevation (rear wall) proposed design for 413 N Washington Street

As property owners of 422 N Saint Asaph Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 since 2005, my husband Michael Beattie and I reside just steps from this east wall of 413 N Washington Street, as our town home is located in the upper courtyard of the Lee Mews community.

Living in this exceptionally historic community and neighborhood is a gift. We are pleased that 413 N Washington Street sold as a primary residence, and to someone who is keen to renovate this special building.

Throughout our years in Old Town, we have been grateful for the Board of Architectural Review which ensures historical integrity in our Old & Historic Alexandria District.

For this reason, we ask that the B.A.R. consider the inappropriate and non-historic design of the proposed wall of modern, storefront windows to be mounted on the reconstructed original wall of this Italianate building. As is noted in the proposal diagram, there is also to be 'fritting' (a dotted, frosted design of small circles) on these modern windows, in order to provide privacy to the owner.

The staff report mentions that building *additions* are not encouraged to try to match the historical part of an old, original structure. But as they also state, this wall is *not* an addition at all, but an original wall of the structure. And therefore, it is completely appropriate that the renovation should follow the rest of the structure's renovation plans to bring the exterior of this impressive building back to a proper state. Correct, historic windows are needed on the east elevation. The proposed wall of 'fritted' storefront windows creates a shockingly incongruous structure. And this is viewable *by the public* from many angles and perspectives, which will be shown next.

The staff report says that the large wall of modern 'storefront' (their term) windows, with great amounts of 'fritting' complies with the 'Alexandria New and Replacement Window Performance Specifications in the Historic Districts'. In reviewing this document, dated January 6, 2021 and posted on the city website, it is clear that #2 and #5 contradict this claim.



Alexandria New and Replacement Window Performance Specifications in the Historic Districts

1/6/2021

The material, form and design of windows on new construction, and replacement windows permitted on existing buildings pursuant to the *BAR's Policies for Administrative Approval for Windows*, must comply with the specifications below:

1. Replacement windows approved on Early buildings must be full frame replacements, or sash kits installed in the existing frame, rather than insert or pocket style replacements. Fiberglass windows, where permitted, may be insert - type windows only if they minimally obscure existing historic fabric and closely replicate historic window details such as muntin (grids), jamb, and trim profiles.
2. The dimensions and proportions of the window rails, stiles, muntins, frame, sill and exterior trim must match historically appropriate window proportions. Exterior trim on Early buildings may not be mitered at the corners.
3. Where permitted, multi-light insulated glass windows must have permanently fixed muntins on both the interior and exterior of the glass, with spacer bars between the glass. These are typically referred to as Simulated Divided Light (SDL) windows.
4. Muntins must be sized appropriately and paintable. Muntins that approximate historic putty profiles are preferred.
5. Generally, glazing must be clear, non-reflective and without tint. Where double glazing is permitted, Low-E (low emissivity) glass is encouraged for energy conservation. Low-E 272 glass meets these requirements.
6. The vinyl weatherstrip portion of wood window jambs should be minimally visible.
7. The applicant must submit complete window manufacturer technical specification sheets, or "cut sheets," to BAR staff to confirm compliance with these specifications. All window replacements in the historic districts, except sash kits, also require a building permit from Code Administration.

For help, contact BAR staff at projects@townofalexandria.gov or 703.746-3833.

The following demonstrates how the public will regularly have views of this most incongruous wall of modern windows on the east-facing wall. This is a jarring and inappropriate design feature when placed in the heart of a significantly historical block of Old Town. The light reflection on the proposed wall of windows will in fact draw attention to this jarring sight during the daytime. In the evenings, the interior light of the residence will also broadcast and magnify the incongruous and non-historical design.

