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May 24, 2006

Ms. Carol J. Mitten  
Chairman, DC Office of Zoning  
One Judiciary Square  
441 4<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Suite 210S  
Washington, DC 20001

Via Registered Mail, Return Receipt Requested

Re: Case 05-26

Dear Chairman Mitten:

I write to oppose the proposed PUD and map change being advocated by Clark Realty Capital, LLC, for 2950 Tilden Street, NW.

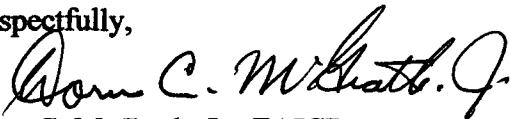
My principal objections to this egregious proposal are summarized in my attached one-page statement to the ANC-3F meeting on May 8, 2006.

In addition, I believe that the impracticality of having large moving vans and trash compactors provide service to this site is more than confirmed by reference to any edition of Architectural Graphic Standards by Ramsey and Sleeper, which shows that the average height of a moving van is 13'6" and that its turning radius is not less than 43'. Obviously, such vehicles would be able to make a U-turn through the relatively narrow median strip on Tilden Street east of the now-open site with great difficulty, including damage to parked cars and plantings.

Maneuvering vehicles in this location would present severe obstacles to through traffic and emergency vehicles on Tilden Street, which is already burdened by extensive parking by nearby schools, as well as legitimate residents of the area. The creation of additional obstacles to through traffic in an already congested street should not be encouraged by casual re-zoning in the name of Transit-Oriented Development, "Smart Growth," or other current clichés.

Thank you for the opportunity to present these comments for the record.

Respectfully,



Dorn C. McGrath, Jr., FAICP  
Professor Emeritus of Urban and Regional Planning  
The George Washington University

Attachment

ZONING COMMISSION  
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 05-26

EXHIBIT NO. 63

ZONING COMMISSION  
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DORN C. MCGRATH, JR., FAICP  
2710 BRANDYWINE STREET, NW  
WASHINGTON, DC 20008  
TEL: 202-966-9559 FAX: 202-966-0593

**STATEMENT TO ANC-3F MEETING  
May 8, 2006  
by Dorn C. McGrath, Jr., FAICP**

Madam Chairman, Commissioners, and Members of the Committee:

I am Dorn C. McGrath, Jr. I live at 2710 Brandywine Street, NW in the District. I am a retired professor of city and regional planning at The George Washington University. This is my neighborhood. I have traveled Tilden Street and Connecticut Avenue many, many times. I am concerned always about the exploitation and abuse of land anywhere in the District of Columbia. Accordingly, I feel compelled to comment on this misguided project.

I hope that my comments will not be met with clichés such as “transit-oriented development” (TOD) or “smart growth.” We live in a city where such clichés have become the justification for all manner of development that makes no sense at all from a practical point of view.

I have examined the plans that were circulated at this meeting. I note that the project's side driveway/alley involves planting of “large trees” in the narrow easement between the corner property and the proposed PUD. This will restrict the available width of the driveway/alley, which is only 16 feet. It seems clear that the specification of “large trees” fails to take into account either the planting box requirements for a root system consistent with large trees or the canopy height that would be required to enable a moving van to clear the trees without damaging branches. Nowhere in the plans is the height of a moving van specified.

No mention has been made of the service requirements of the driveway/alley for trash trucks. Having chaired the Mayor's Commission on Solid Waste Site Facilities Selection, I doubt very much that 8- or 12-ton trash compactors could successfully back into the driveway/alley to collect trash from the proposed PUD apartments without doing severe damage to the plantings, the building, or both. There is no guarantee that such trucks would be side-loading in any event, since the great majority of such trucks are end-loading trash compactors. Backing in several days a week is scarcely an efficient way to deal with the trash of 49 apartments.

Where would emergency vehicles actually go? It seems unlikely that they would drive down the driveway/alley to serve the rear of the building through the so-called green room, and we are advised that there is a break in grade at the end of the driveway/alley. It also seems unlikely that emergency vehicles could gain access to the front entrance to the building except by double-parking on Tilden Street. This, of course, would add to the insufferable congestion and lack of parking that already characterizes the street.

I have not seen the so-called traffic engineering study for the site, but I doubt that it took into account the congestion likely to result during nine months of the year from the Burke School addition only a block farther north.

I note that the proposed PUD building would lie entirely within the shadow of the adjacent 3833 Connecticut Avenue apartment building that stands less than 30 feet away, across a fire lane. This would place the so-called green room in total shade all day long; was this considered by the landscape architect in the selection of plants for this area?

It also appears that there are no serious amenities for this project being provided by the developer. The proposal to pay a pittance for rehabilitation of the Pierce Mill and make a donation to the Hearst Recreation Center is in no way proportional to the benefit to the developer that would be achieved by cramming this site.

Thank you for this opportunity to offer my comments.

