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For Immediate Release.

Reston Citizens Association supports Merchants' Action to Preserve Reston Town Center as a Welcoming Destination

Last week **Reston Citizens Association (RCA)** and the greater Reston community learned about **Jackson's Mighty Fine Foods (Jackson's)** lawsuit regarding the paid parking solution being implemented by Boston Properties (BP) at Reston Town Center. RCA also understands that in the next 30 days further such lawsuits could be filed on behalf of the nearly 25-member merchant's association as it explores its options and RCA wishes to announce its unqualified support to these efforts.

A group of RCA Directors for more than 12 months has tried to engage with Reston Town Center Management in order to find a compromise that would allow the Town Center to retain its character while respecting BP's development rights since the Town Center is in fact its private property.

During multiple conversations with BP Management, its PR firm, and a separate crisis management firm, RCA has raised several pertinent issues. Initially RCA on its own accord chose to keep the details of those conversations private. However, recent communications by BP has caused RCA to reconsider this position.

RCA has pointed out that many other shopping districts such as Mosaic, Fair Oaks, and Tysons Corner (a shopping area where an actual Metro station is currently open) do not have paid parking. Also, at a minimum, a parking system that permits free parking for the first three hours or so would allow Reston area residents to visit RTC for short shopping and dinners trips while still preventing the alleged parking abuse by commuters, the ostensible BP reason for paid parking.

BP has stated that it is committed to reinvesting the RTC paid parking revenues in Reston. If in fact paid parking is to remain in some form, RCA challenges BP to publicly commit the projected \$8 million annual revenues to community betterments and activities that benefit Reston and not simply to new commercial construction.

RCA makes this call because of the misinformation and untruths that BP provided to RCA. From the very beginning, knowing how central the cellphone app would be for the paid parking experience, RCA asked many questions regarding how the App would work. Despite the assurances that were given to RCA that the ParkRTC App would provide a very user-friendly experience, today it is clear this is patently not true.

As users of the ParkRTC App frequently spoke of the confusion and frustration about parking validations handled via the App, BP did not communicate clearly that merchants and restaurants are set up to validate only specific garages, thereby requiring patrons to move cars between garages if they desired to avail validated free parking. This problematic setup would create more traffic movement within RTC and cause more parking imbalances, the very things that BP claimed paid parking would avoid.

From a technology perspective, in response to a specific RCA query, BP representatives alluded that the ParkRTC was not an off-the-shelf solution, but was built internally. We now know this is not the case as BP has admitted publicly that the ParkRTC App is a “white label” parking app developed by Passport Inc. The ParkRTC App does not appear to conform to the best practices established by Google and Apple for their respective app stores, with the Google version of the app being a “port” of the Apple app and is many generations behind Google guidelines. This is not the state of the art experience that we were promised.

As a whole, the system is confusing, contradictory and subject of great frustration for users. Thus the RCA stands with merchants and the community in calling for paid parking to be scrapped or significantly overhauled immediately.

BP has in the past been a good and generous manager of the Reston Town Center and can be this again. RCA stands ready to work with BP to address its legitimate concerns about commuter parking while at the same time preserving the open and welcoming character of the Town Center that has made it such a centerpiece of our community and the greater region.

RESTON CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

RCA is a non-profit organization serving over 60,000 people who live in small tax district # 5. It was founded in 1967 to promote and protect Reston’s founding principles by serving as a non-partisan forum for all residents and as a community advocate with County and State government. RCA is the only community wide, non-partisan organization in which all Reston residents have a voice.

For more information, please visit RCA’s website www.rcareston.com