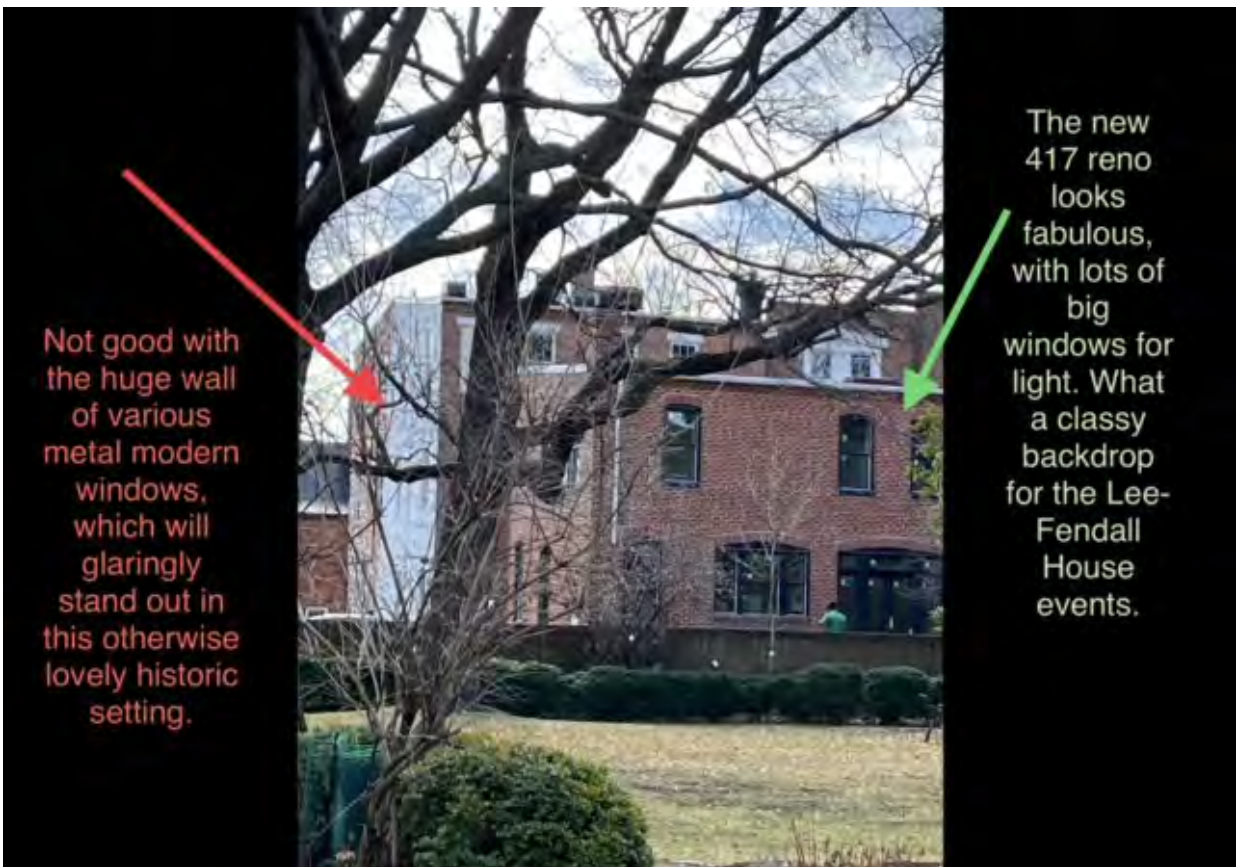
From the cobblestoned 600 block of Princess Street, there are clear views of this east wall. The staff report uses a low resolution, blurry image from Princess Street, and one sees three thick gray lines drawn through to try to show that there is no impact, with only an insignificant 'oblique' view. See the images below taken from cobblestoned Princess Street.







