﻿
 August 19, 2022

To the Metropolitan Nashville Planning Commission

 Dear Commissioners,

       I write this email to address to you my concerns regarding the proposed zoning change to accommodate the Ariza Bellevue project planned on the bank of the Harpeth River in Bellevue.  My name is Rex Roberts.  I have been a resident of Nashville for 57 years since I entered Vanderbilt Law School in 1965.  I practiced law in the Law Department of The National Life and Accident Ins. Co. (later American General Life and Accident) for 31 years.  Presently I reside at 300 White Oak Lane in the Harpeth Meadows Independent Living community, a senior community of 130 two- and-three-bedroom homes which adjoin a large nursing home.  These homes and the nursing home are located off of Coley Davis Road in Bellevue.

       The developer of the Ariza Bellevue project proposes to build several high-rise buildings to house a total of 417 apartment units on land totally enclosed by the Harpeth River and the CSX Railroad.  It is my understanding that this land is currently zoned for single-family homes on two or more acres.  Much of the land surrounding the location for this proposed complex is in flood plain.  It is frightful to consider what this area would have suffered if the recent weather system that devastated Kentucky had come through some 80 miles to the south of where it did.

     In addition to the possibility of this project contributing to enhanced flooding, a major concern for those of us living off of Coley Davis Road is the proposed use of Coley Davis Road as the access for the construction of the project as well as the sole access for its residents if and when it is completed.  The anticipated traffic flow emanating from the completed apartment project can be judged by the 598 parking spaces planned for its residents.

      Coley Davis Road presently becomes a narrow two-lane road immediately after double turn lanes feed traffic into it from Highway 70S.  In addition to approximately 2,000 residents who live in various neighborhoods off of Coley Davis Road, which road affords them the only means of entry to and exit from their homes, the turn lanes off of Highway 70S also serve as access to a service station, a flooring company, a Hampton Inn, a Home Depot, a recycling center, a Metro Transit park-and-ride facility and the Harpeth Soccer Complex that is a 20-acre natural grass location featuring 21 soccer fields (some with lighting) which hosts three annual tournaments as well as daily and nightly training for approximately 3,000 boys and girls ages 3-18.

       In addition to the approximately 600 added vehicles utilizing this narrow two-lane road after construction, the developer plans to utilize Coley Davis Road to bring in all materials (lumber, bricks, cement, roofing, sheetrock, appliances, etc.) during the construction phase of the apartment buildings.  This access is proposed to be a 500-foot bridge built across the Harpeth River which will connect the apartment site with Coley Davis Road at a point over one end of the soccer fields and between the Highway 70S intersection and the homes of the 2,000 residents in the Coley Davis neighborhoods.  Even with all of this additional traffic congestion, the developer has stated that his studies indicate no need for altering any of the access in or out of Coley Davis Road.

       In addition to the possible increase in flooding and the inconvenience of the almost certain traffic congestion, our major concern at Harpeth Meadows is a life-and-death concern for our residents, both nursing home and Independent Living.  As mentioned, Coley Davis Road is the only access for the residents of the neighborhoods off that road, including those in Harpeth Meadows who are all elderly and many who are very feeble.  In the past year, emergency personnel (ambulance and fire engine come jointly) made over 240 trips out Coley Davis Road, most of which were to the Harpeth Meadows, nursing home and Independent Living combined.  In many of those cases, fifteen minutes could have meant the possible difference between life-saving treatment and death.  An interruption of the traffic flow on Coley Davis for any reason (excess traffic, accident, construction vehicle mishap, etc.) could delay the emergency personnel by fifteen minutes or more with devastating consequences.

        At this point I would ask each commissioner reading this email to engage in a brief imaginary scenario.   Each is asked to think of one’s own situation.  To traverse Nashville, or reach an interstate, those of us who live in the city generally have to connect with one of the major arteries (or pikes) connecting downtown with the county (e.g., Franklin Pike, Dickerson Pike. Lebanon Pike, Charlotte Pike, Harding Pike, Gallatin Pike, etc.).  Think now of your daily commute.  Think of the route you take most often to connect with one of these main thoroughfares. Regardless of whatever the number of lanes is in the connector you now take, consider it is a narrow two-lane road.  Now imagine that this route is the only way for you to get to the main artery and it is likewise the only route for 2,000 of your neighbors.  With all of this in mind, consider the effect of 600 additional cars entering your only access, and them entering about 2-3 blocks before the major intersection and between the intersection and the homes of you and your neighbors.  This scene is what we who live in a neighborhood off of Coley Davis Road are facing if the zoning is changed to allow the Ariza Bellevue project to go forward.

       There is one other concern I must mention.  The developer proposes to build the bridge over the Harpeth River to Coley Davis Road as well as the Greenway connector under the railroad, at a combined cost (his estimation) of $7 million.  When built, this bridge and connector will become the property and responsibility of Metro-Davidson County.  Since much of the bridge and Greenway are in areas subject to flooding, the upkeep, repair and even possible replacement would fall upon the taxpayers.  This proposal would thus appear to have some aspects of “a pig in a poke”.

       It is for the concerns stated above that I urge the Planning Commission to deny the zoning change and prevent the construction of the Ariza Bellevue project in its proposed location. Thank you for your consideration of my concerns and request.

                                                          Rex Roberts