

May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Dear Burlington Planning Commission,

We would like to provide some background to the UVM Trinity Campus discussion on your 5/25 agenda. UVM came to the City last year to discuss rezoning Trinity campus to build new student housing. The council discussed this in executive session in the winter. At this point, we can share that a majority of Councilors made it clear that it was very important to us that this would mean that fewer students would be housed off campus and that UVM commits, in a tangible way, to this concept. This response was reiterated publicly in January when Richard Case, UVM VP of Finance and Administration, presented to the council. To date, UVM has not signaled their willingness to agree to this. Their response seemed to indicate their feeling that UVM is already doing more to house students than other comparable institutions, and that therefore Burlington should not, and could not, expect more from UVM. However, the neighbors around UVM and the City Council do expect UVM to be a better partner in finding other housing options for off-campus students.

This is the first opportunity the city has had in years to hold UVM to being a better housing partner. Instead of showing interest in moving forward with stronger partnerships, UVM has retreated. They maintain that they are not planning on increasing enrollment while refusing to commit to saying they won't increase the off-campus student population. At the same time, UVM faculty and staff have shared that UVM is looking to increase their PhD student base and to obtain their Research 1 designation. This means separating undergraduate and graduate students, which almost always means increasing enrollment to cover the costs of the increase in courses.

With this coming to the Planning Commission, we wonder if UVM is ignoring the requests of their neighbors and are forging ahead. So, we are bringing up our request at this stage, again. We ask that you join us in requesting that UVM tangibly commit to a maximum number of off-campus students, both in your discussion on Wednesday and beyond.

Zoraya Hightower, Ward 1 City Councilor (P) – represents Trinity Campus

Joe Magee, Ward 3 City Councilor (P)

Sarah Carpenter, Ward 4 City Councilor (D)

Ben Traverse, Ward 5 City Councilor (D)

Jack Hanson, East District City Councilor (P) – represents Trinity Campus