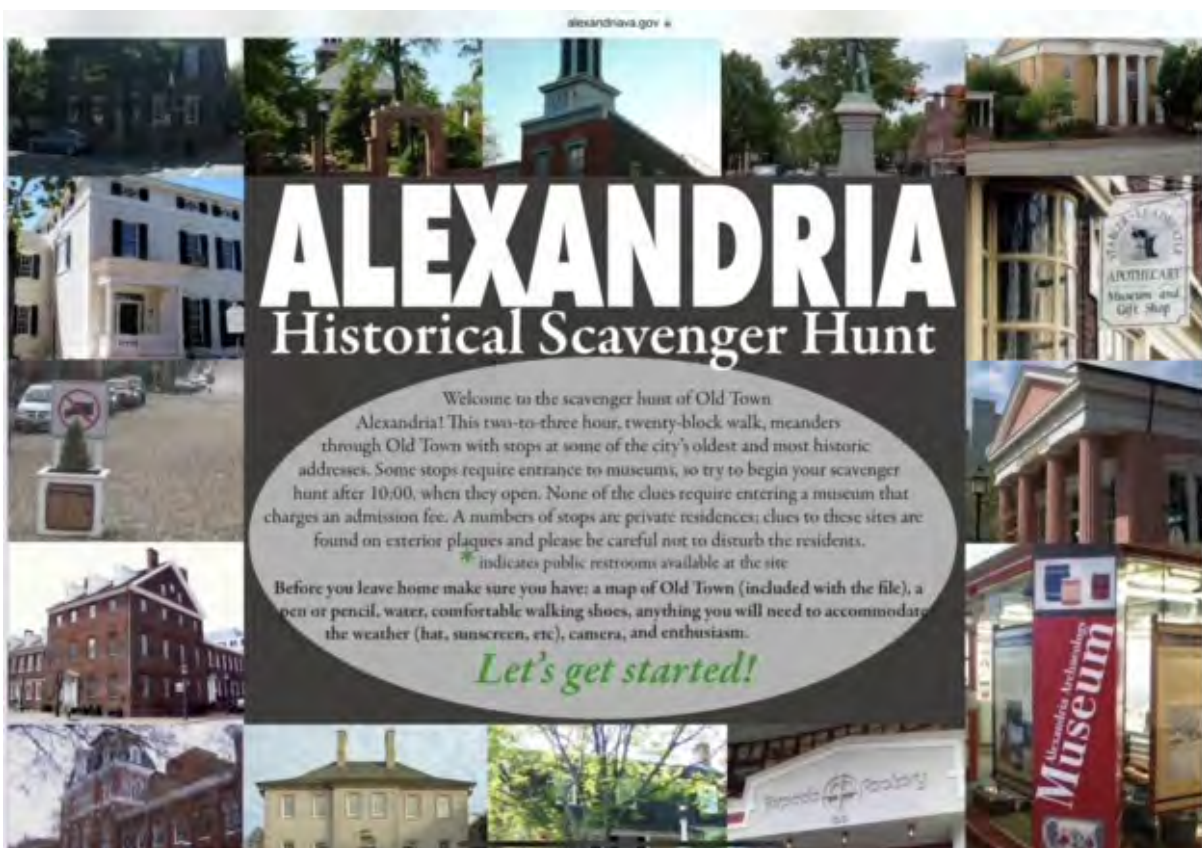
There are also views from the historical 600 block of Oronoco Street.



The Lee-Fendall House hosts *many* lovely public events, which are critical to the revenue needed to maintain and support this important property. People choose this garden for their weddings and other special events because of the enchanting, historic ambiance. And of course there are other public events hosted throughout the year, which draw tourists and locals alike to this setting. The public will certainly see this east wall of fritted, storefront modern windows, just past the 160 year old black walnut and ginkgo trees (where photos are taken). For night events, the wall of jarringly incongruous windows will glow from interior light, in the background of these special garden events.

Our opposition to this one portion of the design, the inappropriate east wall windows, is supported by the many public views of the wall, as well as for the integrity of such a lovely, historic building, set in such a special Old Town block.

Please also be aware that the city promotes self-guided walking tours. These can be found on the city website, as well as at VisitAlexandria's site, and many apps for self-guided tours of Old Town Alexandria. One regularly encounters tourists wandering through our Lee Mews courtyards, passing from the 400 block of North Saint Asaph Street in search of the Lee-Fendall House Museum and Garden. They are holding their phones and following their GPS. After viewing the cobblestoned Princess Street, they arrive in the Lee Mews parking lot area and look towards the lovely view of the rear of Lee-Fendall House. And then they carry on out to N Washington Street. The public, enjoying what Alexandria actively promotes. And this takes them right by the rear of 413 N Washington Street.





9 COBBLESTONE STREET

LOCATION: Princess Street
WHAT IS IT? A close replica of how streets were in 1790.
DID YOU KNOW? The street's stones remained untouched for nearly two centuries until the 1979 restoration.
TO THE NEXT STOP: Go back to the corner of Princess and St. Asaph. Turn left and continue on St. Asaph. Turn left after you cross Oronoco Street.

Question: According to legend, who provided the labor to cobble the street?
Answer: _____

Need a hint? Read the information posted in the planer in the road.



10 LEE BOYHOOD HOME PRIVATE!

LOCATION: 607 Oronoco Street
WHAT IS IT? Famous Confederate Civil War General Robert E. Lee, although not born here, spent most of his childhood growing up in this grand townhouse.
DID YOU KNOW? Built in 1795 by John Potts, Jr., it passed through the hands of several families until it became the home of Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee, the famed Revolutionary War general, and Ann Hill Carter Lee -- Robert E. Lee's parents.
TO THE NEXT STOP: Continue on Oronoco to N. Washington Street. Turn left at the corner to cross Oronoco.

Question: What did Lee say when he returned to his childhood home after the Civil War?
Answer: _____

Need a hint? Find the marker!



