



Dear Charlotte City Council and Mecklenburg County Commissioners:

We, the undersigned, are speaking with a unified voice to urge City Council to defer approval of [Rezoning Petition 2024-031](#), submitted by Panthers Stadium, LLC. In addition to City Council we are addressing Mecklenburg County Commissioners as they help to govern parts of the greenway throughout our county. We feel collaboration between the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County should be paramount in this endeavor. Charlotte City Staff is also copied so that there are no surprises from this correspondence.

Please do not approve this rezoning as currently petitioned. Our concern and opposition to the current rezoning petition stems from just one issue – the failure of the petitioner to implement the greenway improvements recommended in the City’s own Uptown CycleLink Study (published by CDOT in February 2021). We are requesting a deferral until the petitioner, City staff, and our neighborhood leaders are able to coordinate appropriately on the implementation of the Uptown CycleLink plan in this area.

We understand the rezoning process. **There have been several failures in this petition process which warrant a deferral of approval until they can be appropriately remedied.**

- **First, City Staff has failed to appropriately acknowledge and support the Uptown CycleLink project.** The pre-hearing staff analysis fails to recognize the Uptown CycleLink Study, despite the City’s [own website](#) clearly identifying this area as a “future” part of the Uptown CycleLink network. This is a significant and very concerning oversight. We (the taxpayers) paid for the development of the Uptown CycleLink study. Our residents participated in public engagement that led to specific recommendations for greenway improvements in the Cedar Yards area (see attached). We expect City Staff and City Council to follow through on those recommendations. **What good are our plans if we don’t implement them when we have the opportunity?** City Staff’s failure to appropriately educate both Planning Commission and City Council means that you do not have all the details you should as you approach this rezoning request.
- **Second, the petitioner has failed to commit to greenway improvements which appropriately serve the public interest.** The petitioner is seeking a rezoning because they do not have the flexibility and entitlements to build what they want. In return for granting those additional entitlements and flexibility it is the job of City Council to seek improvements that serve the public interest. **The Uptown CycleLink Study is the City’s most relevant and**

recent guidance for the serving the public interest in this Cedar Yards area.

Representatives for the petitioner have been responsive, but they have stopped short of committing to build the Uptown CycleLink recommendations. They have committed to “reserve the space” for the full Uptown CycleLink recommendations to be built someday in the future. It is not good enough to simply “reserve the space” for a future project that may never happen.

- **Finally, there has been a failure to appropriately acknowledge the importance of maximizing this critical greenway connection.** Despite being barely passable as a greenway connection today, the Cedar Yards area greenway (from Cedar St. to Graham St.) serves a tremendously important function.
 - It is a key active transportation corridor across the Norfolk Southern rail line, serving pedestrians, cyclists, e-scooters, wheelchair users, and runners.
 - It supports City goals and decreases traffic congestion by enabling car-free commutes between the West Side and Uptown.
 - It provides an economic lifeline and access to opportunity for historically disenfranchised neighborhoods on the West Side.
 - It is a recreational amenity, providing critical stadium access and a popular route to nearby parks and the countywide greenway network.

This crucial connection to Uptown must be improved to support users of all ages and abilities, which is exactly what the Uptown CycleLink study recommendations will do.

This rezoning petition seems particularly tone deaf coming on the heels of the announcement that the City is pursuing a deal to dedicate hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars to support the renovation of Bank of America stadium. An attorney representing Panthers Stadium, LLC communicated to neighborhood leaders that they are not committing to build the CycleLink recommendations now because it would be “a more complicated effort” than what they’re proposing. **We appreciate that it might be “more complicated.” However, if we’re going to give hundreds of millions to the Panthers for a new stadium, isn’t it perfectly reasonable to ask Panthers Stadium, LLC to make some critical greenway improvements that have already been studied and recommended through a public process?** Don’t make Charlotte a place where billionaires get handouts while our historically disenfranchised neighborhoods continue to see their aspirations for improved mobility ignored. We are certain that is not anyone’s intent.

Please do the right thing and defer this rezoning petition. Deferring the petition will give the petitioner, City Staff, and our neighborhood leaders the opportunity to work together to remedy the failures listed above.

We are not trying to kill this rezoning petition. We are not trying to kill the stadium deal. We simply want the greenway improvements, as recommended by the City’s own Uptown CycleLink Study, to be committed and built through this rezoning petition.

Thank you for your attention and for your support of the specific greenway improvements recommended in the City’s Uptown CycleLink Study.

Sincerely,

Five Points Community Collaborative Board,

Shannon Hughes – President (Wesley Heights Community)
J'Tanya Adams – Vice President (Seversville Community)
Christi Derreberry – Secretary (Wesley Heights Community)
Hope Young – Treasurer (Seversville Community)
Jerod Brown (Biddleville-Smallwood Community)
Jennifer Rezende Wilson (Seversville Community)
KaTonya Wilson (Wesley Heights Community)
Natasha Newman (Biddleville-Smallwood Community)
Travis Bell (Biddleville-Smallwood Community)

Attachments: Relevant pages from the City's Uptown CycleLink Study.

