

# Comments on June 14, 2018 Planning Commission agenda items, received June 13-14

## Item 1, East Nashville Community Plan Amendment

**From:** Courtney Williams [mailto:courtneywilliamsdesign@gmail.com]

**Sent:** Thursday, June 14, 2018 11:33 AM

**To:** Planning Commissioners

**Subject:** Comments to Commission - Highland Heights Draft Plan

Dear Planning Commission,

Thank you for your role in this study.

I take tremendous heart in knowing that the Planning Commission's and the Planning Department's stated goal for this Charrette and Small Area Study was to ensure that policies affecting the Highland Heights area accurately reflect how the members of that community want growth and preservation to happen in the future, and that any significant changes would be guided by community input and discussion.

Planning Staff's tremendous effort and tact throughout the Charrette process to consider, balance and combine the visions of so many stakeholders was no easy task. As a resident serving on the Advisory Committee it was challenging even to share my own perspective when many of the forums for community discussion were disproportionately filled with developers pushing their own profit guided agenda for my neighborhood.

Over the last three years, this square mile of Nashville has done its part to shoulder the growth we are seeing across Nashville's entire urban core. The residents of this neighborhood have compromised and we have added tremendous density disproportionate to the rest of District 5. We participated, compromised and ultimately supported the first generation of the Nashville Next plan.

Three years later, our land use policy was changed without public notification, our Council person continues to contest the recommendations of Planning and the Commission, and multiple SP pushed through during this short time are being used to set a precedent that continues to disregard the value of what exists around them and ultimately ignores the original input of my neighbor's provided. When is enough, enough? I implore you, please give value to the voices of our residences. Trust us, when we say there is value here that goes beyond land value and short-term profit. Residents, especially long-time residents, understand the value these existing buildings bring and believe me it goes far beyond the structures themselves. These buildings, these trees, shape the very lives within their walls and below their canopy. This is something I believe the developers prove time and again they do not understand. Let's put a stop to this blatant land grab. Please help us preserve what's left of our neighborhood and help us to thoughtfully evolve while maintaining our existing fabric.

I personally believe that the precedent of the last policy change and the subsequently approved developments should not be used as justification for greater intense developments. This methodology would be in conflict to the vision statement presented. We, as neighbors, want to preserve the existing character and quality of our neighborhood. As the neighborhood continues to change and grow, we want to preserve the single-family footprint of the neighborhood and to change the policy to reflect two-family homes that complement the existing character. Maintaining and reclaiming our tree canopy and green spaces are also fundamentally important to this community -particularly as we see growth.

Overall, I felt positively about the vision statement included in the plan presented for the area. Specifically the section addressing the value of our existing character/fabric and sensitive design was very important to me: "We will reclaim and protect the character of our neighborhood fabric through sensitive design, guide change and growth along our corridors, and enhance our neighborhood centers".

So in thoughtful response to the draft plan presented for Highland Heights, I hope you will consider the following amendments:

Lower the subdistricts in the northwest corner of the neighborhood. It is important to preserve the single family footprint in that area, and the policy at this point does not.

Neighborhood Centers (Corner of Meridian & Trinity and Corner of Douglas and Lischey) -

As a resident and owner of a single family home in the Douglas/Lischey subdistrict I urge you to reconsider the approach taken when developing these neighborhood centers. Please preserve these beautiful historical churches in both these subdistricts.

Specifically, my M1 subdistrict (Douglas/Lischey) includes mainly residential single-family homes, and designating it as M1 sacrifices this existing pattern. Only the new Douglas Market development should be included as M1, the rest of the single family homes should stay intact and the policy should reflect that. The rest of Lischey Avenue in that immediate vicinity is R1, and I'd like to see the R1 designation

reassigned to these existing single family homes. As a result of this M1 designation, development is being encouraged on three sides of my home!

