September 1, 2026
Dear Members of the Planning Commission:

I am writing regarding the proposed conditional use for a boutique hotel at 163 N. Franklin Street. I live nearby and walk past this property almost every day. As a person who is blind and walks with a guide dog, I experience the streets and intersections of our neighborhood differently from someone traveling by car. I am particularly concerned about the potential increase in traffic and the effect it could have on pedestrians who rely on these streets to get around. I am not the only visually impaired pedestrian who regularly uses Franklin Street. Another blind neighbor uses a cane and an app to navigate independently and frequently walks along Franklin Street when going into town. For both of us, predictable traffic patterns and safe, navigable streets are particularly important. The proposed hotel would introduce a different pattern of vehicle activity, including guest arrivals and departures, drop-offs, deliveries and service vehicles. Given the one-way configuration of Franklin Street and the T-intersection at this location, I believe these potential impacts deserve careful consideration. I also question the premise that a boutique hotel is necessary to preserve this property. The house has been a residence for multiple decades. I understand that it has been characterized as abandoned and that there may be concerns about whether someone will purchase and rehabilitate it as a residence. But those concerns do not, in my view, establish that a special exception for a commercial lodging use is necessary. If the property is placed on the open market and offered as a residence, it should have the opportunity to find a buyer who recognizes its historic character and potential.

I respectfully ask the Planning Commission to carefully consider the traffic, pedestrian-safety, and neighborhood impacts of this proposal and to determine whether granting this special use is truly necessary to preserve the property. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Arthur Neil Cole
Delaware, Ohio