



Durham C.A.N.
(Congregations, Associations and Neighborhoods)
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Date: April 22, 2020
To: Durham City Council
Re: Public Comments on Work Session Agenda Item #6 Conveyance of 702, 704 and 917 Grant Street to Durham Community Land

With regard to the City Council agendas for the 4/22 work session and 5/3 City Council meeting, we are writing to support the donation of city land in the Hayti community to Durham Community Land trust.

Durham Congregations Associations and Neighborhoods (CAN) is a broad-based, non-profit organization that works to coalesce, train, and organize communities in Durham across religious, racial, ethnic, class, and geographic lines for the public good. Our primary goal is to develop local leadership and organized power to change the conditions in low- and moderate-income communities.

Because of our organizing work on a range of affordable housing issues including the yet-to-be-completed repairs at the Hoover Road Durham Housing Authority Community; the yet-to-be-credited court fees connected to predatory evictions filed by landlords like the Durham Housing Authority; and the yet-to-be-initiated redevelopment of the former Fayetteville Street Projects (also referred to as Fayette Place), we remain steadfast in seeing the creation and preservation of low-income and affordable housing -- particularly on City and County-owned land-- as a top priority.

In 2017, CAN fought for the city to provide funds to Durham Housing Authority to repurchase the former Fayetteville Street Projects from a neglectful private developer. Fayetteville Street Projects, along with several other city-owned pieces of land, remain empty, neglected, and withheld from the Hayti community to which they rightfully belong. The sale of these lots to DCLT would allow homes to be built in the community, representing a small step toward justice. We do in solidarity with our neighbors in Braggton and Walltown and Old East Durham, and *all* communities seeking to ensure that Durham's increasing prosperity -- subsidized significantly by years of public financial investment -- benefits and serves the needs of the *entire* community.

We understand the vital work of the City's Community Development Department (CCD) and thank Ms. Karen Lado, Mr. Reginald Johnson and CCD staff for meeting with Durham CAN leaders on several occasions over the last month to discuss this issue and our mutual interests in ensuring a community-driven approach to the pending roll-out of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program; the demolition of 519 E Main and Liberty Street Apartments; and the redevelopment of the former Fayetteville Street Projects.

Sincerely,

Durham Congregations, Associations, and Neighborhoods