

My name is David Ansell, I live at 910 M Street NW. (within 100 yards of "The Gang of Three" Project) I am also a local Shaw blogger (www.badwolfdc.blogspot.com) and write regularly about Blagden Alley, as it goes through its transformation.

I have followed and written about the Gang of Three project since May 2013. Not all the articles were positive, as is often the case as projects progress, and as more is understood about the impact the project has on the neighborhood, especially in one that is so historically sensitive.

As a resident I am very pleased with the care that Douglas Development has taken to maintain the integrity of Blagden Alley and the street facing facades on 9th Street NW.

On the issue at hand: While there is no doubt that as any neighborhood goes through reconstruction and renovation (in this Shaw is no different) issues that have direct effect on residents gives pause, and require conversation to make sure that the community and the developers are on the same page. In the case of The Gang of Three project this has been the subject of much conversation, (CDC, ANC, BANCA community group) and in my opinion, the community fully backs Douglas Development and the project.

The parking issue for the Gang of Three project is really a minor issue, based on the available parking on the 9th Street NW block in question. Between M Street NW and N Street NW, there are approximately 24 parking spaces (mostly metered) on the West side and double that on the East side (also metered). Restaurants, local business et al, that have a high parking usage (eg. Longview Gallery), use available public parking at the O Street Market campus through a Valet Parking system, that has been successful. Parking demand for restaurants within Blagden Alley has not created any parking issues (Rogue24, La Colombe Coffee and Lost & Found). So there really is no high parking demand adjacent to the Gang of Three project.

Further, the choices for creating parking are very limited, and neither option (that have been discussed) seem to meet the neighborhood residents desires. A parking entrance on 9th Street would mean defacing the historic facades or an entrance within Blagden Alley would create an increase in vehicle traffic in the Alley itself, which I believe the residents would vigorously oppose. (The general feeling among residents is that vehicle traffic be reduced within Blagden Alley).

I fully support the application by Douglas Development for parking relief and encourage the BZA to approve this case.

David Ansell