11 LEE - FENDALL HOUSE

LOCATION: 614 Oronoco Street
WHAT IS IT? The land was owned by Revolutionary War general "Light Horse Harry" Lee, the father of Robert E. Lee, until he sold the land to his cousin Phillip Fendall in 1784.
DID YOU KNOW? The building was vacated in 1969 upon the death of its final resident. It was opened as a museum in 1974.



12 LLOYD HOUSE

LOCATION: 220 North Washington Street
WHAT IS IT? The house was built by John Wise, a tavern keeper, but was later bought by John Lloyd and remained in his family until 1918.
DID YOU KNOW? It was saved from demolition in 1956 by Robert V. New. It was bought and restored in 1968 as an example of late Georgian architecture.
TO THE NEXT STOP: Leaving the

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Self-Guided Tours

Explore on foot to learn about African American sites, Civil War hospitals, George Washington's Alexandria. Specialized brochures feature Jewish and Presbyterian sites in Alexandria. Neighborhoods are featured in brochures of Old Town North and Upper Old Town, and a Women's History tour is featured on an audio tour. For journeys by bike or scooter, get an Alexandria Bikeways map, or print cue sheets for tours of the War of 1812 or the Civil War Defenses of Washington. Historic Wayfinding and Alexandria Heritage Trail signs will enhance your visit.

Walking Tours

[Walking Tours](#) include brochures, apps and podcasts to guide your exploration of Alexandria's historic streets. Look for specialized tours on African American history, the occupation of Alexandria during the Civil War, women's history, George Washington and more.

Bike Tours

[Bike Tours](#) include maps, cue sheets and historic information. The City of Alexandria is a wonderful place to cycle. Select a portion of the Alexandria Heritage Trail, a Civil War bike trail, or a War of 1812 bike trail.

Wayfinding Signs

[Wayfinding Signs](#) can be found on and around King Street, from the Masonic Temple on Shuter's Hill to the waterfront. They are best explored on foot, or you can see the panels online.

Alexandria Heritage Trail

We thank the B.A.R. for maintaining the integrity of our historic neighborhood, which we cherish

along with the appreciative tourists and visitors. The B.A.R. ensured a beautiful and historically appropriate design for the Sunrise Senior Living facility directly across the street from 413 N Washington Street. We are so grateful, and it's something we see every day as we come and go from our home.

Thank you for your consideration of our earnest request. We want the owner to have proper light in her 413 home, and would hope that this could be achieved with larger, historically appropriate windows on the east side. And perhaps skylights, which would not harm the exterior of such a beautiful building.

Laura and Michael Beattie

Below, from the upper courtyard of the Lee Mews town homes.



Below is from our front door, with the same view from our dining room windows.





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From: [Gail Hoffman](#)
To: [Lia Niebauer](#)
Cc: [John Pike](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]BAR Hearing Tonight - Re 413 N. Washington St.
Date: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 10:45:28 AM

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Dear Ms. Niebauer:

We are residents of Lee Mews and directly impacted by the proposed alteration of 413 N. Washington Street. The letter sent to you by William Schmale, President of the Lee Mews Council of Co-owners reflects the very serious concerns of the many owners and other neighbors in our community.

We would like to emphasize that the proposed alterations to the rear of the 413 N. Washington St. property constitute a direct departure from the established architectural style and standards of our historic district. This extraordinarily modern, shimmering glass surface proposed for the entire back of the building is at complete variance with the traditional design standards that prevail in our historic district.

The preservation of these traditional design standards is at the core of the mission of the Board of Architectural Review. It is this distinctive historic character that our city nearly lost half a century ago and has worked in the decades since to recover and sustain. The proposed alteration of 413 N. Washington St. would be a dramatic and glaring architectural statement that is at utter and complete variance with everything else in this historic area. We are very big fans of modern architecture but it does not belong in the historic district in Old Town.

We have always understood that one bright line criteria for what is permitted or prohibited in this historic district is that which is visible from the street. This extraordinarily vivid architectural statement – with its strikingly modern surface – would be directly visible from our living room and courtyard, from the courtyard of Lee Mews, from the Mews parking lot, and it will be readily visible from Princess Street, as the structure is now (see included pictures). By virtue of its singular design, it will most certainly be noted and remarked on by passersby as being completely out of place and out of character. This represents precisely the sort of departure from established traditional architectural standards that the Board of Architectural Review was intended to preclude. Approval of this variance from established design standards will create a precedent that will render it virtually impossible for the board to object to other such radical variances in the future.