Specific requested improvements to the Cedar Yards area greenway connection include:

1. A 12' greenway bypass of the "zig-zag" stair and ADA-ramp connector by the stadium's north entry driveway. (*Slopes for the greenway bypass do not need to meet ADA requirements because the ADA-ramp is already in place.*)
2. Ped refuge island and improved crossing of Cedar St.
3. Widening of the greenway to include a 7' sidewalk and 10' cycle track for approximately 450' from Cedar St. to the existing pathway that connects to the Panthers practice site. (*This width and separation of pedestrians and cyclists will improve safety. These improvements will eliminate approximately 15 city-owned parking spaces to make room for the greenway improvements and ADA parking spaces for Third Ward.*)

NOTE – All improvements are on land owned by the City of Charlotte.



Christi Derreberry (Jun 11, 2024 14:09 EDT)



Natasha Newman (Jun 11, 2024 15:16 EDT)



Shannon H Hughes (Jun 11, 2024 14:06 EDT)



Jennifer Wilson Rezende (Jun 11, 2024 13:41 CDT)



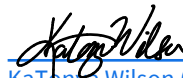
Travis M. Bell (Jun 11, 2024 14:02 EDT)



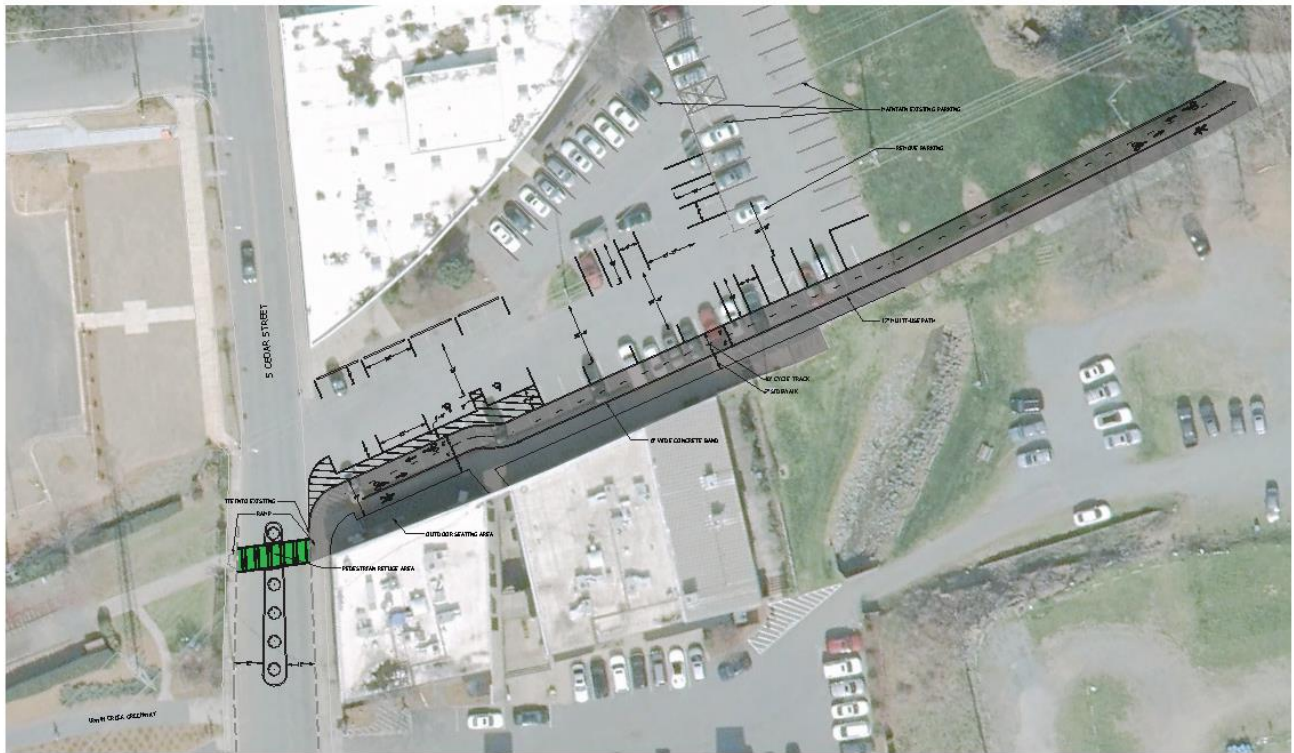
J'Tanya Adams (Jun 11, 2024 14:39 EDT)



Hope S. Young (Jun 11, 2024 14:36 EDT)



KaTonya Wilson (Jun 11, 2024 13:54 EDT)



Graham Street and Cedar Yards Corridor

The Graham Street Greenway connector will leverage the plaza in front of Bank of America Stadium (along Graham Street) and create enhancements to the existing trail connection under the CSX tracks and through the Cedar Yards parking lot to create a key connection between the Uptown CycleLink network, the Wesley Heights Greenway connector, and the Third Ward neighborhood. The proposed alignment will install pavement markings in the Bank of America stadium plaza to guide cyclists from the Mint St. corridor to the Cedar Yards area. The proposed alignment will also widen the existing narrow sidewalk through the Cedar Yards parking lot to 17 feet to accommodate a raised two-way cycle track and sidewalk

configuration (see graphic below). This trail connection will enhance a critical pedestrian and bicycle connection from the Third Ward neighborhood and the Irwin/Stewart Creek Greenway system to the Uptown network. It is also the primary, multi-modal connection for the Third Ward and Wesley Heights neighborhoods since there is limited street connectivity across the CSX rail road tracks.

