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HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

RE: Jefferson-Chalmers WATER Project

At its March 16, 2023, regular meeting, the City Planning Commission (CPC) received a presentation from Mr. Jay Juergensen regarding the Jefferson-Chalmers WATER Project. As Council is aware, neighborhoods like Jefferson-Chalmers suffered extensive damage during the unprecedented rainfalls of June and July 2021, for which a Presidential Declaration of emergency was issued. The damage resulted not just from the heavy rains but from pump failures at facilities downstream, while an unprecedented amount of combined sewage was discharged into Fox Creek on the community's eastern edge.

In addition to the challenges brought on by heavy rains, the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) designation of Jefferson-Chalmers in a new floodplain, that along with new Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), have increased requirements for property owners to obtain flood insurance, the premiums for which can be considerable. Residents have been highly motivated to find ways to remove their properties from the floodplain designation and to relieve the burden of flood insurance premiums. One of the pernicious effects of the floodplain designation is that it precludes the City's expenditure of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and other Federal funds in areas so designated. Jay C. Juergensen and the Jefferson-Chalmers WATER Project have spent more than a year exploring the problem and reviewing ways to address it.

During its regular meeting of March 16, 2023 the CPC found Mr. Juergensen's presentation on the WATER Project's analysis and efforts to be comprehensive, eye-opening, and worthy of deeper exploration. To that end, the Planning Commission voted to recommend to Your Honorable Body to schedule an informational presentation before the entire City Council at the earliest convenience and that City Council work to identify the necessary funds to aid in removing the community from the floodplain. Not only is Mr. Juergensen experienced and well credentialed in stormwater management matters, but he also has roots in and continues to own property in Jefferson-Chalmers.

Respectfully submitted,
LAUREN HOOD, CHAIRPERSON



Marcell, R. Todd, Jr., Director