Just take a drive through my neighborhood - The development of these tall multifamily units, the introduction of two homes where there once was one, the increased commercial usage of buildings in the area, and the overall impact to traffic as a result of these developments has a direct impact on the privacy, beauty and fabric of my neighborhood. Development on this scale has become far to typical and as a result it disregards the personal value my home brings to my family's everyday life, and degrades the community character in which we have invested.

The vision statement reads: "We will reclaim and protect the character of our neighborhood fabric through sensitive design, guide change and growth along our corridors, and enhance our neighborhood centers".

Please keep the spirit of the above vision statement in mind. If you're telling me I have to sacrifice my quality of residential life, then I think a good example of compromise would be development similar in scale and design sensitivity to what was done in the Riverside Village area of Inglewood (at the corner of Riverside Drive and McGavock). It is a commercial area that compliments the homes surrounding it - doesn't disregard them.

In conclusion, I believe that singularly focusing on increasing higher density housing can negatively effect the affordability, livability, and availability of single family homes — the very foundation of my Highland Heights community. As a working artist who looks forward to raising a family in my East Nashville home (just as my brother and sister are in nearby Cleveland Park and McFerrin Park) my investment in my immediate neighborhood is long-term. Single-family properties accommodate more diverse families (size and structure), encourage & support long-term investment in the neighborhood (room for families to grow), establish the lasting architectural appeal of an area and inspire current and future investment. The preservation of this community foundation is what allows the most desirable neighborhoods to stand the test of time — to remain desirable enough to keep thriving, and even have the chance to evolve. Please don't take this away from my neighborhood.

Thank you for your time and for your consideration of my feedback.

In gratitude,  
-Courtney Williams

Home owner and 8 year resident of Highland Heights, Member of the Steering Committee for the Neighborhood Association, and Member of the Advisory Committee for the March 2018 HH small area study

1303 Lischey Ave., Nashville TN 37207

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*-Courtney Williams*

**From:** Nate Paulk [mailto:paulknate@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 14, 2018 11:15 AM  
**To:** Planning Commissioners  
**Subject:** Highland Heights Public Hearing comments

Dear Planning Commission,

I am writing in regards to the final public hearing that will certainly have a great impact on the people which live and work in the Highland Heights (HH) community currently and in the future.

For five years, I have served as the director of Trinity Community Commons, a non profit, birthed out of the United Methodist Church (UMC). Our work is based out of the historic Trinity UMC that has, for decades, played a vital role in the life of the HH community. After years of decline of that specific congregation, the UMC

initiated our work with the aim of leveraging a strategically located facility for community connection and growth. We currently create opportunities for members of this community to "gather and grow" in ways such as a weekly community meal, financial literacy classes, summer reading programs and mentorship opportunities. Furthermore, we have been the site for the monthly Highland Heights Neighborhood Association meeting for the last two years.

For five years, I have witnessed the way the process of systemic development and gentrification has eroded the deep connections that I experienced after I began working within the HH community. More troubling than my own experiences, is watching neighbors who have coexisted for decades, misidentifying their neighbor as their enemy or their obstacle to financial improvement. I simply feel the rapid development has not been worth this specific and real kind of loss. Our organization will continue to engage all individuals and families that find meaningful connection and use with our work....no matter their background, race, economic reality OR the type of dwelling in which they reside.

My request is that the Planning Commission approve the proposed plan, but make amendments that bring the density down in the northwest corner of the neighborhood, which is the area in which our facility is located. I believe increasing density will further erode the remaining landscape and culture of this unique and beautiful area of Nashville. Furthermore, I feel an increase in density would clearly prioritize what could be over what exists right now.

In the context of our work, our small team often asks ourselves the question, "When is it enough?" I pose the same question to you.

Thank you for your consideration of my thoughts. Thank you for leading us well.

Sincerely,  
Nate Paulk  
Trinity Community Commons  
204 East Trinity Lane  
Nashville, TN 37207

**From:** Davis, Sadé Larisha [mailto:larisha.s.davis@vumc.org]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 14, 2018 10:11 AM  
**To:** Planning Commissioners  
**Subject:** Final Public Hearing- Highland Heights Study Comments

Hello Planning Commission:

I wanted to provide my comments regarding the Public Hearing for the Highland Heights Study.

