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From: Matt S <matt.spidell@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 12:46 PM
To: PL, Subdivision and Zoning
Subject: Support for SPUD-1694

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my strong support for the rezoning application submitted by Sisu Youth Services through SPUD-1694. This rezoning is crucial for expanding vital services for youth experiencing homelessness in Oklahoma City.

Benefits for Youth Experiencing Homelessness with SPUD-1694:

This rezoning will directly benefit youth experiencing homelessness in Oklahoma City by increasing shelter capacity. Expanding Sisu's facilities will provide more beds for young people in need of emergency shelter and transitional housing.

This rezoning will also help to create a pathway to stability. By providing safe and supportive housing, Sisu helps youth break the cycle of homelessness and build a brighter future.

I urge the Planning Commission to carefully consider the evidence and approve this vital rezoning application. Investing in our youth is an investment in the future of our city.

Addressing Concerns Raised by Neighbors:

I understand that some neighbors have expressed concerns about this project. However, many of these concerns appear to be based on sensationalism and misinformation. Let's address some common misconceptions:

"Increased Crime": Sisu has a proven track record of providing safe and supportive services to youth. Studies have shown that well-run shelters and supportive housing programs actually reduce crime rates in surrounding areas by providing stability and support to vulnerable individuals. Oklahoma City Police Department's crime statistics even show a continued decline in crime in our area, and allegations of connections to Sisu are misplaced and misconstrued.

"Decreased Property Values": Quality developments, including those that serve the community, can actually enhance property values by improving the overall quality of life in a neighborhood.

On a personal note, I frequently interact with youth from SISU. I regularly take my one year old son to nearby Swatek Park. The youths who also frequent that park - some of them presumably from SISU - have been nothing but respectful and kind to me and my son. I sincerely believe that most opponents of this rezoning and of SISU Youth Services would rather sweep the larger issue of youth homelessness under the rug instead of facing it or even talking to young people.

Sincerely,

Matthew Spidell
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Oklahoma City, OK 73112