We also want to stress that the massive construction project envisioned in this proposal will severely impact us and our neighbors, and will have tremendous consequences on our everyday lives. For example, one of us (John Pike) is handicapped and the parking lot serves as the only entry and exit from our home as it is too difficult for him to navigate the stairs leading to N. St. Asaph St. We are reliant on the parking lot and driveway alongside 413 N. Washington St. to be unencumbered as he goes to and from his office and medical appointments. We all need the ability to come and go as needed. But having constant work crews and vehicles in this parking lot will make coming and going extremely complicated, if not impossible. There is room for only one car to pass in and out of the parking lot at a time. All it will take is for one commercial vehicle – either in the driveway or in the parking lot – to block access.

Both the proposed construction and the presence of commercial vehicles in the parking lot represent a very real risk to property. This is not just hypothetical. In October of 2021, a commercial truck in the parking lot smashed into our car, which was parked in its space (and fortunately unattended). Shortages of both auto parts and labor resulted in a long repair process. We finally got the car back in January of this year, and we are still waiting to recover auto repair and rental car costs.

However annoying and challenging the lengthy construction would be, if this proposal were allowed to proceed, we – and all those who come after us – would have to endure a construct that will **permanently** alter the character of our neighborhood and historic area. We urge you to reject the proposed alterations, and we very much hope our neighbor at 413 N. Washington St (who we look forward to meeting) will create a new vision that we can all admire and enjoy together.

Many thanks for all you do.

Sincerely,

Gail Hoffman and John Pike
426 N. St Asaph St
Alexandria, VA 22314

View from our living room and patio. 413 N Washington is the white building directly ahead on the left.



Daytime view from the Lee Mews Courtyard (from in front of our patio)



Clear view of the rear of 413 N. Washington St from Princess St



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From: [Deanna Wilson](#)
To: [Lia Niebauer](#)
Cc: [Deanna Wilson](#); [Justin Wilson](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Comments for BAR #2021-00236 & 2021-00261, Toth Property February 16, 2021 Docket
Date: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 11:24:00 AM

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Ms. Niebauer:

Please include the following comments as part of the public record and for consideration by the BAR.

RE: BAR #2021-00236 & 2021-00261, Toth Property

I reside in the Lee Mews Condominium complex, which abuts the proposed demolition and reconstruction project under consideration by the BAR.

I offer the following concerns to the staff recommendations:

Views to the impacted areas are limited to what can be seen from North Washington Street and from Oronoco Street over the open space of the Lee-Fendall House museum and Princess Street over the open space behind 407 North Washington Street.

This is not an accurate statement. The Lee Mews homeowners will be greatly affected by the proposed change to the east side of the building. Many of us have direct views of the east side of the Toth property when we are in our homes, and certainly when we depart our homes and are enjoying our common community areas. As shown in the first picture below, my view is of 411 and 413 N. Wash., the Downham Buildings; currently the east facades of the buildings mirror each other in window placement and symmetry. The proposed design of an ultramodern wall of windows is not in keeping with the colonial nature of the surrounding area, including the Lee-Fendall Home and the Lee Mews community. As shown in the photo, the impacted areas are not limited nor are they minimal. This wall of windows will be clearly visible to many residents and visitors.

"The east side of the building will be minimally visible from a public right of way. The parking lot to the east of the building is private property, meaning that the only visibility will be oblique views from Oronoco St, St Asaph, and Princess Streets (Figure 4). Due to the minimal visibility and structural need to rebuild the existing wall, staff supports the proposed modification and recommends that the applicant work with staff to ensure that the storefront system meets the New and Replacement Window Performance Specifications."

This is the only reference to the 22 non-applicant private parking spaces that will be impacted daily by this massive construction/deconstruction project. While 4 of the Lee Mews parking spaces directly abut the construction site & will be greatly inconvenienced during the construction, all Lee Mews residents will be burdened for the duration of the project. We are a community of families who require unimpeded access and egress to our parking lot and spaces 24/7. The daily work vehicles, construction materials and scaffolding will make this difficult and some days impossible. As shown in the bottom picture below, our community has been and is currently "sharing" the parking lot with an ongoing smaller construction project at 417 N. Washington. While only 2 of the Lee Mews parking spaces abut 417 N. Wash, the daily disruption has been significant. Construction vehicles frequently block multiple parking spaces requiring residents to locate the vehicle owners and wait for removal until we can depart or use our parking spaces. This causes delays in going to medical appointments and other daily activities. Despite assurance from the 417 property owner that driveway access would never be impeded, there were several instances when we would pull into the driveway and could not advance to the parking lot due to ladders, we were told to back out into the traffic on very busy Washington Street which was extremely dangerous and life threatening. I would add that the 417 construction project has been mostly internal renovations—not the removal of an external wall—and it has been very disruptive to our daily lives.

