

From: Anderson Vereyken <amcjb12@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 17, 2023 4:05 PM
To: CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Written statement for 3/18/2023 City Council Meeting Docket Item 7

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Good afternoon,

Please find below my written statement for Item 7 (the Braddock Road Metro Small Area Plan zoning amendment) at Friday's meeting. I have never submitted a statement for a council meeting before; I do not intend to speak, and am unsure if non-speakers are allowed to submit written comments. My apologies if they are not.

Best,
Anderson

Dear City Council,

I am writing to express my happiness at the general development of the Braddock Road Metro neighborhood, and to indicate my approval of the zoning amendment being considered for the Small Area Plan. Over the past few years, the area on the east side of the Braddock Road Metro has grown upward and outward, with many new buildings springing up along N Fayette Street and elsewhere. This is heartening to see. In my view, the Braddock Road Metro neighborhood is Alexandria's ideal location for the kind of multifamily development that has been occurring there. Close access to public transportation systems makes it easy for neighborhood residents to get around Alexandria or into DC without putting more cars on the road. There are multiple grocery stores in either walking distance or a ten minute bus ride away in Potomac Yard. Shopping and recreational opportunities are never more than a block or two away, and thanks to mixed-use buildings with available commercial space, additional local opportunities seem likely to appear in the future. The Braddock Road Metro neighborhood has the potential to be a perfect model for the benefits of dense, walkable, mixed-use communities.

The redevelopment of the Samuel Madden Homes promises to continue this trend of effective and equitable growth. The current housing, which was built in the late 40s, is simply no longer of acceptable quality. The new building promises not only to provide improved living space for current residents of the Samuel Madden Homes, but also to make even more affordable units available to members of the community. The addition of a food hub and childcare center will make support systems available on-site. Like the other multifamily buildings sprouting up around the Braddock Road Metro neighborhood, residents new and old will be able to take advantage of multiple transit options and nearby commercial locations.

What has been particularly impressive about the Samuel Madden Homes redevelopment thus far has been the commitments made to residents concerning the demolition and construction process. Current residents have been guaranteed temporary housing, the payment of relocation expenses, and the right to move back to the property once construction is complete. However, to prevent this promising project from taking on a more troubling hue, it is extraordinarily crucial that these guarantees be fully and comprehensively realized. No matter how impressive the projected support has been thus far, and how beneficial the redevelopment may be, it does not change the fact that between 60 to 70 households are being asked to temporarily uproot themselves. This is no small sacrifice. Moving elsewhere for even just a few years can disrupt established social bonds, make finding work or commuting more challenging, and place children into a new and unfamiliar environment. Our valued neighbors currently living in the Samuel Madden Homes must be given the fullest support possible by all involved parties. If - as I hope it does - the City

Council approves the amendment to the Small Area Plan that allows the Samuel Madden redevelopment to go forward, I encourage City Council to remain very mindful of its obligation to do right by the Samuel Madden Homes' current residents.

Sincerely yours,
Anderson Vereyken
Braddock Road Metro neighborhood resident

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