

Rochelle Lee

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Rochelle Lee, 172 Ontario Street, Providence, RI 02907. I have lived in Elmwood for more than twenty years and in Providence for thirty years. I am also familiar with many local residents and former members of Hood AME Church.

Even as a longtime resident of Elmwood, I am just being informed of the development plans proposed renovations of Hood AME by Blue Dog Capital Partners, (BDCP), to create 18 apartments.

I oppose this project as presently constituted and envisioned. I oppose changing the zoning for the property for this specific development purpose.

Not only has little if any local outreach been carried out by BDCP, seeking broad input from residents and other property owners, but it has little value in regards to addressing the most pressing housing needs of our community.

After reviewing the posted materials on ZBR's website and speaking to people in my community, two things are evident: this proposed project has not been vetted by our community members, and, the housing plan is not intended to advance nor support access to affordable housing.

This is most evident in the basic facts regarding Bulldog Capital Projects', (BCP), unit mix for 126 Adelaide Street. Only two apartments even come close to family size housing with two bedrooms, and the remaining units are for single persons or a household size of no more than three person households.

Given that a zoning change would, for the foreseeable future, reduce (again) the available and properly zoned locations to establish a faith based community -- assets that are sorely needed in our neighborhood and many of the city's working and poor neighborhoods. There will be no local job generation, no impact on the use of area business for purchasing, likely, little if any local hiring either during construction or during property management, nor does his project add resources or support the community priorities well documented in a host of city plans, charrettes, public hearings and the like. --

The former church building needs to be renovated but the proposed adaptive re-use that BDCP is pursuing is like a fish out of water -- disconnected from the majority of its neighbors, removes an important historical property widely known in the African American community and does not strengthen nor build the community capacity that comes with local job creation, opportunities to grow employment or create new affordable housing.

I urge members of the Zoning Board of Review to reject, if not postpone the Zoning Board of Review vote to approve this requested zoning change.

Thank you,
Rochelle Lee