



August 29, 2026

Paul Stoddard, Director
Department of Planning and Zoning
City of Alexandria
City Hall, Room 2100
Alexandria, VA 22314

RE: SUP2026-00024
1913 Mount Vernon Avenue, The Del Ray Farmhouse
Outdoor Live Entertainment and Vision Clearance Modification

Dear Mr. Stoddard,

The Del Ray Citizens Association (DRCA)'s Land Use and Traffic Calming Committees, as well as our Executive Board have reviewed SUP2026-00024 for outdoor live entertainment at 1913 Mount Vernon Avenue including the modification that allows the stage to remain in the vision clearance. We support the SUP with the conditions staff has recommended, and we ask for a few additions, which we will detail below.

Although our association does not meet in the summer so this issue could not be reviewed by our full membership, we did reach out to all active members within a block of the Farmhouse and we received very supportive feedback on the proposal. Jay Portlance has operated The Farmhouse as a good neighbor, running similar events without complaint. The fact that Condition 1 ties the SUP to Jay rather than to the property gives our association comfort about the impacts of this use on neighbors. Condition 2 ending live entertainment at 7pm does as well. We ask that both stay as drafted, and if a future owner ever sought to take this permit over, we would want this SUP to be revisited.

Our concerns generally stemmed more from noise than traffic visibility. Music playing from several businesses at once has become a real problem for people who live on and near the Avenue, and we do not want approvals adding up to something no one intended. Most of what we ask for is aimed there:

- **Frequency.** No more than one occasion of outdoor live entertainment per week. The conditions set hours but no limit on how often. A weekly cap would keep this permit in line with the use as described.
- **Coordination.** We would ask the applicant to coordinate with businesses within one block, on both sides of the Avenue, so that only one set of live or amplified music is playing at a time.



- **Amplification (Condition 5).** If feasible, require that performances are amplified through the establishment's certified sound system, with volume controlled by staff rather than performers. The city has required this in past live entertainment SUPs – it allows an employee to directly turn the volume down when needed rather than relying on the band to do so.
- **Sidewalk clearance.** Ensure that the audience for musical acts do not congregate on the sidewalk or block the crossing. Sidewalk space is especially precious in Del Ray on the Flea market type Saturdays when these events would be held.
- **Posted contact (Condition 4).** In addition to the door and the website, post the community liaison's name, phone, and email along the fence line where someone on the sidewalk can read it, at least while music is playing. The same sign could also ask patrons not to gather on the sidewalk.
- **Lighting (Condition 6).** Condition 6 covers lighting attached to the stage. The city should consider clarifying that lighting aimed at the stage from elsewhere should not be used as it could impede visibility in the intersection.

We are comfortable with the vision clearance modification as conditioned, though we do note for the record that our understanding [is staff recommended Denial of a variance request for a very similar corner pergola at DeWitt and Mount Ida](#) just last month. We did not review that case and take no position on it, but neighbors notice when two similar corners are treated differently, and a short explanation would help.

The Farmhouse has been a welcome addition to the Avenue, and we are glad to support this application with the conditions above.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Leach, DRCA President

Monica Parry and Amy Vander Vliet, Land Use Committee Co-Chairs

Logan Davis, Traffic Calming Committee Chair

cc: Lanning Blaser, Department of Planning and Zoning
D. Jason Portlance, The Del Ray Farmhouse