I opposed the updates for Edwin Street and the north west corner of the neighborhood.

I have been living on Edwin Street all of my life, and recently built a single-family home and do not want live next door or behind town homes. The policy should encourage single-family homes development.

I attended the sessions and overall I believe they should approve this plan, but lower the density on the north west corner.

Thanks,

Sade Larisha Davis

Resident of 313 Edwin Street

**From:** Dorise Polk [<mailto:dorise.polk@comcast.net>]

**Sent:** Thursday, June 14, 2018 12:10 AM

**To:** McCaig, Anita D. (Planning)

**Subject:** Potential Community Plan Amendment for Highland Heights Neighborhood

Dear Planning Commission,

Please note that as a homeowner that has lived at 708 Ward Street for over fifty years (except during the time which I served in the United States Navy), it saddens me that the people of the neighborhood do not want our area to grow along with our fine city. I have seen this neighborhood go from a nice area to live in, to a side of town that people were surprised that you lived in, and now back to an area that everyone wants to live in. And that is because people are finally spending money and building the area up. If we become an area of Neighborhood Maintenance, that will stop, and so will the provision of more or enhanced services. I have seen this area go from being a diverse community to a majority ethnic community and now back to being diverse, and I like it that way.

Sometime last year or more, members of the Planning Commission had several meetings in which they explained to us the good and the bad sides of changing our neighborhood to T4-NE. After listening to what they had to say, looking at the information provided on the internet and viewing some information from other neighborhoods that were proposing the same change throughout the city, I decided that I wanted our neighborhood to grow also, and that meant becoming T4-NE. But now, to have to revisit this whole ordeal again is really tiring.

I have already had to fight hard to get my property rezoned, and to possibly have to go through more changes just to keep it that way is disheartening. I think the neighborhood should be as Neighborhood Evolving, so that we can grow along and be in the position to receive services that go along with a neighborhood growth. Please leave the streets of Ward and Rosedale as T4-NE so that we may have greater housing choices.

I do hope you will consider my request as it reflects not only my desires but also that of other neighbors on the street. I will write a letter for each house that I own on this street, because this policy change could ultimately affect each property differently.

Thanks in advance,

Dorise Polk

From: Evelyn Davis [mailto:anndavis863@gmail.com]  
Sent: Wednesday, June 13, 2018 8:01 PM  
To: Planning Commissioners  
Subject: RE: Highland Heights

Dear Commissioners,

I attended two of the sessions during the Highland Heights Study and gave feedback on the plan. My address is 315 Edwin Street. I have lived here for 27 years.

The proposed change does not represent what I want for my neighborhood. The neighborhood has changed a lot and I expect that it will continue to change and grow.

The problem is that this is an established neighborhood. The change in policy for the area I live in does not account for its existing single-family homes. This area has serious infrastructure issues like storm water and narrow roads. It is difficult to exit my driveway on most days due to all the cars that park on the street. The policy should account for these issues.

Sincerely,  
Evelyn Davis

From: Alex Linton [mailto:alexlintonrn@gmail.com]  
Sent: Thursday, June 14, 2018 11:43 AM  
To: Planning Commissioners  
Subject: Re: East Nashville Policy Amendment 2018CP-005-002

Dear Commissioners,

I'm writing in regards to the Highland Heights Study and asking that you all please consider a plan that works best for the current residents and retains the single-family character of the neighborhood. My husband and I recently moved to our new home on Stainback last year because we were drawn to the neighborhood's single-family appeal and lack of gentrification. We had previously lived in the

Nations of West Nashville and had witnessed first-hand the repercussions of over-building and irresponsible developments over the two years we resided there. The excessive and crammed new construction lead to congested street parking that impeded emergency vehicles and caused safety hazards for pedestrians. We saw dramatic increases in rental prices that pushed several of our neighbors out of town, and we saw some of these same properties turn into Short-Term Rentals (some undocumented) for tourists. We do not want to see neighborhoods like Highland Heights and Cleveland Park suffer the same consequences. Please limit the increases in density to the new plan and salvage what's left of the single-family charm of Highland Heights. I do not mind seeing our lovely neighborhoods rehabbed, but the residents have grown tired of these countless rezoning requests and irresponsible developments drastically increasing the density in our small neighborhood.

