



April 16, 2018

Dear Mayor Sessoms, Vice Mayor Jones, Councilwoman Abbott, Councilman Davenport, Councilman Dyer, Councilwoman Henley, Councilwoman Kane, Councilman Moss, Councilman Uhrin, Councilwoman Wilson, and Councilman Wood:

The Atlantic Avenue Association (AAA) is very excited about the city's recent efforts to grow Virginia Beach tourism and is encouraged to see the city working hand in hand with local small businesses and residents to achieve the best results for our community. It is safe to say that the members of AAA want to be an integral part of this worthwhile endeavor to reinvent Virginia Beach tourism and the resort area.

Proposals for the Dome site and a new pier are the two primary examples of this new, exciting movement, and we see Atlantic Avenue - the front doorstep to Virginia Beach for millions of visitors to our city every year - as the perfect place for this wonderful renaissance to get going quickly.

Atlantic Avenue Association members are primed and ready to embrace this challenge. Our members are community-minded small business owners who provide goods and services desired by our visitors; we generate millions of dollars in sales taxes for Virginia Beach; and we employ thousands of its citizens. These are things, frankly, we don't think much about. As the saying goes, we "just do it."

We hope you see our potential as experienced and knowledgeable service providers, tax generators, and employers who are ready to hit the street running for the betterment of our community. Of course, to begin to realize this huge potential, we small business operators and property owners need to look at ourselves first for ways to improve and evolve. Yes, there's work for us to do, but we can't succeed alone. We ask the City and the local community to support us in envisioning and creating a uniquely Virginia Beach experience in the resort to which people are drawn and locals want to make a part of their lifestyles.

The Atlantic Avenue Association supports a new pier, state of the art indoor music venue at the Dome site and associated attractions. We very much want these projects to come to fruition. However, our members are greatly concerned about the magnitude of restaurant and retail space being proposed. On behalf of the two and half mile stretch of small businesses

along Atlantic Avenue, we echo the sentiments of the Resort Advisory Commission and the Virginia Beach Restaurant Association; AAA agrees that further study should be given to the impacts and economic consequences of these proposals, especially to the Virginia Beach restaurant and retail community.

The Atlantic Avenue Association is not against the City's efforts to develop the Dome site or build a new pier. To the contrary, we agree with the City that unique, complimentary attractions and amenities at these sites should be part of a comprehensive vision for the resort as a highly desirable, progressive travel destination. Moreover, we see a community driven revitalization process that includes the input and participation of nearby small business interests as critical to the success of these projects.

Working hand in hand with the City and the Virginia Beach community, we see a day coming soon when locals will brag about their cool stay-cation in their beach town. We are ready, willing and able to help, and ask the Council to see the great potential that exists today along Atlantic Avenue. With your support, the members of AAA and the entire resort community will look forward to an exciting future.

Very truly yours,

George Kotarides

Chair, Atlantic Avenue Association

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