

On Sep 24, 2014, at 7:08 AM, "John Fleming" <JFleming@trimarkproperties.com> wrote:

Dear Mayor, City Commissioners, and City Manager:

I am writing today in the hopes you will provide some immediate direction to staff with regards to the current food truck regulations. I am aware that the City Commission has requested staff to review the current ordinance and bring back their recommendations. This letter is my formal request for more immediate action in regards to changing the current regulations.

As you are probably aware, we have been successful in attracting new companies to Innovation Square. Over the last year, we have welcomed approximately 10-12 new companies to the area, bringing quite a few new jobs to Gainesville. While we hope that this trend continues (and actually dramatically increases), we are blessed to have considerably more bodies in the neighborhood than even a year ago. However Innovation Square is still in its' infancy, not yet reaching a critical mass needed to support the ancillary services that workers demand/need. Unlike the downtown area that has had considerably more time to develop (redevelop), Innovation Square currently lacks an array of restaurants, coffee shops, social gathering areas, and other basic daily services. We have no doubt that this is a temporary condition, alleviated over time with the recruitment of additional companies. In the interim, there is a need.

Several companies would like a weekly event that would serve the following purposes:

1. Allow the companies to provide, as a perk to their employees, lunch one time per week;
2. Allow for some time away from the office/lab, as a group (instead of everyone doing different things for lunch);
3. Allow for the interaction of companies (collaboration), researchers, employees, etc. within Innovation Square;
4. Provide that "Third Place" for everyone to gather as a community.

Currently, by code, a weekly event held on private property is not allowed (current code attached). I have highlighted several sections that disallow what we want to accomplish but basically:

1. We are limited to one (1) event every sixty (60) days;
2. We are limited to the hours of 5:00 pm to 12:00 am;
3. We are forced to provide a minimum of two (2) food trucks per event.

Since our goal is to promote a weekly event (like “Food Truck Fridays”), have this event for lunch, and not contract with two (2) or more vendors if only one (1) is needed by demand, we currently cannot provide such an affair.

While I understand there are differing opinions related to providing food truck events in downtown Gainesville, that controversy does not apply to Innovation Square. We have very few “brick and mortar” restaurants within a comfortable walking distance (given the allotted time for lunch) from Innovation Square, and are not interested in impacting the dinner and late night demand. Someday soon we hope to have considerably more food options within Innovation Square, but for now a once a week food truck event will do wonders in retaining and attracting talent, promoting community, and providing that “third place” to relax and unwind.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John L. Fleming
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“The reason some people don’t recognize opportunity is that it usually comes disguised as hard work”

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