"F-2 The proposed alterations and solar panels comply with zoning."

I am concerned that there is minimal description & discussion of the proposed solar panels other than ***Solar Panels To Be Designed by Subcontractors***, and the staff comment above. Until such time as these panels are designed and submitted, the application should not be approved.

Proper Notification

Unlike previous construction/alteration projects in the neighborhood, Lee Mews residents were not provided advance notice of this massive construction project. Typically, a letter is mailed or delivered to all residents in advance of BAR hearing notices appearing at the site. Because we didn't receive timely notification of this major undertaking, we have not had adequate time to review this proposal in detail, nor have we met the applicant.

For this reason and the concerns listed above, I urge the BAR to reject the proposed construction project. I am hopeful that we can meet and work with the applicant to ensure a design that is pleasing to all and true to the historical nature of our community and area.

Thank you for all that you do to maintain the architectural style and standards of Old Town.

Deanna Wilson
424 N. Saint Asaph St.





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From: [Lisa Resnick](#)
To: [Lia Niebauer](#)
Cc: [Lisa Resnick](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Letter to submit for tonight's hearing
Date: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 11:16:15 AM

Ms. Niebauer:

Please include the following comments as part of the public record and for consideration by the BAR.

RE: BAR #2021-00236 & 2021-00261, Toth Property

Let's all agree that for residents of Old Town, one of our daily glories is the ability to walk around the neighborhood and *house watch*. We admire the beauty, the architecture, and (ah) the history, all while taking immense pride in that "we live here, too." So when my husband and I purchased our home seven years ago in the Lee Mews community, we joined that fortunate few who call Old Time home.

We appreciate the considerable work and careful eyes of the BAR that OT remains just that—old town. Which is why we have such strong sentiments about the intended design changes to 413 North Washington. There's hardly any way you could describe the all glass wall as in line with the look and feel of this community. Such an all glass wall is something you find in an office building, not a historic home in an historic community. Now we understand you are primarily concerned with the "public" face of this renovation. Well, for 20 townhomes, that view is public. For us, we did not move to Old Town, or Lee Mews for that matter, to face the back of an all glass office-looking wall.

We are appealing to your sense of community. How would you feel if this deconstruction and reconstruction was to happen in your backyard? How would you respond to the challenges of coming and going for months on end as dumpsters, trucks, workers, and scaffolds take over your life to complete a design that is wholly unworthy of Old Town's heritage?

With the wish that you hear and heed the comments of your neighbors at Lee Mews,

Lisa Resnick and Don Micallef
408 North Saint Asaph Street

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From: [Jennifer Mitchell](#)
To: [Lia Niebauer](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Reference BAR Items #2021-00236 & #2021-00261 - 413 N Washington Street
Date: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 11:45:08 AM

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Ms. Niebauer,

As a resident of Lee Mews, I am writing to strongly oppose the massive industrial window proposed for the east/rear wall of 413 N Washington.

Due to the late notice and very short response time provided concerning this matter, I would like to quickly describe a few of my concerns.

This industrial/non-historic window design for this very historic building and residential neighborhood setting is not only inappropriate for this setting, I believe this industrial wall of glass has great potential to negatively impact our property values in this historic neighborhood. Residents and future residents seek out this area for its historic design and history, not modern/industrial glass walls. This proposed glass wall is not a small/discrete modification to the rear of a property. It is literally viewable by both residents and the public from all angles. When Lee Mews residents make modifications/upgrades to our property in this historic area we must comply with very specific requirements and standards that clearly do not apply to this project.

Furthermore, I have great concern with the access to our parking lot being significantly impeded by construction work, materials and equipment. I have daily services scheduled that require access to the parking lot. Access to the parking lot must remain open for emergency vehicles and resident parking/services. It should not be used as a storage area for construction materials, equipment and debris as this poses significant safety risks/hazards.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and to express my strong opposition to this project as currently designed.

Very respectfully,

Jennifer Mitchell
420 N Saint Asaph Street
Lee Mews Resident

Sent from my iPhone

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From: [Linda Stella](#)
To: [Lia Niebauer](#)
Cc: [Linda Stella](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Proposed glass structure
Date: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 1:43:15 PM

Dear Ms. Niebauer,

I understand that 413 Washington Street is proposing a modern design for their building. As I understand it, this proposed building will have an entire wall of modern windows which will stand out amongst the carefully curated architectural style honed over many decades to keep Old Town with a unique character reminiscent of colonial times. In fact, Old Town markets itself as a place where time has stood still and Americans can come visit and experience this area as such.

