

Old Jamestown Association  
P.O. Box 2223  
Florissant, MO 63032  
February 1, 2018

Department of Planning  
St. Louis County Government  
41 S. Central Avenue, 5th Floor  
Clayton, Missouri 63105

RE: Rebuttal to Public Hearing on 01-18 BSC Holdings LLC (Rivers Edge Self-Storage)

The Old Jamestown Association Board of Directors has again reviewed the re-zoning proposal referenced above. The parcel in question is located on the north side of Lindbergh Blvd (N. Hwy 67), approximately 1,150 feet west of Jamestown Bay Drive (5105 N. Hwy 67). **Proposed Use:** Self-storage warehouses.

The Old Jamestown Board of Directors opposes. In a letter mailed prior to the public hearing we set forth our position. We presented our position again at the public hearing held on January 22, 2018. The rezoning request from NU Non-Urban District to C-8 Planned Commercial District is incompatible with the nature and characteristics of the surrounding area and as currently defined for NU or KP zoning - and this *includes* the remaining part of this same parcel of land that is in question, which is currently zoned KP (Karst Protection). To be determined is whether this request for rezoning is appropriate at this specific location. We argue that the proposal for re-zoning is not appropriate.

In the remarks made by the Attorney Feder in support of the re-zoning, there was little mention of the number of single family dwellings that are the prominent feature of the surrounding neighborhood. That is not surprising given that it does not support the proposed re-zoning which looks at the specific location of this site and its surroundings. Today, the surroundings fit the NU characteristics. Ignoring this fact is unreasonable. More specifically to the proposal, one need only look directly across the street to find a large sub-division, the Behlmann Farms community and other small residential parcels not associated with Behlmann Farms as evidence of single family dwellings which dominate the neighborhood at this location. These are consistent with the landscape of NU as defined by St. Louis County regulations. Atty. Feder's remarks imply that somehow the road which separates the Rivers Edge Sports Complex from its neighbors across the street makes this specific location suitable for commercial zoning. When looking at the community which surrounds the parcel in question it is impossible to separate it from that which is directly across the street – a single family neighborhood. Any other argument simply does not hold up.

When Atty. Feder talked to the aerial photos presented at the hearing his remarks were largely general. However, some details are important to a good understanding of this location. There is a church located on the parcel directly adjacent to the east. There is a privately-owned park which is located next to the parcel with the church. Both churches and parks are considered features found in NU environments and characteristic of that zoning. This specific location is surrounded by characteristics of NU zoning.

Atty. Feder did, however, specifically comment on the location of Jamestown Mall about a mile away to the east. Yet, his remarks conveniently ignored three churches and three subdivisions in between the location of the River's Edge Sport Complex and the Jamestown Mall location. Again a closer examination of the surroundings does not support the argument put forth that the proposed commercial use at this specific location is appropriate. It is not.

From my recollection, Atty. Feder did not specifically address the single-family dwellings to the west on either side of Lindbergh. As I recall he pointed out the canopy of trees located on the single family lots in the Deer Valley subdivision to the northwest. He implied that these adjacent lots would be unaffected by any change in zoning because they are in the Karst Protection district. These are private properties owned in the Karst Protection (KP) district and it is tightly regulated but it is difficult to reason that any re-zoning of the parcel in question has no impact on the property of its neighbors and is appropriate in this location. It has impact if nothing else to the property values and that is a concern to homeowners in Behlmann Farms, Jamestown Bay, homes not in a subdivision and the Deer Valley home sites in the KP. It ought to be of concern to both the Planning commission and the County Council when looking at this proposal. The appropriateness of re-zoning this parcel remains the primary question.

The issue of property values for the neighboring homeowners is a major concern that needs to be considered in this decision and one that has been brought specifically to the Old Jamestown Board of Directors. As an example, I spoke to a new homeowner in the Behlmann sub-division on the night of the public hearing who had not yet moved in but was very disturbed to learn that a neighboring sports complex for family recreation might be replaced with a storage facility. She did not view that as a positive for her recent investment in her new home. *No one* in this otherwise residential area living next door to a commercially-zoned parcel - like that proposed for a storage facility - would view it as a plus regardless of the promises made about the planned exterior. No homeowner in this neighboring area would consider commercial zoning appropriate in this location.

The area is only now showing signs of recovery from the downturn in home values we had witnessed in the period starting about 2006. This Zip code was one of the hardest hit in St. Louis County. This change would have impact to home values and to not face that fact is to disregard a real concern of the neighboring homeowners. This is one example where this proposed change is a direct and negative impact on the surrounding areas that are currently defined as Non-Urban (or KP).

In his presentation, Atty. Feder suggested that the business owner did not have support in the community for the sports complex. Yet, photos of the recreation complex on a recent weekend show that the parking lot is filled. (See attached.) The photos show families coming and going for play at the facility. This hardly reinforces any notion that this community does not patronize the recreation complex today. That argument simply does not stand up without more. Regardless, of any perceived lack of community support, re-zoning remains a question of appropriateness at this location – not community support.

As we have previously stated, Old Jamestown Association is concerned that this change might open a door to erode the NU character of this corridor and could negatively impact the larger community including the Florissant Karst itself. This proposal sets a precedent for change that is clearly not supported by the majority of property owners in the Old Jamestown area. As Old Jamestown Association has previously stated, it is our mission to preserve those unique characteristics of our area which include its non-urban features. We remain opposed to any change that threatens that. And this re-zoning proposal does just that. Nothing we have heard to date has moved us to reconsider our position. We remain opposed to this re-zoning because it is not appropriate at this specific location.

Sincerely,

Ellen M. Lutzow, President

Old Jamestown Association Board of Directors

Cc: Councilwoman Rochelle Walton-Gray

Enc. Photos of River's Edge Sports Complex taken on the last weekend of January, 2018.