Thank you,  
Alex Linton Tyson  
1225 Stainback Ave  
Nashville, TN 37207

**From:** stacy@easeuptravel.com [mailto:stacy@easeuptravel.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 14, 2018 9:11 AM  
**To:** Planning Commissioners  
**Subject:** 2018CP-005-002 - EAST NASHVILLE COMMUNITY PLAN AMENDMENT - Highland Heights Study

As a resident of the study area and a member of the Advisory Committee contributing to this study, I'd like to provide some comments on the proposed amendment.

1. First, thank you to the Commission for directing Planning staff to conduct this study. A special thank you is extended to staff members who worked countless hours and refereed numerous meetings to prepare this study. Their efforts are sincerely appreciated.
2. Overall, I support their recommendations. The study as presented is a result of a very challenging balancing act, and for the most part, addresses many of the concerns of fellow neighbors while allowing ample opportunities for growth.
3. I do have a few recommendations that I petition the Commission to consider as conditions for approval:
  - a. **The future east-west connector of Marshall Street from Lischey to Jones.** This unimproved street will have a 200-foot section constructed as part of the Marshall Crossing SP approved prior to this study's presentation. However, the remaining street extending to Jones will touch 5 individual properties on the northern side of the street. These 5 properties (the center one being mine) would become properties with street frontage on both ends. All those homes face Joy Circle and currently enjoy the privacy of a

typical back yard. I strongly encourage the Commission to add a condition that any future development of that unimproved portion of Marshall St be done as an alley/laneway instead of a street. This would preserve the back-of-property setbacks and backyards currently enjoyed by my family and my neighbors. Such a condition would still allow vehicular traffic and connection between Lischey and Jones. It should be noted that Joy Avenue is an existing east-west connector street that runs parallel to and is located roughly 730 ft (roughly 1/8 of a mile) north of the unimproved Marshall Street.

- b. **Transition subdistricts along Dickerson and E Trinity** - During the study's earliest stages, the vast majority of participants agreed that future dense development should occur along the major corridors of E Trinity Lane and Dickerson Pike. To help transition to the more predominant single-family home character of our neighborhood, it was understood that there would be subdistricts created to effectively step down density to facilitate that transition. However, such transition as depicted in the subdistricts proposed in the northwestern quadrant and extending along Edwin St encroaches too far into the single-family core of the neighborhood. For example, the vast majority of Edwin Street is single-family homes with a well-established pattern of lot sizes, setbacks, etc. Under the currently proposed amendment, the R4 subdistrict on the Building Regulating Plan is proposed for either end of that street but not the section between Lischey and Jones. I respectfully request that the Commission add a condition to step back the subdistricts on Meridian, Lischey and Edwin to R3 preserving much of the single-family precedent while allowing slightly more dense building on major intersections.
  - c. **Cherokee Street** - With a number of properties re-zoned to RM-20, it is inevitable that this dead-end street will have higher density projects. On the study's Mobility Plan, there is potential for a north-south connector street that would connect the north-south portion of Edwin to Montgomery St. Considering the potentially drastic increase of traffic using Jones for ingress and egress to Cherokee, this proposed connector street is critical to relieve such traffic. I petition the Commission to add a condition requiring that connection be built before too much more development occurs on Cherokee.
4. Lastly, as a resident of this neighborhood for over 10 years, I would like to state that I have no financial stake in this neighborhood aside from my individual property which is my only residence. I've devoted my time and efforts to help derive a solution that balances preservation of our neighborhood's character and diversity while providing a plan for more responsible development that occurs at a sustainable pace. Otherwise, our neighborhood might realize a saturation of units that could lead to a depressed market eroding the desirability our neighborhood enjoys.

