



The Fayette Alliance

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Executive Director

Elizabeth Knox van Nagell

LFUCG Urban County Council
200 East Main Street
Lexington, KY 40507

October 2, 2008

Dear Council members,

I am writing this letter on behalf of The Fayette Alliance. The Fayette Alliance is a coalition of agricultural, neighborhood, and development interests whose aim is to promote urban and rural vitality in Lexington-Fayette County.

Farmland preservation, and innovative infill redevelopment are essential pillars of the Fayette Alliance's mission—and more importantly, to Lexington-Fayette County's future prosperity.

As you know, Pepper Distillery LLC is initiating a text amendment that, if adopted, will allow adaptive reuse projects in the B-4 (Wholesale & Warehouse Business), I-1 (Light Industrial), and I-2 (Heavy Industrial) zones within the LFUCG Infill Redevelopment Boundary (ZOTA 2008-6).

According to the proposal, “Adaptive Reuse” projects use abandoned, vacant, or underutilized structures for new purposes, such as loft apartments, boutique hotels, offices, restaurants, and shops. By bringing buildings back to life, adaptive reuse projects “revitalize neighborhoods by preserving... historic architecture, creating new housing and mixed use opportunities, and increasing public safety”. *LFUCG Planning Staff Report*.

To qualify as “adaptive reuse” under the text amendment, a project must incorporate several progressive criteria into the development, such as green infrastructure, historic structures, multi-modal transportation opportunities, public art, and/or affordable housing.

With over 8,000 acres of blighted, underutilized, and vacant land inside the Urban Service Area, The Fayette Alliance supports the proposed text amendment. If adopted, it will be a catalytic tool in accommodating our future growth needs—by transforming tired properties into dynamic urban spaces and streetscapes without needlessly consuming our finite and threatened natural resources. This strategy expressly furthers Goals 5, 7, 8, 11 and 12 of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, and the spirit of the LFUCG Downtown Master Plan.

Moreover, the text amendment will affect over a dozen significant downtown properties including those along the Manchester Street corridor that comprise the Distillery District project.

Through community participation and collaboration, the Distillery District aims to revitalize roughly 28 acres of blighted real estate in downtown Lexington. Approximately 630,000 square feet of mixed-use construction and 350,000 square feet of adaptive reuse projects will anchor several public amenities in the development, including a signature Town Branch trail system, art park plaza, bourbon museum, and rooftop gardens. Ultimately, the Distillery District will represent a \$190 million investment in our urban core.

As such, the proposed text amendment will facilitate bold, visionary, and sustainable development opportunities in Lexington-Fayette County— thereby strengthening our quality of life and long term economic, environmental, and cultural viability.

Therefore, we respectfully request that you support the Planning Commission’s unanimous recommendation of approval re: ZOTA 2008-6. As there will likely not be a public hearing on this text amendment, we appreciate your consideration of this letter and dedication to responsible land use planning.

Respectfully,

Knox van Nagell
Executive Director