

## Application V-24-03 Appeal

Public Comments: Set 3 – Received through July 17, 2024 -8:30am

1. Email from Peter Bradley dated 7/17/2024 (forwarded from the City Clerk's Office on 7/16/2024)
2. Letter from Jeremy Brown dated 7/15/2024 (forwarded from the City Clerk's Office on 7/16/2024)
3. Email from Melisas Beck dated 7/16/2024 (forwarded from the City Clerk's Office on 7/16/2024)
4. Letter from Kathleen Baker dated 7/16/2024 (forwarded from the City Clerk's Office on 7/16/2024)
5. Email from Megan Glick dated 7/12/2024 (forwarded from the City Clerk's Office on 7/17/2024)
6. Email from Mike Walsh dated 7/16/2024 (forwarded from the City Clerk's Office on 7/17/2024)
7. Email from Averi Smith dated 7/17/2024 (forwarded from the City Clerk's Office on 7/17/2024)
8. Email from Dylan R. Grimes dated 7/16/2024 (forwarded from the City Clerk's Office on 7/17/2024)
9. Letter from Robert c. MacLeish II dated 7/12/2024 (forwarded from the City Clerk's Office on 7/17/2024)
10. Letter from Donny Legans dated 6/16/2024 (forwarded from the City Clerk's Office on 7/17/2024)
11. Letter from Sandhya-Verma-Higgins dated 7/17/2024 (forwarded from the City Clerk's Office on 7/17/2024)



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15 July 2024

TO: City of Dover Planning Commission

SUBJECT: Appeal Hearing Regarding Demolition of 148 & 150 South Bradford Street

To whom it may concern:

My name is Jeremy Brown and I own and operate a moving company based in Dover, Delaware. As a small business, we rely heavily on the economy of Kent County and especially the City of Dover. I am excited about the opportunities on the horizon with the revitalization efforts for Downtown Dover and I am counting on those efforts to restore a once thriving and vibrant downtown. The economic impact has the potential to be extraordinary.

I fully understand and support the need for historic preservation; however, too often we lose sight of the forest for the trees. The entirety of Downtown Dover is overflowing with rich history, but the lack of commerce, residents, and opportunity is fostering an environment where we risk losing much more than just two buildings. We need to see beyond any one structure, so that instead of simply preserving a building, we can restore and revitalize an entire city.

I wholeheartedly support the demolition of the two buildings at 148 and 150 South Bradford Street, not because I want to see history lost, but instead because I want to see all the history of Downtown Dover reborn.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Brown, President

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my support for the demolition of the buildings located at 148 and 150 S Bradford Street as part of Dover's Revitalization Project. This step, while difficult, is essential for the continued progress and successful transformation of our downtown area.

We must acknowledge that all good things come to an end, and it is time for Dover to evolve. The demolition of these structures is crucial in allowing the revitalization project to proceed smoothly and effectively. Reviving our downtown area will bring new opportunities, enhance the community, and attract businesses and visitors, ultimately benefiting everyone.

I understand the historical significance of the buildings at 148 and 150 S Bradford Street, and it is indeed sad to see a part of our history go. However, this sacrifice is necessary to ensure the future prosperity and vibrancy of our downtown. If this project does not move forward, we risk undermining the considerable effort and resources that have been dedicated to securing the grants and support needed to make this revitalization a reality.

The potential negative impact of halting this project cannot be overstated. It could trigger a downward spiral, undoing the hard work and commitment that has been invested in the revitalization initiative. We must seize this opportunity to breathe new life into downtown Dover, ensuring it becomes a thriving and dynamic hub for years to come.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I strongly urge you to consider the long-term benefits of the revitalization project and to proceed with the demolition of the buildings at 148 and 150 S Bradford Street.

Sincerely,

Averi Smith - KCAR 2024 Rookie Rising Star  
The Moving Experience Real Estate  
27 W Loockerman St., Dover, DE 19904  
m: [609-854-1379](tel:609-854-1379)  
o: [302-241-0899](tel:302-241-0899)  
w: [www.themovingexperience.com](http://www.themovingexperience.com)  
fb: <https://www.facebook.com/RealtorAveriSmith/>  
ig: delaware.realtor



"The Moving Experience IS inspired customer loyalty"

16 June, 2024

**City of Dover Board of Adjustments,**

My name is Donny Legans, owner of a Rail Haus and resident downtown. I come here humbly asking that you approve the demolition of 148 and 150 S Governor's Ave. I appreciate history and nostalgia. A vibrant downtown is what we all want. An activated downtown teaming with residents, visitors, and workers is the goal. The parking garage project is integral to us reaching that goal.

