



South River City Citizens Inc.  
P O Box 40632  
Austin TX 78704  
[www.srccatx.org](http://www.srccatx.org)

Eric Cassady, President  
Dan Fredine, Vice President  
Oliver Caruso, Treasurer  
Mary Friedman, Secretary  
Carol Martin, Membership Secretary

Austin City Council  
City Hall  
301 W. 2nd St.  
Austin, TX 78701

February 29, 2020

RE: Case number SPC-2018-0501AW: Alcoholic beverage sales distance requirement waiver for Neighborhood Goods

Dear Mayor Adler and Council Members,

Michele Lynch of Metcalfe, Wolff, Stuart & Williams, LLP, representing Neighborhood Goods, Inc., is requesting a waiver so that alcohol sales and consumption will be allowed at Neighborhood Goods, located at 1007 S. Congress Avenue. This waiver is required to allow alcohol sales and consumption due to proximity to the Texas School for the Deaf (TSD) property at 1102 South Congress Avenue.

On February 3rd, 2020, South River City Citizens (SRCC) passed a motion to neither support nor oppose this waiver request. Therefore, the remainder of this letter will document SRCC's position on minimum distance requirement waivers in general as well as this specific request.

SRCC has a long history of acting to limit alcohol sales close to schools. Some of the efforts have been successful; others have not. Two cases were withdrawn by the applicants—Tiger Mart and Torchy's—after resolute community opposition became known. Another case arose when a waiver was requested to allow sales right next to the Fulmore Middle School campus. SRCC led a coalition that included Bouldin NA, Congress Avenue Merchants Association, Fulmore PTA Executive Board, Austin Neighborhoods Council, Boys and Girls Club of South Austin, State Representative Eddie Rodriguez, Faith Presbyterian Church, St. Ignatius Catholic Church, former SRCC President Rene Barrera, and other organizations and individuals. Efforts by Austin Independent School District Board Members Robert Schneider and Pat Whiteside were particularly useful and helpful. Unfortunately, this waiver was ultimately approved by Council to allow alcohol sales despite extensive community opposition.

AISD joined with SRCC and other organizations and individuals in opposing these cases. Ultimately, a uniform policy was adopted by AISD that all these waiver cases would be opposed system-wide, eliminating discretion of local school officials who might not be aware of the full scope of problems associated with alcohol consumption by and in close proximity to students.

SRCC is aware that the administration of the Texas School for the Deaf has been apprised by the developers of the Neighborhood Goods development and has chosen to remain neutral by neither supporting nor opposing this waiver. SRCC respects the right of the TSD administration to make its own choices about responding to waivers to allow alcohol sales across the street from its campus.

SRCC is taking no action to support or oppose this waiver. Factors that have influenced our decision include a general understanding that the operation of the businesses and the distribution points of alcohol within the projects are designed in a way that makes it unlikely that students will be exposed to alcohol sales or consumption. Normal and typical travel patterns of AISD and TSD students are unlikely to cause them to pass anywhere close to the alcohol distribution points. Further, SRCC has no influence over what course of action the Texas School of the Deaf chooses to adopt in this case.

SRCC, mindful of its long history of acting to protect AISD students from nearby alcohol sales and consumption, intends to act vigorously in cases that may arise in the future to oppose waivers to the existing City of Austin ordinance that limits alcohol sales and consumption close to schools. Our decision to not get actively involved in this case should in no way be perceived as changing our position on alcohol waivers in general.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric Cassady', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Eric Cassady  
President  
[president@srccatx.org](mailto:president@srccatx.org)

CC: Bryan Walker, Michele Lynch, Russell Fraser, Dan Fredine