One would be foolish to think that change, development, and progress will not happen to our neighborhood. This study addresses that inevitability but establishes more control over the aggressive pace. To quote the study - Highland Heights is "a neighborhood experiencing widespread redevelopment, from 2013 to March 2018 almost \$20 million of investment – as reported by building permits issued by Metro – has occurred with new construction (\$16 million), additions (\$806,000), and rehabilitation of existing structures (\$3.1 million). This represents 188 new units. Metro Council has approved additional development entitlements over the last two years that would bring several hundred additional units." If the additional

development entitlements are utilized and approximately 380 new units are added to our housing stock, our small neighborhood will have increased by 25% in just a few years with neither increase in footprint nor improvement in vital infrastructure.

I support the results of this study and ask your consideration of my additional recommendations. I ask for your approval, and thank you for your attention.

Gordon Stacy Harmon, CHS

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## **Items 1/2/8/9 - East Nashville Community Plan Amendment/1225 Stainback Ave (Amendment)/3814 Georgia Ave/1519 Meridian St**

**From:** jami anderson [mailto:jamidesign@yahoo.com]

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 13, 2018 3:35 PM

**To:** Planning Commissioners

**Cc:** Planning Staff

**Subject:** Items 1, 2, 8, 9 for tomorrow's meeting

I'd like to address the 2 petitions on Meridian (2018Z-038PR-001 and 2018-0039PR-001), [1225 Stainback Avenue](#) (2015SP-049-003), and the Highland Heights Study that will be addressed at the planning commission meeting tomorrow.

The vision statement of the Highland Heights Study says we want to reclaim our neighborhood, which is true. However, the subdistricts with very dense housing types in the northern and western portions of our neighborhood do not allow that.

Please respect what we have left of the single-family character of the Highland Heights neighborhood (as well as the adjoining Cleveland Park neighborhood). The designations on the proposed map for Lischey, Edith, Edwin, and Meridian allow housing types that do not fit or maintain existing character. Those streets are in the neighborhood core. I support development,



but this type of development is not development for an established neighborhood; it is a demolition, redesign, and rebuild.

Our neighborhoods have already been raped thanks to some unscrupulous council members, oblivious “councilman courtesy,” a selectively informed planning commission, and developers with big pockets lining smaller pockets at the expense of families, neighborhoods, community, and infrastructure. Please respect the tremendous time, effort and care that has gone into the charrette by the people who populate this very neighborhood to save what little is left of this area.

Thank you!

Jami Anderson

1219 Stainback Ave

## **Item 9, 1519 Meridian Street**

**From:** sophia sims [mailto:sslsims@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 13, 2018 9:33 PM  
**To:** Planning Commissioners  
**Subject:** Meridian (2018Z-038PR-001 and 2018-0039PR-001)

All,

First, the previously approved developments on Meridian, Lischey, and Edwin do not merit the higher transitions. The subdistricts R5 and R4 will not encourage and/or preserve the existing footprint and does not fit the infrastructure. We are a neighborhood of primarily residential homes with narrow roads and drainage ditches. Storm water and sewage are major issues in HH area. We are amendable to additional density as one of the avenues for improved infrastructure but not at the cost of losing our neighborhood’s character. Thus, it would be more appropriate to classify Meridian Street and all of Edwin Street with subdistrict R3. These proposed designations would allow for additional density balanced against the existing development pattern of single family homes. Therefore we strongly oppose subdistricts that transition “up” our existing residential streets and instead of a transition “down.

**Trinity Lane and Dickerson Road** – Trinity Lane as it touches Highland Heights, is distinct from Dickerson Road. In its present iteration, Trinity Lane contains largely residential single-

family homes with new homes being built and is a two-lane road resembling Douglas Avenue. The sub districts for Trinity Lane do not support the current development pattern. We believe the proper classification for Trinity Lane to be R5.

