

8 September 2020

To: City of Providence Zoning Board of Review

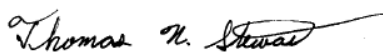
Subject: Blue Dog Capital Partners, LLC. Proposal for 126 Adelaide Ave, Plat 52, Lot 351

As a resident of Elmwood living on Adelaide Avenue and affected by the proposed change in zoning, I am commenting in support of the proposed change. I have reviewed the original and revised proposals submitted by Blue Dog Capital partners, and I have participated in the community meeting held by Blue Dog Capital partners. The major issues I have heard raised are the affordability of the proposed rentals, the potential increase in traffic density on Adelaide Avenue, and concerns by neighbors about maintenance of the property.

A survey of available rental housing in Elmwood demonstrates that the proposed rental rates are in line with Elmwood market rates for similarly sized rentals. The availability of additional housing stock would serve to dampen additional increases in the cost of housing. A potential for some increase in traffic density does exist. I note, however, that high traffic density on Adelaide is driven more by a combination of the large number of single and two-family homes in Elmwood repurposed to house many more families than the neighborhood's infrastructure was designed to handle and the corresponding widespread blacktopping of entire properties to accommodate a large number of tenant's vehicles in spite of zoning ordinances. One can reasonably expect that recent city "Slow Street" plans to install permanent greenways to slow traffic on some Elmwood streets will have a bigger impact in increasing Adelaide traffic than this project would have. Lastly, I believe that the project developers have demonstrated adequate good faith through their willingness to engage the community and revise plans based on the inputs to alleviate concerns they will be good neighbors.

Looking to the benefits to the neighborhood of this project, it is clear that the lack of affordable housing in Providence is a major concern. In fact, this lack of affordable housing has provided incentive for landlords to capitalize on converting the large neighborhood homes into high density housing stock for which they and the community infrastructure were never designed. In this case, we have a developer taking a large vacant historic property for which no other plans exist or have been offered, and properly going through the rezoning process. The developer has provided plans for a significant increase in available housing stock with normally common amenities like on-site tenant laundry facilities and zoning-compliant parking missing from much of the existing higher density housing in the community.

The developer has proposed to put a large historic, but unused, property to use in alleviating a housing shortage while maintaining the historic character of the building. This is a win-win proposition for the neighborhood. I have seen no concrete alternative plans, either from those opposing the project or from the city council for use of the property. Lack of action will result in the property remaining empty indefinitely and, as we have seen again and again in vacant properties in our neighborhood, attracting homeless squatters, vandalism, and theft of metals and other materials.



Thomas N. Stewart

232 Adelaide Avenue  
Providence, RI, 02907  
Stewartn1@gmail.com