



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 2F
Government of the District of Columbia
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November 26, 2013

Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW
Suite 210S
Washington, DC 20001

Re. 1101 Rhode Island Avenue, NW
Square 310, Lots 33 & 807
BZA Variance and Special Exception Relief

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 18668
EXHIBIT NO. 29

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Dear Members of the Board:

Please be advised that ANC 2F, at its regularly scheduled November 6, 2013 public meeting, at which a quorum was present, voted (8-0-0) to support the variance and special exception relief requested in order to construct a mixed-use building at 1101 Rhode Island Avenue, NW. Specifically, the ANC approved the following motion:

“ANC 2F advises the Board of Zoning Adjustment to grant the following applied for relief for 1101 Rhode Island Avenue, NW: a special exception under section 411.11 of the D.C. Zoning Regulations for a penthouse composed of walls of varying heights; a variance from section 776 for an open court; a variance from section 2604.1 for FAR, a variance from section 2604.2 for lot occupancy; a variance from section 2101.1 for number of parking spaces, a variance from section 2115.1 for parking space sizes, and a variance from section 2116.12 for parking space setbacks. The ANC’s approval is contingent upon the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the community, as represented by the ANC, and the developer with regard to potential community impact surrounding construction by the December 3rd BZA hearing date ”

The proposed project will take a vacant lot at a key intersection in ANC 2F and turn it into a vibrant residential and commercial building which will help to activate the corner of 11th and Rhode Island, as well as weave together the growth immediately to the east and west of the lot. The developers, who live and work in close proximity to the project site, reached out to the ANC and immediate neighbors months in advance of the BZA hearing date in an effort to lend transparency to the project and to initiate a dialogue between the interested parties. This has resulted in a healthy give and take between the developers, neighbors, and ANC, as well as the signing of a developer-initiated MOU related to the project on November 26

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The developer's willingness to engage and respond to the concerns of the neighbors and the ANC stands as an example of the kind of good faith community engagement that results in smart development. Through emails, formal ANC meetings, and developer-hosted community town halls, the developer listened to the concerns of the community, provided evidence to support the claims underlying their variance requests, hired specialists to conduct parking and environmental studies at the behest of the community, made modifications and concessions based on community concerns, and offered to formalize community enhancement items in a legally binding MOU.

The variances of most immediate concern to the community and ANC were those relating to parking. The project proposes a single level of below grade parking, which would provide 14 parking spaces in response to the 19 required by the zoning ordinances. At the request of the community, the developers provided a detailed presentation about why adding an additional level of below grade parking on the site was not an economically feasible or logistically reasonable option. To offset the four spaces not provided in the building, the developer has agreed to close curb-cuts at the lot which will provide four additional on-street parking spaces, which will be open for use to not only new residents of the building, but to the community writ-large. In addition, the developer has agreed to pay for a one year car and bike share membership for each residential unit of the building. This due diligence and parking offset options satisfied the ANC's concerns relating to the requested parking variances.

The second most discussed variance was that relating to FAR. The developer plans to put a green roof on top of the below grade parking garage rather than to leave the garage open and exposed to the elements. The addition of a matter of inches to accommodate the roof put the project over the allowable by-right FAR limit. The developer has given the community and ANC assurances that the green roof over the parking garage will not be accessible to tenants and will not be used as a social gathering space. If the green roof were removed and the parking garage left exposed, then the project would be in compliance and would not require a variance. In light of the programmatic plan for the space, the nominal difference between the by-right height and proposed height of the green space, and the desirability of a green roof over no roof, it is the opinion of the ANC that this variance will allow for the creation of a public benefit at little to no impact to community.

The remaining variances – those relating to uneven height of the penthouse structures and an open court – are technical in nature and result from modifications to the original plans at the request of the community and the ANC. The penthouse variance will serve to reduce the impact on light and air to adjoining properties that would result from a single rooftop structure of uniform height, and the side yard variance will allow the width of the public alley to be increased by 1.5 feet in an effort to accommodate the interests of the neighboring properties that abut the alley.

On the basis of the foregoing, the Commission finds that there is no substantial detriment to the public good or adverse impact to the Zone Plan and that the development will substantially improve the use of the land. The ANC therefore urges the BZA, pursuant to District of

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Columbia Code §1-309.10, to accord great weight to its advice and grant the above referenced variance relief, pursuant to §3103 2 of the Zoning Regulations (11 DCMR §3103 2)

Very truly yours,

/s/

Matt Raymond
Chairman, ANC 2F

cc: *(via email only)*
ANC 2F Commissioners
Adam Beebe, Executive Director, ANC 2F
Kevin Siegler and Robin Bettarel, CAS Riegler
Evangeline Pelonis, neighbor
Chris Sondreal, neighbor