

24 October 2022

Durham City Council  
Joint City-County Planning Committee  
Durham Planning Commission  
Durham City-County Planning Department

City of Durham  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, NC 27701

RE: Z2200048 – Duke East Campus Addition

Dear Honorable Members of Durham City Council, Joint-City County Planning Committee, and Durham Planning Commission, and Valued Staff of Durham City-County Planning Department,

The Burch Avenue Neighborhood Association (BANA) Board respectfully submits this comment regarding Duke University's request to rezone 400 Gattis Street (the “Old Laundry”) to UC(D).

We appreciate Duke’s efforts to work with the neighborhood. We recognize that, in response to our feedback, Duke removed the parcel at 922 Rome Avenue from its request and agreed to not use the Old Laundry for inpatient hospitals, urgent care, medical clinics, overnight accommodations, or retail sales & services.

We understand Duke would like more flexibility in its campus planning and that Duke does not have any plans to redevelop the Old Laundry at this time. However, without any plans to discuss, Duke’s request places an undue and considerable burden on a small group of neighborhood volunteers to try to anticipate every possible use of the land by Duke—**and how it will affect our neighborhood decades in advance.**

BANA has two main concerns:

- 1) keeping our neighborhood **safe**, and
- 2) preserving the **character and quiet enjoyment** of our neighborhood.

Our small, quiet neighborhood has only seven streets, two of which dead end at the Old Laundry. Most blocks do not have sidewalks, including the two blocks of Gattis Street closest to the Old Laundry. On-street parking and narrow streets make it difficult for vehicles to pass one another—residents often pull over to let oncoming traffic pass safely. Additionally, at the beginning and end of each school day, traffic from Immaculata Catholic School on Buchanan Boulevard, just over a block from 400 Gattis, increases congestion around our neighborhood. In these narrow streets, people go for walks and runs, children frequently ride bikes, and residents walk their pets.

BANA would like Duke to ensure any development of the Old Laundry does not create more traffic through our neighborhood. **At this time, vehicles cannot access the Old Laundry from Duke’s**

**campus, and all Duke traffic to the property goes through our neighborhood.** We would like Duke to build a road from Campus Drive to the Old Laundry and 402 Gattis (the “Arts Annex”) to keep most, if not all, of Duke’s traffic on campus. We appreciate that Duke has committed to not allow public vehicular through access between Campus Drive and the Old Laundry/Arts Annex, but traffic on Gattis should be limited to emergency and service vehicles only to prevent a significant increase in traffic.

Because Duke has no plans for the property and UC zoning allows for many uses, the BANA Board must oppose Duke's rezoning request unless it includes the below commitments to ensure our residents can continue to safely enjoy our neighborhood:

### **Maintaining the Safety of Our Neighborhood**

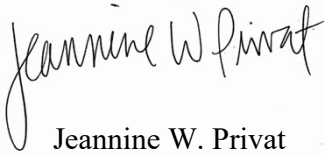
- Duke will conduct a traffic impact analysis for development of 400 Gattis.
- Duke will build a road for vehicular access from Campus Drive to 400 and 402 Gattis Street before 400 Gattis is redeveloped, with traffic on Gattis Street limited to emergency and service vehicles only.
- 400 Gattis will not be used for a parking deck or for other high-traffic uses.
- Duke will work with the Burch Avenue neighborhood to make improvements to Burch Avenue neighborhood streets, sidewalks, and crosswalks to promote road safety.
- Duke will give timely notice to nearby residents about any demolition of the Old Laundry building, which is filled with asbestos.

### **Maintaining the Character and Quiet Enjoyment of Our Neighborhood**

- Duke will preserve and maintain the existing mature trees and increase landscaping to maintain the character of the neighborhood.
- Duke will maintain pedestrian and bicycle access for the public from Gattis Street to Campus Drive.
- No new buildings or renovations will be taller than 45 feet consistent with current zoning.
- No facilities/buildings at 400 Gattis will routinely emit loud noises that could disrupt residents’ enjoyment of the neighborhood.
- No facilities/buildings at 400 Gattis will routinely emit noxious odors that could disrupt residents’ enjoyment of the neighborhood.

If and when Duke redevelops 400 Gattis Street, we hope Duke will do so in a way that ensures the safety, character, and quiet enjoyment of our neighborhood. We sincerely hope any development will be good for our neighborhood and beneficial for Duke University. We hope to continue to develop a positive, productive relationship between Duke University and Burch Avenue residents.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeannine W. Privat". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

Jeannine W. Privat  
President, Burch Avenue Neighborhood Association Board

Burch Avenue Neighborhood Association Board

Caroline Tilley Asher  
Lynne Bahrami  
Doug Coonley  
Cristen Paige  
Rachael Tilley  
Richard Ziglar

cc: John J. Noonan, Vice President for Facilities, Duke University  
Stelfanie Williams, Vice President for Durham and Community Affairs, Duke University  
Adem Gusa, AICP, Director of Facilities Planning and Design, Duke University  
Nil Ghosh, Associate, Morningstar Law Group