

Request for Revitalization Grant- City of Durham

Habitable Space LLC  
902 Burch Avenue  
Durham, NC, 27701

February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Chris Dickey  
Economic Development Coordinator  
Office of Economic and Workplace Development  
807 E. Main Street  
Suite 5-100  
Durham, NC, 27701

Dear Mr. Dickey,

Habitable Space, LLC is pleased to present you with this request for a grant from the City's Neighborhood Revitalization Fund to assist with our efforts to renovate and expand the property at 1200 West Chapel Hill Street. We're excited about the work the city has already supported in this corridor, and look forward to contributing to the renaissance of West Chapel Hill Street.

Some of our project's highlights include:

- Full renovation and expansion of a vacant, outdated commercial building.
- New restaurant and catering kitchen to be opened on the property; owner has successful track record of two other restaurants and 17 years in business in the City of Durham.
- Creation of 36 new full time jobs.
- Project has complete schematic designs and will be shovel-ready by June 2016.
- Outdoor dining patio will bring life and vibrancy to the street level.
- Project will revitalize a key property located at western "gateway" to West Chapel Hill Street and downtown Durham.

As our attached images show, 1200 West Chapel Hill Street was home to a Pure gas station in the 1960s, when the corridor had a thriving business district. The gas station closed in the 1990s as businesses began to struggle, and the property has been in declining use since then. A church held services there on Sundays between 2004 and 2013, but the building was vacant on weekdays and has been fully vacant since 2013. It is currently a 1288 sf shell in need of a gut level renovation.

With the successful turnaround of downtown Durham and its nearby neighborhoods, West Chapel Hill Street is now primed for revitalization. A vibrant restaurant would be a catalyst to stimulate a new wave of small business growth in the corridor. As our attached conceptual drawings show, we plan to create a dynamic new look for the building by adding a second story and an outdoor dining patio. The restaurant will be open seven days a week, and will serve quality food reasonably priced so that neighbors from Burch Avenue, the West End and other nearby neighborhoods can

afford to eat there frequently. The location is easily walkable and bike-able for many residents. As the attached letters of support show, the community is excited about this project.

As our budget shows city grant support will be needed to make this enterprise successful. Overall project costs are \$822,550, and our committed financing plus owner equity is \$602,550. The cost of building restaurant infrastructure is high, and West Chapel Hill Street is just in the beginning stages of thriving as a district for this type of business. We very much hope that the city will partner with us through a Neighborhood Revitalizations Fund grant and help ensure the success of this venture.

Thank you in advance for your support and consideration.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Wendy Woods AND Stacey Poston". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wendy Woods and Stacey Poston

Owners, Habitable Space LLC