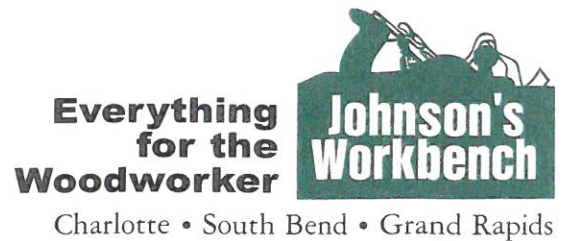




**L.L. Johnson  
Lumber Mfg. Co.**

P.O. Box 278-563 N Cochran  
Charlotte, MI 48813



January 8, 2015

Mr. Bryan Myrkle  
Economic Development Director  
111 E. Lawrence Ave.  
Charlotte, MI 48813

Dear Mr. Myrkle and Council members,

I attended the January 6, 2014 Planning Commission meeting primarily to get some of my questions answered, as well as to express my initial opinions about a rezoning request involving L. L. Johnson Lumber Mfg. Company (LLJ) property within the City of Charlotte. From that meeting I gained some information I, nor anyone at LLJ were aware of, regarding zoning changes that have already occurred, as well as some reasons for planned changes. In regards to the changes that have taken place, specifically at 213 W. McClure Street where I-2 property was rezoned to a Residential single residence lot in the middle of I-2 property, I missed the notice of this proposal. My ignorance is no excuse, but I feel this was ill advised. I also feel I fell down somewhere in time, when the lots north of McClure and south of Amity on the west side of Clinton were rezoned from I-1 industrial to Residential thereby creating residential property fronting onto industrial. Also at the meeting I learned banking standards have changed and the owner of 446 N. Sheldon, Destiny Davis, was having problems selling the house LLJ sold her a few years ago, due to financing issues. As I understand the reason for their rezoning request, many lending institutions won't extend loans on non-conforming property today because if it burns down there is no guarantee they may rebuild. I also learned at the meeting, the Master Plan for zoning, that has been formulated with considerable expense and volunteer time, includes rezoning all the lots bordered by McClure Street, Sheldon Street, and the railroad from Heavy industrial property to residential single family.

While I appreciate and sympathize with Ms. Davis' selling troubles and recognize the fact bank loan standards have changed **again**, the mere fact that banking standards have changed should **not** effect zoning decisions. If they do, our fair city needs to prepare for a lot of continual future zoning changes. I do recognize however, all the lots from Ms. Davis' lot south to the railroad on the east side of Sheldon Street all front onto Residential property and back up to the railroad. With the exception of 454 N. Sheldon, the lot on the SE corner of Sheldon and McClure which our Company currently owns and is attempting to sell, I see no reason **not** to change the zoning to residential along the east side of Sheldon street between McClure and the railroad as it fronts residential, backs up to the railroad, and is in keeping with the current Master Zoning Plan. That would help with some of those owner's current selling issues. I do have significant fears regarding the residential property fronting on our Company's heavy industrial zoned property as all the houses on the south side of McClure Street between Sheldon and Cochran do. One fact I am aware of is heavy industrial uses and residential uses do not naturally get along in close proximity. LLJ has expended significant time and expense in the past due to this

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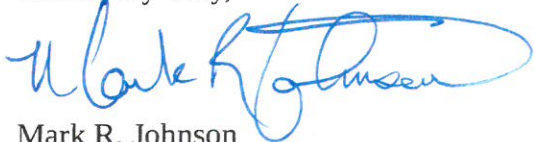
fact. Some of our neighbor's complaints didn't stop with notification of our City of Charlotte officials who to date have been very supportive of our Company. Several of these complaints escalated to the State, and one time I am aware of, to the Federal level. In all of those instances we were found innocent but the cost of proving that innocence was considerable.

Another fact I recently learned is industrial property fronting residential property, by zoning regulation, requires a 75' set back rather than a 30' set back as with industrial to industrial frontage. With approval of the proposed residential zoning south of McClure Street our Company will then be completely fronted with residential property. On the aerial view handouts supplied, please note where LLJ's current set backs are, identified by the light green lines, compared with our property lines and adjoining streets. Also note where the Zoning Master Plan's proposed future line, identified by the yellow line, appears on the south side of our property. This appears to send a message to me that our Company is not in the correct location for heavy industrial applications, something we have been involved with since the 1920's in our present location. This also tells me we are in violation of set back laws for all of our buildings except for the main plant in the center of our property. I have been verbally assured, City Council will likely allow us variances or permission to continue where we are but the actions of the Planning Commission and City Council make me nervous for future plans we have involving further investments in our current manufacturing facilities. If one of our buildings were to be seriously damaged, what assurance do we, or our lenders have we will be allowed to rebuild? This is the very same argument the supporters of the proposed zoning changes are offering for their side of the street. Their property was zoned industrial I-2 when they purchased, now they are asking for our City to rezone thereby elevating their property value while diminishing our Company's.

We recently donated our sawmill equipment to the Michigan Old Gas Tractor Association and have plans for manufacturing improvements in the reclaimed area of our main plant. Manufacturing has been "going out of style" for sometime now in the United States and has acquired a black eye in the opinion of many of our citizens. Hopefully this opinion will continue to reverse course as value creation is a necessary component of a successful society, manufacturing accomplishes value creation. Our intentions at LLJ have been to continue creating jobs of a lumber manufacturing nature and to get along with our neighbors. I am deeply concerned for where the City of Charlotte places our Company property in their future Master Zoning Plan. With the complete encroachment of residential property surrounding us, not backing up to us, but fronting us, we will be compressed into a very small footprint while attempting to create enough of a buffer between us and our good neighbors. There are plenty of issues to deal with in a manufacturing business without disgruntled neighbors piled on top.

In closing, I am certain there are ways to create win-win solutions and apologize for not being able to present my opinions in person. I look forward to your decision regarding the zoning proposal at hand and avail myself to you in the future toward the search for solutions involving our Company, our good neighbors, and the Master Zoning Plan.

Yours very truly,



Mark R. Johnson  
President