

Charlotte City Council  
600 East Fourth Street  
Charlotte, NC 28202

March 21, 2017

Dear Charlotte City Council Members:

I am writing to you as a Charlotte native, and the daughter of Charles Ervin who built the high-rise now known as "Varnadore". It is located on the corner of Independence Blvd and Albemarle Road. Speaking for my family, we like the vision that Our Local has for the property. Their idea is innovative for Charlotte, just as the building was designed to be, and is in keeping with what the building has been about from the very beginning.

In the early 1960's most of Charlotte's 'tall buildings' were clustered downtown. My father wanted to construct a 10 story office tower situated out Independence Blvd. It was to be the new home of The Ervin Construction Company. Many felt that the location was literally in the "middle of nowhere". There were those who laughed and referred to the new high-rise as a "white elephant". None of the negativity deterred my father from creating what he felt could be an enduring symbol and gateway to Downtown and to East Charlotte.

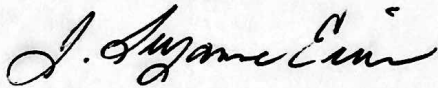
My father's vision, progressive for the times, was to create a sense of place, of community. This was often reflected in his developments referred to as the "Ervin experience". New ideas were created regarding home location in relation to schools, churches, parks, and the new American idea at that time, the shopping center. The company officials worked closely with home owners, government agencies, and planning departments to create a single concept – total environmental development.

The construction of the building had to meet the same strict criteria. It was important to have the support not only of Mayor Stan Brookshire and city officials, but of the community as well. The new offices were occupied by the end of September 1964 and in June, Gov. Terry Sanford appointed my father to the NC Board of Conservation and Development.

After construction was completed, the 'Ervin building', ('Varnadore'), served as an anchor in the East Charlotte Community for over 50 years. Our Local's vision will bring back this building's purpose as it was envisioned. The LED installation only amplifies the good that this property holds. As an artist, I find it to be an inspiring expression and a beautiful new canvas that gives a unique view into our culture. The building was far more than my father's corporate headquarters. He wanted it to serve as an iconic and modern gateway, a central point for the community and to demonstrate what was possible.

My family and I share the vision shown by Our Local and would like to see it realized in its entirety and not diminished. We are happy to see our father's original concept preserved and evolved in a way that will once again act as a progressive beacon for Charlotte and an asset that serves the community.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J. Suzanne Ervin".

J. Suzanne Ervin  
2309 Pender Place  
Charlotte, NC 28209