

City Council Representatives,

Collectively as neighborhoods, we have never come together in such numbers to support any redevelopment project. Ever.

Today, we are writing to you in solidarity and strong support of the re-zoning efforts of an organization called "Our Local" to redevelop the properties near the corner of Independence Blvd. and Albemarle Road known as the Varnadore Properties et. al.. Their request to rezone the properties from B-2 to MUDD-O would usher in a kind of redevelopment and spark that we have been hoping to attract for over two decades.

It is unusual that a project like this is so community focused and requires no public funds. The 8.6 million dollar investment that Our Local is bringing to our community should not be taken for granted. Nor should our voice in this matter. We are deserving of this vision and it needs be realized in its entirety and as originally depicted by Our Local.

The Ervin Building, now known as the "Varnadore Properties et. al. serves as a gateway to both Uptown and East Charlotte, and is representative of our voice. It's existence is representative of how we in East Charlotte have endured great change, survived, and are ready to unite, move forward, and thrive. We have persevered and it is time for us to be heard.

The current state of this property shrouds our voice in neglect and devalues our potential. This is not acceptable to us as a community. The modernized restoration of this icon as exhibited by Our Local will change the narrative on our part of the city and help restore East Charlotte as a highly valued part of the greater community.

This property sits on the second busiest corridor in the State and its LED installation will attract the kind of attention we need as a city by uniquely featuring the culturally diverse and arts-centric richness of the community in a way that nothing else can. Undoubtedly, the project also highlights Charlotte's creativity and commitment to innovation.

The LED technology that Our Local has chosen is highly efficient and sensitive to light levels. It is cutting edge by industry standards and reflective of Our Local's environmental considerations concerning light pollution mitigation and sustainability. The installation further distinguishes itself by contributing positively to the mental climate of the area through its promotion of local culture along with feelings of completeness and connectivity. Current plans call for each panel to measure 12.6 feet high by 55.12 feet wide. By contrast, a standard billboard is 14 feet high by 48 feet wide.

We have come to understand that the size and location of the installation is both intentional and critical. The installation is intended to blend with and enhance the visual continuity of the building. In working with the architect working with the architect, Our Local has found that reducing the size of the installation would be highly problematic, since doing so makes the installation appear as an afterthought. This is especially evident when considering the overall design of the building.

Since art content will be displayed and the intended viewing audience is the traffic on Independence Blvd., the size of the installation is crucial. People must be able to understand what they are looking at from a considerable distance, often with only a few seconds of viewing time. It is understandable that this art-specific display will require a large format since we have come to understand that the installation's technology-based sensitivity to light conditions, along with content restrictions based on self-imposed light level restrictions compound the need for the proposed size. For example, content with

darker colors and warmer light tones will be used during evening and nighttime hours to minimize light pollution and any possible impact to neighbors.

We are pleased that Our Local is in talks with Art Pop to establish guidelines to program and govern content and are especially pleased that they have committed to a "Content Committee". The independent seven member tripartite committee will hopefully be lead by Art Pop and consist of neighborhood, cultural, and sustainability representation. The purpose will be to prevent sales advertisement and effectively reflect the vibrant culture of the city by featuring the work of local artists, people doing good in the community, while tastefully acknowledging sponsors by showing corporate and municipal connection to the community.

Our Local has listened to our concerns and what we want collectively and they are ready to deliver on what we have asked for. We encourage you and city staff to get onboard with this project. We want Our Local's full vision for a community oriented, campus-inspired redevelopment approved and we are fully supportive of every aspect of this project:

- Aquaponics R&D Center
- Community Engagement Spaces
- Classrooms/Business Incubator
- Boutique Hotel
- Shared Workspace
- Restaurant, Bakery, Coffee Shop, Retail
- Rooftop Patio/Lounge
- Large arts-based LED Installation
- Events Space

This project is viable and tangible. It demonstrates outside-of-the-box thinking, especially for Charlotte, but it is reflective of what we need and want as a community. It is the type of "place making" that will allow our area to transform from a victim of circumstance to a leader in community-centric innovation. This will cost us nothing but our support. As elected representatives, we respectfully ask that you listen to us and allow this project to proceed in its entirety and as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

The undersigned East Charlotte Neighborhoods

Neighborhood	Representative	Signature
Lauren Park	Darrell Bonapart	Darrell Bonapart
Grove Park	Mimi Davis	Mimi Davis
Winterfield NA	DIANE LANGVIN	Diane Langvin
HOLLY GROVE HOMES	FREDERICK WRIGHT	Frederick Wright
Lauren Village	Shinona Thompson	Shinona Thompson
Snare Park	Shimisha Richards	Shimisha Richards
Marlwood Forest	Alice Thompson	Alice Thompson
Four Seasons HOA	Erin Thugmme	Erin Thugmme
Windsor PARK	T. Scott Robinson	T. Scott Robinson
Hope Valley	Laura Dunlap	Laura Dunlap
Four Seasons	Dyrre Osborne	Dyrre Osborne
WILLOW ACRES	PAMELA SOXX	PAMELA SOXX