

September 19, 2011

Springfield Planning & Zoning Commission  
304 Municipal Center West  
Springfield, IL 62701

RE: Petition for Zoning Reclassification – 1508-1516 S. MacArthur, Docket #2011-041

Dear Commission Chairman and Members,

At its meeting on September 1, 2011, the Board of Directors of the MacArthur Boulevard Business Association unanimously passed the following motion:

“The proposed zoning change from S2 (community shopping and office district) to B1 (highway business service district) and/or any conditional permitted use variance is incompatible with the MacArthur Boulevard Master Plan. City regulations on zoning note that a B1 district is designed to provide particularly for drive in type of automotive and other services, entertainment and open amusement establishments. All of these would tend to interfere with the pattern of prime retail development of convenience shopping. Since many of the establishments are designed to attract the motorist, they may involve lighting or signs which make them incompatible with residential use. Such businesses are more appropriate along major thoroughfares.

Furthermore, the proposed zoning or use is not in sync with the MacArthur Boulevard Master Plan which recommended the South Grand/MacArthur area be used for pedestrian friendly mixed use retail and residential with green space. Therefore, the MBAA does not support the request by Roberts' Automotive to vary the existing zoning to B-1 General Highway Business Service District Classification or any requested conditional permitted use variance.”

Our association has been working for over five years on a plan to revitalize, renew and “green” MacArthur Boulevard. We have been a key force in the initiation, input and resultant Master Plan for MacArthur Boulevard prepared for the Springfield/Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission and the City of Springfield and just released earlier this year. Former Mayor Frank Edwards appointed a MACBAC committee to work on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report and that committee is in the very midst of its work.

As quoted from the study:

“MacArthur Boulevard is a critical commercial corridor within the Springfield region and community stakeholders recognize its importance and potential for serving the needs of local residents and citizens. It is also a key gateway into Springfield’s central and southern neighborhoods. “

Although the MBBA is a business association, we cannot support business that would adversely impact our residential neighbors, many of whom are members of our association. While there are automotive type service businesses along MacArthur Boulevard, they are located nearly a mile south of the proposed site. The character of the proposed site is less auto centric and more residential than the southern end of MacArthur. We do not believe the zoning change or variance request from Roberts’ Automotive is compatible with the plan and vision for MacArthur Boulevard. On behalf of the MBAA, its business and residential members, we urge you to deny the request for a change in zoning or any conditional permitted use variance.

Respectfully,

Debbie Cimarossa  
President  
MacArthur Boulevard Business Association  
Representing the MBBA Board and Association Members

Cc Mayor J. Michael Houston  
Springfield City Council Members