

I am sorry to be presenting this morning, late to the party.

I understand the competing goals, the need for speed, and ANG votes which have been taken

I submit that perhaps a small change in the plan, taking a wider view into consideration, will lead to an extraordinary benefit to both the developer and to the surrounding community.

There is a tree -- a willow oak -- in the center of this property -- a tree featured by Lady Bird Johnson's when she redesign the property in the 1960s as part of her Capitol Beautification Program. This tree is slated to be pulled down. I know that Insight Property Group realizes the value of this tree and they have made efforts to compensate for its destruction.

Also, abutting the IPG property is a under developed DPR/DGS property occupied by one of Washington's best community resources -- Peter Bug's Shoe Repair Academy, run for many years by Mr John Mathews, aka, Peter Bug.

I am proposing that IPG, DPR and DGS constitute a public/private partnership working with Mr Mathews and neighborhood leadership to save the tree and develop the DPR/DGS property

Saving that tree and creating a park integrated with the proposed 80 new homes obviously enhances the environmental benefit and the salability of the homes.

One way to save the tree is to move the six mews houses currently scheduled to go where the tree now stands to the southern end of 13th St, near E. This would constitute a property swap. This would allow the center of the property to be designed into a park space, turning the under developed portions into something the entire community could be proud of -- something up to the standards of the new IPG townhouses and condos

I realize that inserting a new idea at this moment in the process isn't easy. I'm asking each of you to dig deep, to consider something hard and deeply beneficial to my neighborhood -- at 17% Ward 6 has the lowest tree canopy in the city.

I ask that my government and IPG -- this very good development firm -- join me and other neighbors and build not just a good place, but participate in place making for the generations, a place that will be a model for the city and for the nation -- to see in this neighborhood what Mrs. Johnson saw in this same willow oak more than 60 years ago.

I ask for approval of the zoning, excepting for the six townhouses closest to where the tree is standing, until we can call the relevant parties together.