I cannot imagine the Architectural Review Board would allow such a sharp disruption in architectural character to occur. As a resident we have to hold to basic architectural designs and are, in fact, fined if we depart from these restrictions. To allow this modern monstrosity to be built would undermine all Old Town stands for.

I have own 434 N. Saint Asaph Street since 2003, almost 20 years. Please do not allow this design to be approved and blight our community. Please hold them to the standards we are all held to and keep the character of our beloved city.

Respectfully,
Linda Stella
434 N. Saint Asaph Street
703.869.1182

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From: [Marta Schmale](#)
To: [Lia Niebauer](#)
Subject: RE: BAR #2021-00236 & 2021-00261, Toth Property
Date: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 2:26:08 PM

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Dear Ms. Niebauer,

Please include the following comments as part of the public record and for consideration by the BAR.

RE: BAR #2021-00236 & 2021-00261, Toth Property

I have been a resident of Lee Mews for almost 9 years and the main reason my husband and I purchased this particular home was its beautiful and historic surroundings, which will greatly and negatively be impacted by the proposed alteration of 413 N Washington Street.

Not only would the huge glass wall on the east elevation be an eyesore and a clear departure from the historical style and architecture of the neighborhood, it will also provide a constant glare at my living room and bedroom, especially on a beautiful sunny day like today.

Furthermore, I do not appreciate how the alteration plans submitted by ColePrevost purposefully minimize the visibility of the rear of 413 N Washington Street from the street by carefully taken photos. Per the attached pictures I took earlier today, the back wall of the Toth property is clearly visible from N Saint Asaph Street, Princess Street, as well as Oronoco Street to both residents and visitors to the area. I cannot imagine the light pollution that glass wall will cause after dark to Lee Mews residences, the street section of the entrance to the Mews on N Saint Asaph Street and also to the garden of the historic Lee Fendall House that hosts numerous public events in the summer months.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask the BAR to reject the proposed construction project. Please see attached three photos that underline my concerns.

I look forward to cooperating with Ms. Toth and her team in designing a mutually acceptable and pleasing plan for the reconstruction of the rear elevation of her house at 413 N Washington Street.

Marta Schmale
428 N Saint Asaph St







From: [Candice McCarthy](#)
To: [Lia Niebauer](#)
Subject: RE: BAR #2021-00236 & 2021-00261, Toth Property
Date: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 2:29:26 PM

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RE: BAR #2021-00236 & 2021-00261, Toth Property

Ms. Niebauer,

I reside at 418 N. St. Asaph Street which is located directly behind the Toth property at 413 N. Washington Street. I have several concerns regarding this proposal that I would like to express to the board.

My primary concern is that the proposal for the east elevation of this property is incongruous with the surrounding homes. This is a unique property in the sense that its rear/east elevation is visible from multiple historic homes, sites, and streets to include the Lee-Fendall House Museum and Garden on Oronoco Street and can be seen clearly from Historic Princess Street (see attached photographs).

With those two vantage points considered, this application proposes that the east elevation be replaced by a contemporary, three story floor to ceiling "storefront" window unit. In addition, the materials that are being proposed are not only modern, but industrial in design. I urge the board to take a closer look at the spec sheets for these materials, to include the "Lumi Frit, Surface 1 Frit Glass, Small Dot + Etch by Bendheim. I have also attached a picture of a commercial building using this exact material. Nowhere on the manufacturers website, could I find an image of residential use of this specific product which is worth noting. Please keep in mind that this 'wall of windows' and the Fritted glass will be clearly visible from historic cobblestoned Princess Street as well as the house and gardens at the Lee-Fendall Museum. This greatly impacts the historical style and elements of Old Town, and is not in compliance with the standards set and enforced by the BAR. <https://bendheim.com/product/surface-1-frit-glass-small-dot/>

In addition, I'm greatly concerned that a large, three story window will generate excessive and intrusive light pollution on multiple private residences in the surrounding area. While the proposed wall of windows on the east elevation of this property is directly across from my house and will impact all main living areas of my home, the impacts of the renovation reach well beyond any one family home, and will negatively affect the majority of property owners on this entire block.