**Divided Blocks** – The divided blocks on Pullen and Gatewood appear unjustified in light of the new, single-family homes being built in that area. There is an existing development pattern, and even the new homes being built are consistent and in harmony with the older homes in the area. Divided blocks contravene that pattern and frustrate the vision statement of maintaining our character.

The square that encompasses the boundaries of Highland Heights (eastern side of Meridian Street and Lischey Avenue from Edith Street) is incredibly small, and this one, small neighborhood has went through upheaval the last several years with SPs. Please respect what we have left of the single-family character of our neighborhood and lower the subdistricts on Meridian, Lischey, Edith, and Edwin. Those streets are a part of the neighborhood core. The density should remain on Dickerson Rd and Trinity Lane, with a recognition that those Dickerson and Trinity are not the same either in terms of design. We recommend the square be classified as R3.

**Corner of Douglas and Lischey** – While we agree with the M1 classification at the corner of Douglas and Lischey, the M1 subsumes too much. A lot of that area includes residential homes, and we do not want to sacrifice that existing pattern. We think a good example of what we would like to see in this area is the Riverside Village area in Inglewood at the corner of Riverside Drive and McGavock. It is a commercial area that compliments the homes surrounding it. Only the new Douglas Market development should be included as M1, the rest of the single family homes should stay intact and the policy should reflect that. The rest of Lischey Avenue in that immediate vicinity is R1, and we think R1 should be the designation for more of the lots in the current M1 area.

**Corner of Meridian and Trinity Lane** – This corner with the church should be designated as subdistricts M1 or M3 because the church is a historical building with a lot of character and is worth preserving.

**Neighborhood Infill** – The subdistricts R1 and R2 are appropriate in all of the areas currently labeled as such. To promote incremental density while respecting the existing context, the subdistricts like R3 and R2 in the north portion of the neighborhood going towards Trinity Lane and west towards Dickerson Road would also be more appropriate than subdistrict R5 and R4. Specifically, in that portion of the neighborhood, R3 and R2 would allow for greater density while also complimenting the existing single-family footprint and recent development pattern.

**Marshall Street** – Marshall Street is an undeveloped right-of-way, and the Marshall Crossing SP is arguably inappropriate precedent. Please consider designating Marshall street as an alley/laneway. An alley/laneway is a fair compromise that balances the need for infrastructure and the existing context of the homes that touch this proposed “connector” street. There are a total of nine properties that touch that right-of-way, and none of them face it. If it were to be

developed as a street, it would detrimentally impact those properties along the northern side of the street.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sophia and Russ Sims

## **Item 11, Platinum Storage Bellevue**

From: Steve Nathan [mailto:theprez@comcast.net]  
Sent: Wednesday, June 13, 2018 8:59 PM  
To: Planning Commissioners  
Subject: re: rezoning corner of Collins Rd. and Learning Lane Bellevue 37221

re:6/14 agenda: Rezoning proposal for corner of Collins Rd. and Learning Lane Bellevue 37221

I hope to attend tomorrow's meeting as it's agenda includes the proposed rezoning of residential property in my neighborhood in order to build a Storage Facility.

Residents are mostly opposed to this as they simply don't believe such a business belongs in a residential area. My opposition is rooted differently.

I think this property would be best suited for mixed use commercial, similar to other properties in the surrounding area. If a building includes space for a dentist, a hair salon, a dance studio and a sandwich shop for example, and one or two of those businesses fails, it is a simple matter for a yoga studio, a chiropractor or a pizza parlor to move into those spaces. However, if this storage business should fail, it will be very difficult to convert the space. This will make re-sale of the property unlikely and will leave residents with a large empty building that sits and decays, attracting trouble and becoming an eyesore. No one wants that next door to their child's elementary school.

I urge the Planning/Zoning Commission to reject this proposal and send the developer back to the drawing board.

Thank you,  
Steve Nathan  
205 Sweetgum Ct.  
Nashville, TN 37221