For two years I called Old City Philadelphia home. Old City epitomizes old and new coexisting in an energetic neighborhood resulting in one of the best historic cities to visit in the US. Steps from Benjamin Franklin's house are modern restaurants, next to museums and historic homes are rooftop bars. There is a beer garden steps away from the Liberty Bell. This coexisting nature isn't unique to Philadelphia. Charleston, Annapolis, Arlington, Nashville come to mind. All these places at some point made (and continue to make) tough decisions to build and create these vibrant areas at the expense of some history. Dover is ready to take that same leap.

No doubt we must sacrifice some older, historic homes to spark a newer, better Dover. A Dover that is at the same time fresh and historic. Familiar and new. Dover can pull this off and is uniquely positioned for success. Particularly with anchors that help hold us together plus its small size allow a little change to go a long way. This parking garage is that change that can be a catalyst. Every industry in Downtown benefits from a central parking garage solution. The easing of parking concerns is everyone's best interest and is the one solution that quickly solves one of the main problems plaguing downtown.

When we started designing Rail Haus, keeping the old building was imperative to the look and feel of what we wanted to accomplish here. So I appreciate aesthetics and history even when it becomes pricey to achieve. However, 90% of our project is new. But you still feel the history and warmth and care when you enter Rail Haus. Dover can and will have that same feeling of history, warmth, and care with 148 and 150 S Governor's Ave no longer standing.

Donny Legans  
Downtown resident and Owner of Rail Haus

Dear Mr. Mayor, District II Councilmen, Distinguished members of the Board of Adjustment,  
City Staff, and fellow citizens,

I salute the Board of Adjustment for taking up the matter of the citizen's voice in City Board and Commission determinations, specifically, at public meetings.

A decision by an appointed citizen Board or Commission to overturn the decision of another appointed citizen Board or Commission is an extremely grave matter. Denying citizen comment for the record of the proceedings is to negate the role of citizens and to discourage broad citizen participation in governance.

In the matter of the Downtown Dover Partnership request for demolition of buildings at 148 and 150 South Bradford Street, there is a deviation from the much-lauded "Capital City 2030" plan proposed to the public in 2023. That deviation, namely, the substitution of a parking garage with bicycle availability for the 'Multi-Modal Transit Hub' with its proposed 146 residential units and commercial space together with parking for same, drops the most critical element--more housing--from the plan. I urge the DDP and City leadership, in responding to the ever-changing development environment of property ownership and funding sources, to prioritize the housing of Dover residents as equal to or possibly even more valuable than the footprint of a parking space.

Having a fine record of supporting improvements to the two buildings targeted for demolition, do we not cringe at sacrificing what began as family homes for parking spaces, with no plan to make places for resident, homeownership families as an outcome?

Let us prioritize people, as residents and citizens of a historically vibrant Dover, going forward to the future.

I thank the leaders of Dover, and this morning's appointed body, for the opportunity to provide this citizen homeowner's comment on this occasion.

Respectfully yours,

**Kathleen**

Kathleen Baker  
3 S. Bradford St., Dover DE 19904  
703/403-6882

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July 16, 2024

**City of Dover, Delaware**

15 Loockerman Plaza  
Dover, DE 19901

**RE: Application #V-24-03**

City of Dover Board of Adjustment Meeting, July 17th at 9:00 am

**To Whom It May Concern:**

Please use this letter as documentation of support by me, Dylan R. Grimes, of the demolition of two buildings at 148 S. Bradford Street and 150 S. Bradford Street and support the applicant for HI-24- 02 and HI-24-03, Downtown Dover Partnership.

As a member of the community, the plan proposed and currently being implemented by the Downtown Dover Partnership will create a lasting impact on generations to come and is vital to the sustainability of Downtown Dover.

