



Rev. Sarah N. Klaassen, Pastor

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November 5, 2018

Patrick Zenner  
Director, Planning and Zoning  
City of Columbia  
Columbia, Missouri 65201

Dear Mr. Zenner,

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Directors of Rock Bridge Christian Church to request an amendment/edit to the zoning code for religious organizations' structures located in R-1 zoning. We are requesting that religious structures be permitted to house a commercial kitchen for the purpose of supporting the mission of job training or a small-business (catering) start-up.

Rock Bridge Christian Church has a long history of allowing organizations to use our space as a part of our mission. We believe that our building should be in use seven days a week to not only maximize building use, but to assist community members in need. Because we have a commercial grade kitchen, we began exploring ways to make use of our kitchen space by allowing a member of our church who is unemployed to use our kitchen for a catering business. This member is also participating in the Missouri Women's Business Center program through Central Missouri Community Action. We have communicated with Ms. Sherry-Major, director of MWBC, and she has indicated that there is a shortage of available commercial kitchen space for use in Columbia. CMCA has provided a letter of support which is attached.

As the letter from CMCA demonstrates, the lack of commercial kitchen availability is a hinderance to those in the community trying to improve their employment situation. Additionally, the current R-1 zoning code limits religious organizations in the ways we can serve the community.

Ideally, Rock Bridge Christian Church would like to offer our kitchen as a quasi-commercial venture for those unemployed or looking to start a catering or meal preparation business. We believe this effort would support the City of Columbia's Strategic Priority outcomes of reducing the wage gap between white and minority populations as well as reducing the skills gap. We also are confident that other religious organizations may be exploring similar endeavors and thus, this amendment in the zoning code would further expand the supply of commercial kitchen availability and enable more Columbians to improve their educational and employment status.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for further information regarding this request.

Cordially,

Victoria Boyd-Kennedy  
Board President  
Rock Bridge Christian Church