

Gasser-Ramsey
2922 Upton Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008-1151

June 22, 2006

To: Ms. Carol J. Mitten, ~~Chair~~, DC Office of Zoning and the Board Members

From: James R. Gasser and Gregory A. Ramsey

Re: Case 05-26

We are residents of 2922 Upton Street, NW, Washington, DC 20008. While the majority of the testimony during this session will be from the residents of Tilden Street, NW, the impact of this Clark Building (Clark Realty PUD proposal for 2950 Tilden Street, NW, case 05-06) will have farther reaching impacts than just to those residents. The Zoning Commission must take that into consideration. The scores of families who live on Upton Street (as well as the many surrounding neighborhood streets) will have the additional Clark traffic forced onto Upton and other streets by the approximate 110 vehicles garaged in this proposed multi-unit building.

At this time the residents of Upton Street are contending with a new addition at the Burke School which will add more than 50 more students and their vehicles to our street during the next few years. We also deal with the students from Howard University Law School, who refuse or are unable to pay for on campus parking; they park all day long on the north side of Upton Street as there is no zone 3 limitation on that side of the street. Furthermore, we have the Levine School of Music, the Embassy of the Netherlands, and Hillwood House Museum located on or near Upton Street. Each of these organizations adds scores of vehicles to our street daily. During major events, which they all have, the neighbors and families of Upton Street, often find not place to park, experience damage to their vehicles, and gridlock just trying to get away from the street in front of their homes.

In addition to the organizations listed above, there is a medical school located just around the corner from Upton Street in the Bank America building at Van Ness Street and Connecticut Avenue, NW. This school adds scores of vehicles which use the north side of Upton Street for parking as well as Howard's Law students. Classes for this medical school are scheduled for a morning session and an afternoon/evening session, daily adding commuter parking until 10:00 p.m. each week day.

Under the current plan for the new Clark Building, Clark postulates that only 12 % of the building's residents will drive to work. If Upton Street is any indication of the actual use of vehicles daily, it will, no doubt, be the majority of them as our neighbors do on Upton Street. Each of the new residents of the Clark Building will have to turn right onto Tilden Street, and cross or enter the Rock Creek National Park. Alternatively, if they are using Connecticut Avenue, they will have to make the "U" turn at 29th Street and attempt

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to drive back west on Tilden to enter Connecticut Avenue turning north or south at Tilden and Connecticut. As I have experienced in the times that I have driven to work, Tilden at present is clogged with vehicles driving out of Rock Creek National Park. I have personally witnessed drivers, becoming frustrated with the slow progress through the Tilden/Connecticut intersection, turning right (from Tilden) onto 29th Street, NW then left on Upton Street, NW and use Upton to gain access to Connecticut Avenue.

These added vehicles clog Upton Street which is already full of parents dropping their children at the Burke School, additional vehicles will only compound the problem when the new Burke building is completed thus increasing their student population to over 300 students by the school year 2006-07 and to 320 students by the year 2008-09. The present cap of Burke School is 270 students. Even with the new traffic pattern proposed by Burke with the new addition, more cars will be using Upton Street to return to Connecticut Avenue by turning right from the alley between the two Burke Buildings. Once that intersection is clogged they will begin using the alley that cuts between Upton and Tilden, turning right to enter Connecticut, adding even more cars to that clogged intersection. Adding anymore vehicles than the eight from the originally proposed Clark town houses would be more that the neighborhood can handle.

Understandably, Howard University Law School, Levine School of Music and the Hillwood House Museum, and the medical school will no doubt all increase their attendance and add even more vehicles to Upton Street. When is too much too much? Now! Please do not permit this new mega structure to be built adding more vehicles to clog our street and take away the pleasant quiet of our neighborhood.

The impact of additional vehicles by the existing institutions, besides making Upton Street a parking lot, have begun to take away the quiet enjoyment of the neighborhood we moved into 10 years ago. Upton Street has become just another congested urban cut through street. Clark's new monster building will only add to the vehicles on the Street.

Clark should do the right thing and build the number of buildings for which it purchased the land - eight townhouses. We have already had to replace two side view mirrors on our only vehicle and have witnesses several of our neighbors vehicles damaged or mirrors broken off due to the increased traffic on our street.

In summary, we do not need the possible addition of 110 more vehicles in our neighborhood. Clark purchased this property to build eight (8) townhouse on the less than a one (1) acre parcel. If that addition were to be built at the most there would be 16 to 24 added vehicles. Clark should do the right thing and build the number of buildings they purchased the land to build - eight townhouses!

In conclusion, I would ask the Zoning Commission member's one question: Why should the city change zoning to benefit Clarke Construction at the expense of the quiet enjoyment of the neighborhood and the area's environmental quality?