Thank you,

*Dylan R. Grimes*

Dylan R. Grimes  
443 - 988 -3418  
thedillytheory@gmail.com

July 12, 2024

City of Dover – Board of Adjustment  
PO Box 475  
Dover, DE 19903  
Emailed – [Comp-Plan@dover.de.us](mailto:Comp-Plan@dover.de.us)

RE: Meeting 07/17/20204 – Application #V-24-03

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Bobby MacLeish, I own 126 Loockerman Street downtown with my Sister Megan Glick, my brother-in-law Mike Glick, and my dad Robert MacLeish, Sr. When we acquired this property in 2019 with the hope of helping bring more people to the downtown area with apartments on the upper levels and retail on the bottom. We want to develop this property and be part of the revitalization of Downtown Dover but the roadblocks that we continue to encounter when trying to help the downtown area have been far too high to overcome. When the Mosaic plan was released, our group felt encouraged and we were excited to see the forward progress that was coming to the Downtown Corridor. The start of the parking garage is key to the transformation of Downtown Dover. The ability to have ample parking will not only help the current businesses downtown but allow investors like our group to be able to bring people downtown for our apartments and provide more retail in shops and restaurants downtown. While our group values the importance of Downtown Dover's history, it is important to that we make our downtown as vibrant as other towns. We want to have people come to visit our amazing downtown and the parking garage is critical to reaching Downtown Dover's full potential. The group completing the parking garage have done their research along with the DDP to ensure that the location causes minimal disruption while maintaining the integrity of Downtown. I believe the City has made the right decision to allow the demolition of the buildings, while they were integrated in Downtown when they were first built, they no longer provide positive impacts to Downtown. This parking garage is such an important start to making Downtown Dover what it needs to be, we ask that you allow the demolition of the buildings so that Downtown Dover can meet its full potential as Mosaic showed in their Master plan.

We hope that when making your decision you look at what is best for Downtown Dover and the future vitality of Downtown Dover. Let's make Downtown Dover the premier downtown destination in the state.

Thank you,



Robert C. MacLeish II  
Member

**From:** Melissa Beck <[mmbeck0820@gmail.com](mailto:mmbeck0820@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, July 16, 2024 3:45 PM

**To:** City Clerks Office <[CityClerk@dover.de.us](mailto:CityClerk@dover.de.us)>

**Subject:** EXTERNAL: Dover Revitalization Project

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Good afternoon. I am writing to show my support to remove the two buildings on Bradford Street and create parking for the downtown area. I think that the one thing that prevents many folks from going downtown and supporting more of our local businesses is there is a lack of parking. Creating this public parking area would give these existing businesses an opportunity to succeed and create a thriving community for new businesses to open. I love attending the events that are downtown and supporting our community, I am hoping that this parking issue is resolved soon. I understand that the demolition has already been approved and hope that the plans move forward. Thank you.

Melissa Beck, Dover Resident

**From:** Mike Walsh <[mikewalshpt@gmail.com](mailto:mikewalshpt@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 16, 2024 4:01 PM  
**To:** City Clerks Office <[CityClerk@dover.de.us](mailto:CityClerk@dover.de.us)>  
**Cc:** Todd Stonesifer ([todd@toddstonesifer.com](mailto:todd@toddstonesifer.com)) <[todd@toddstonesifer.com](mailto:todd@toddstonesifer.com)>; Glenn Mandalas ([glenn@bmbde.com](mailto:glenn@bmbde.com)) <[glenn@bmbde.com](mailto:glenn@bmbde.com)>  
**Subject:** EXTERNAL: Board of Adjustment Application #V-24-03

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July 16, 2024

Chairperson Kishor C. Sheth & City of Dover Board of Adjustment

Department of Planning and Inspections

15 Loockerman Plaza

Dover, DE 19901

Via email to: [cityclerk@dover.de.us](mailto:cityclerk@dover.de.us)

**RE: Board of Adjustment Application #V-24-03**

**Historical Society of Dover (Friends of Old Dover)**

Dear Chairman Sheth and members of the Dover Board of Adjustment:

Please make this correspondence a part of the official record of the July 17, 2024, 9:00 am, proceedings of the Board of Adjustment concerning Application #V-24-03 filed by the Historical Society of Dover ("Friends of Old Dover").

I am in opposition to the appeal filed by Friends of Old Dover.

The City of Dover needs the parking project that will be facilitated by the demolition of the two structures located at 148 and 150 South Bradford Street. The decision of the Dover Planning Commission will permit the parking project to proceed. Therefore, I support the Planning Commission's decision to reverse the Historic District Commission, and thereby permit the demolition to proceed.

I understand the Friends of Old Dover have appealed to the Board of Adjustment because its position is that the Planning Commission should have conducted a public hearing. I have been advised and adopt the position that the Dover Board of Adjustment is not the proper venue to hear such appeals.

Additionally, even if the Board of Adjustment was the proper venue to hear such appeals, my position is that the Dover Planning Department properly rendered an advisory opinion that the Dover Planning Commission was not required to conduct a public hearing.

