

CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE

"To be one community filled with opportunity"

Human Rights Commission
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www.charlottesville.gov/665/Human-Rights



August 4th, 2023

Dear Mayor Snook and City Councilors,

The mission of the Human Rights Commission is to provide “citywide leadership and guidance in the area of civil rights.” As Commissioners, we are tasked, per Sec. 2-433. (c) and Sec. 2-435. (a)(2) of the Charlottesville Human Rights Ordinance, to identify policies and practices that negatively affect residents because of their protected identities, make recommendations to correct those policies, and push the City to dismantle systemic discrimination as it exists here in Charlottesville.

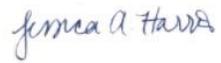
During our regular meeting on Thursday, July 20th, we invited Captain Mark Van Meter of The Salvation Army of Charlottesville to discuss with the Commission the Special Use Permit (SUP) for expanding its facility. The proposal “SP23-00004 – 207 & 211 Ridge Street (The Salvation Army)” is to expand from 58 emergency shelter beds to 114 emergency shelter beds; expand meal capacity from 80 seats to 120 seats; increase the size of the multi-purpose room from 1,928 square feet to 2,415 square feet; and to expand the meeting room capacity from 40 seats to 84 seats.

The Charlottesville Human Rights Commission has identified Housing as a priority this year, per **HRC RESOLUTION #: A23-1**. The Commission believes that the Salvation Army’s proposed expansion represents a positive step toward addressing the current shortage of local emergency shelter for individuals experiencing homelessness in our community. We additionally recommend that the City support emergency housing resources that are equitable and accessible to all Charlottesville residents regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, elderliness, familial status, source of funds, sexual orientation, gender identity, status as a veteran, or disability, with specific concerns that have been brought to our attention for Charlottesville residents who identify as LGBTQIA+, individuals with disabilities, and individuals with limited English proficiency. We recommend that the City’s support of the Salvation Army’s proposal for emergency housing resources include ensuring services are equitable and provided in a nondiscriminatory manner.

With these considerations in mind, we would therefore like to recommend that City Council approve the SUP to expand the Salvation Army of Charlottesville facilities.

As you evaluate this recommendation, we welcome any additional questions or comments. Thank you for the work you are doing.

Sincerely,



Jessica Harris

Chair

Human Rights Commission

Human Rights Commissioners:

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- Ernest Chambers (Vice-Chair)
- Jeanette Abi-Nader
- Mary Bauer
- Wolfgang Keppley
- Kathryn Laughon
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