



January 22, 2013

Dear Little Rock Planning Commission,

On behalf of the Quapaw Quarter Association Board of Directors, I am writing to encourage you to deny the application for a Mapco twenty four hour convenience store on Third Street between State and Izard Streets.

The Quapaw Quarter Association's mission is to promote the preservation of Little Rock's architectural heritage through advocacy, marketing and education. The area surrounding the proposed location for the convenience store has several significant historic structures, including the White-Baucum House on the corner of Second and Izard Streets.

The White-Baucum House was built in 1869-1870 by Robert J.T. White, then Arkansas Secretary of State. It was later sold to George F. Baucum, who was a prominent business owner in Little Rock; the family lived in the house until the 1920s. The house is also significant because it is one of the earliest and best examples of Italianate architecture in Arkansas. The house is individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places, is the recipient of a Quapaw Quarter Historic Structures Plaque, and was listed on the Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas's Most Endangered Places list in 2011.

The QQA supports infill development and encourages new uses for surface parking lots, but development in this area should be sensitive to the historic character of the neighborhood. An establishment like the proposed convenience store could harm the surrounding businesses. Whether warranted or not, a convenience store (particularly one that operates twenty four hours per day) would introduce additional safety concerns to an area that continues to struggle with existing revitalization challenges. This type of development could discourage future investment in the area and have a negative impact in the long term.

We support staff's opinion that this is not an appropriate location for this type of use and encourage you to consider issues raised in the staff report. Thank you for your time and please contact me at rroberts@quapaw.com or 501.371.0075 ext. 3 if the QQA can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Rhea C. Roberts
Executive Director