Thank you for your service on the Board of Adjustment and for considering my comments.

Michael Walsh, PT, Delaware License # J1-0001730

Owner & General Manager

Mike Walsh Physical Therapy LLC

810 New Burton Road, Suite 2

Dover, Delaware 19904

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Email: [mikewalshpt@gmail.com](mailto:mikewalshpt@gmail.com)

**City of Dover**  
**Board of Adjustments Hearing**  
**July 17, 2024**

My name is Peter Bradley and I am the President of Kent County Tourism Corporation as well as a Board member for the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP) organization.

It is my understanding that the Friends of Old Dover organization have appealed to the Planning Commission approval to demo 148 and 150 South Bradford to make way for a multi modal transportation center. The organization formally appealed because they were not allowed "public comment" at the Planning commission hearing and vote.

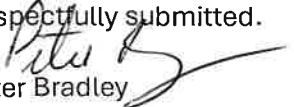
This decision was fully vetted out and the Friends of Old Dover had ample public comment for this project. They were afforded the opportunity to voice their concerns at a DDP Board meeting the other month. The DDP organization listened to their concerns and took a good faith step to have the architect look at designing the multi modal transportation center with the two buildings staying in place. DDP then held at the Dover Public library, a presentation of the Multi modal center with the original design and one with the two buildings in place. It was clear the revised plan with the two buildings would not work on so many levels. The friends of Old Dover also had an opportunity to opine during this public meeting.

The Planning Commission took all the above as well as other key facts in their review and final vote. At this point, the project has been well vetted out, funding in place and the benefits overwhelming. Time is of the essence with the approved funding. The Multi use transportation center is a key piece for the transformation of downtown Dover. It will complement and provide parking for the mixed-use residential development project at 120 South Governors Avenue.

From a tourism and visitor perspective, this center will be transformational. Nothing stresses out a visitor to a new unfamiliar downtown area than finding parking. This project addresses that and will be a strong anchor for future compelling development in the downtown area.

I urge you to deny the appeal so the project can move forward in the timely manner it requires.

Respectfully submitted.

  
Peter Bradley  
President – Kent County Tourism

Dear City of Dover council,

I would like to comment and submit my point of view on the pending parking garage project that is raising concern. As a long time resident of Dover, I grew up close to the downtown area and have observed it's slow decline over the last 50 years. What was once a hub of business, recreation and gathering has become an area of town struggling to find it's identity and belongingness in our community. My observation regarding the plan for this new garage building is as follows;

It is Not the Right Time.

I don't believe this garage is the answer to revitalizing downtown. People don't come downtown because they can't find parking. They don't spend time because they don't feel safe and there are not enough businesses ( with unique shopping and food choices) to entice them. The rent for new businesses to stay and thrive is prohibitive. Also DDP must give equal consideration to all merchants for events like first Fridays and refrain from cutting off the street just below merchants who could benefit from being included. This has happened in the past and forced good businesses away from Loockerman Street. I grew up in the downtown neighborhood. Staying vital and relevant means investing first in safety, with police presence that helps to clean up the downtown of crime, prostitution and taking good care of our homeless population plus bringing new businesses of all kinds into downtown so that citizens of Dover and surrounding areas will want to visit.

The farmers market has been a good start I hope it stays and grows.

Once you have demand for a PKG garage you'll have support for it.

There is no demand from consumers. They are afraid to walk Loockerman and surrounding streets. Please clean up and fortify the downtown area before spending wasteful dollars to erect something that will turn out to be another potentially dangerous area in our city.

You cannot make our beautiful colonial city something it is not. It must stay true to itself in order to thrive. The demolishing around town in recent years has caused our city to lose much of its colonial feel and charm, replacing it instead with cookie cutter pubs and places that you can find anywhere else in America, nothing special

Why not nurture and celebrate Dover's unique colonial heritage ? Why not invest our dollars into bringing businesses downtown, pouring energy into creating an environment of safety, excitement and walkability into downtown and surrounding streets from the legislative green to la baguette, museums, Loockerman Street, the plaza up to 1857 Jackson House, etc. this area used to be a thriving place ..not so long ago! It was an area of destination. It can be again. Progress doesn't always mean more development . Know what we already have is special. Improvement means looking at how the decline happened and what the citizens of Dover deserve for their city. Let's make Dover walkable again with shops, eateries and businesses that will make it shine. And then.....when there is need for that garage, it will be the right time for it to serve the community well.

Respectfully,

Sandhya Verma-Higgins

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