Lastly, the residents of Lee Mews have established and maintain a community courtyard and garden enjoyed not only by our residents, but also by neighbors and visitors who frequently stroll through. In a city with limited green space, this is value added to our community. I believe that the proposed design for 413 N. Washington Street will greatly alter the view and the charm of our shared space.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Candice MCCarthy

418 N. St. Asaph Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

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Candice M. McCarthy



View from the
garden at Lee-
Fendall House



View from
Princess Street



View from the
garden at the Lee-
Fendall garden



From: [Michael Beattie](#)
To: [Lia Niebauer](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]BAR #2021-00236 & #2021-00261
Date: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 3:22:03 PM

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Ms Niebauer,

Please accept this as strong opposition to the east wall window design proposed for 413 N Washington Street.

As a resident of the Lee Mews, and supporting member of the Lee-Fendall House Museum and Garden, I ask the Board of Architectural Review to consider the grave visual impact on the important historical ambiance which the Lee-Fendall House currently enjoys. This is a significant property which is open to the public on almost a daily basis. Please do not disregard the very public views from this close location to the rear of 413 N Washington Street.

The attached photos may assist in clarifying this point. You'll see a lovely brick walkway that runs around the perimeter of the historic garden, for the enjoyment of visitors.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Michael Beattie
422 N Saint Asaph Street
Alexandria, VA 22314



















Sent from my iPad

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From: [Bailee Barfield](#)
To: [Lia Niebauer](#)
Cc: [Will Schmale](#)
Subject: Re: 413 Washington Street
Date: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 4:28:33 PM

[You don't often get email from bailee.barfield@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

To whom it may concern -

I am a homeowner at 434 1/2 North Saint Asaph St and would like to echo the very valid concerns raised by my neighbors in the Lee Mews HOA regarding how the surrounding community will be adversely impacted by the extensive and unseemly proposed renovations to 413 Washington St. I would like to also flag the following two concerns:

1) The long-term construction congestion in the Lee Mews parking lot will result in increased parking congestion on surrounding Oronoco, Asaph, Pitt, and Princess streets as there will be at least a dozen cars (and possibly more should construction vehicles bleed out elsewhere) which will need landing spots at all times barricaded from the parking lot belonging to our community. Not only will this cause a shortage of parking for nearby homeowners (which are scarce for property owners to begin with), but it will also impact the scarce parking remaining available for the local businesses within the surrounding radius.

2) In addition to the interruption of historical preservation consistency to our local views as residents, I would also flag that the back of 413 (and all of the construction that would potentially follow) is extremely visible from Lee Fendall House and its gardens, which would hurt the beautifully preserved outdoor area and create disruptive noise and chaos for a historic local property which plays host to many community events for most of the year.

Thank you.

Bailee A. Barfield
434 1/2 North Saint Asaph St
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-403-1294

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Amanda Radke](#)
To: [Lia Niebauer](#)
Cc: [Kevin Brown](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Comments regarding BAR #2021-00236 OHAD & BAR #2021-00261 OHAD
Date: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 5:44:55 PM

You don't often get email from amanda.radke.87@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Good evening,

My fiance, Kevin Brown, and I recently purchased 406 N Saint Asaph Street last November, and we've recently been informed about the proposed partial demolition and alterations for 413 N Washington street. In anticipation of tonight's BAR meeting, we'd like to pass along some concerns we have for the proposed plan.

First, while the proposed glass wall is for the back of 413 Washington Street, the back of this building is public-facing and visible from both Oronoco Street/Lee Fendall House & Gardens, as well as visible from the historic cobblestone Princess Street. Because of this public-facing visibility, we feel that this plan is not in line with Old Town's historic neighborhood designation. As property owners in Old Town, we are required to adhere to guidelines and requirements to maintain our neighborhood's historical designation, and we worry that by allowing this development to occur, despite being on a public facing side of the building, it will detract from the neighborhood's historic feel. Further, we worry that this will set a precedent to approve more architectural changes for public-facing buildings that will inevitably change the historic feel of our neighborhood, or this approval will lead to a double-standard of allowing such changes for some property owners, but not others.

Second, the proposed plan directly impacts the Lee Mews community as it will cause significant disruption to our ability to access our parking lot. The proposed plan restricts our ingress and egress of our parking lot during demolition and construction. Further, the plan does not provide us with any answers regarding if notice will be provided for when our access will be restricted and for how long or regarding any remedies for inadequate notice or other violations. Given that this plan will directly impact the property owners and residents ability to leave and enter our properties, we feel that this proposed plan must be rejected.

Thank you for your consideration,
Amanda Radke & Kevin Brown

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