



Telephone (703) 971-6262
Fax (703) 971-3032
E-mail: leedist@fairfaxcounty.gov
Web site: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/lee

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
COUNTY OF FAIRFAX



6121 Franconia Road
Alexandria, VA 22310

Rodney L. Lusk
LEE DISTRICT SUPERVISOR

Board Matter

December 7, 2022

Mr. Chairman – The Springfield Masonic Lodge has been part of the Greater Springfield Community for the last 63 years. As an integral and proactive community partner, the Lodge awards scholarships, organizes food and blood drives, and donates labor to create infrastructure for our neighbors with mobility challenges. More recently, the Lodge has diligently worked to undertake an array of philanthropic actions during the current pandemic, including opening up their site as a COVID testing location—testing over 15,000 individuals—in addition to organizing large donations of sanitation supplies to Fairfax County Community Health Workers.

In order to make these community services possible, the Lodge depends on revenue from building rentals, membership dues and donations. While the Lodge has maintained its services to the community, and in many cases increased them during the pandemic, the Lodge's revenues have been significantly impacted over the past two years.

In 2019, the Lodge applied for a special exception to authorize the continuation of the on-site rentals that principally fund their philanthropic

activities. As part of that application process, staff first requested that the Lodge submit a landscaping plan, followed by a minor site plan.

The civil engineering fees associated with obtaining the necessary minor site plan are estimated at approximately \$10,000 and would be in addition to the associated county fees required for the formal submission.

While the Lodge does maintain a modest reserve fund, it largely operates at cost. The financial hurdles necessary to obtain the required special exception are currently insurmountable for the Lodge, meaning that they may need to seriously consider suspending much of their philanthropic work in the community, and possibly even closing their doors.

Given the Lodge's over 60 years of service to the Springfield community, as well as the unique circumstances that have precipitated this crisis related to the current public health emergency, I feel strongly that we have a responsibility take steps to ensure that the Springfield Masonic Lodge remains viable and continues to serve the young people and vulnerable residents in our community.

With that in mind Mr. Chairman, after consultation with Land Development Services Staff, I move that the Board waive up to \$5,000 in fees associated with the Springfield Masonic Lodge's special exception application, permits and other county fees.

I have coordinated with the County Attorney, who confirmed that this waiver is legal and permissible under the County Code.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.