

**Grassroots Business Department**

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Tuesday, December 12, 2006

Carol Mitten, Chairman
Zoning Commission
441 4th Street NW, Suite 200 South
Washington DC 20001

Re: Square 54 (Case # 06-27)

Ms. Mitten,

I am writing to express my support for GW's Square 54 Project. As a business leader in the Foggy Bottom neighborhood, it is clear to me that this development would improve our area immensely.

Adding a dynamic urban town center with retail, residential and office would mean that all businesses in the neighborhood would benefit from the hundreds more people living and working here. An active and enlivened streetlife experience helps all of us.

GW has been engaged with the local business community and is always open to our input and concerns. I look forward to continuing this partnership and supporting Square 54's enhancement of our great neighborhood.

Sincerely,

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 66-27
ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 66-27
EXHIBIT NO. 66-27
EXHIBIT NO. 54

SQUARE 54 OVERVIEW

- Anchoring **Washington Circle** at the northwest corner of GW's Foggy Bottom campus and adjacent to both the Central Business District and the Foggy Bottom-GWU Metrorail Station, **Square 54** (the old GW hospital site) is envisioned as a **dynamic urban town center** – a mixed-use development of world-class design including **retail, residential and office** uses that will provide a variety of **neighborhood benefits** and an **active and enlivened streetlife experience**.

PROJECT BENEFITS: A WIN-WIN-WIN FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS

The Square 54 project will provide **shared and lasting benefits** for all interested stakeholders, including the following key **Community** benefits:

- retail that responds to the needs of members of the Foggy Bottom & West End communities – including a **neighborhood-serving grocery store**
- distinguished rental apartment living, including **affordable and workforce housing options**
- **below grade parking and loading facilities** that provide efficient delivery operations in an active urban street grid
- open spaces and **landscaping and streetscape improvements** that will enhance the public environment and pedestrian experience and create a unique neighborhood gathering place

Furthermore, for the **District**, the Square 54 development:

- provides opportunities for **new business development and job growth**
- **enhances the District's tax base** by bringing the 2.6 acre site on the property tax rolls
- encourages **new residents** to live in the District

For the **University**, the project:

- Provides a **key source of non-enrollment driven revenue** to support the University's core academic mission

- creates a vibrant “town center” to enhance the urban campus experience for those who work, study and live in Foggy Bottom.

And for **all stakeholders**, Square 54 will provide a **signature project of outstanding architecture and design** at the “front door” to the Foggy Bottom campus and the neighborhood and at premier District location, utilizing **environmentally sensitive design** and construction.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROPOSED CAMPUS PLAN AND SQUARE 54

- In order to **meet the University’s institutional needs** and also **respond to concerns raised by the members of the community and the Office of Planning**, the *Foggy Bottom Campus Plan: 2006 – 2025* sets forth a **Grow Up, Not Out** development strategy aimed at maximizing development opportunities **within the existing Campus Plan boundaries**
- By accommodating the University’s forecasted space needs on campus, the proposed Campus Plan allows for the **mixed-use commercial redevelopment of Square 54**.
- Square 54 is a **key component of GW’s integrated development strategy**: the proposed mixed-use development will **enhance the urban campus experience** for those who work, study and live in Foggy Bottom and provide a **key source of non-enrollment driven revenue** to support the University’s core academic mission.

PLANNING PROCESS

- For over two years leading up to the November 20, 2006 Zoning Commission hearing, GW has engaged in conversations with its neighbors about the future of the Foggy Bottom campus – including Square 54 –reaching out to hundreds of community members.
- Specifically, GW and the Office of Planning developed and engaged in an **informative and inclusive community-based planning process**. The process included **multiple opportunities for comment and feedback** throughout the development of the Plan, and the **resulting proposal for Square 54 reflects that input**. The community-based planning process included:
 - A series of **open community meetings** held during the summer and fall of 2005 **co-sponsored by DC Office of Planning, GW and ANC 2A**, and numerous small-group meetings with civic associations, businesses, churches, institutions, and neighborhood residents to **identify issues and seek suggestions** on the development plans as they evolved throughout the process.
 - A variety of information sessions – including brown bag lunches, student briefings, and faculty presentations – with hundreds of students, faculty, staff,

alumni, trustees, and other **members of the GW community** to elicit their input and feedback.

- A three-day **Urban Land Institute Panel** (which included two roundtable sessions for members of the community) convened to provide an independent evaluation of the **redevelopment potential of Square 54**, the results of which supported commercial mixed-use development of Square 54 as well as the University's "Grow Up, Not Out" development strategy.
- The University developed the www.neighborhood.gwu.edu website as resource for information regarding GW planning and development activities, including copies of the application materials submitted to the zoning commission, a **comprehensive "issues exhibit"** documenting stakeholder input and comment, and all presentations made throughout the community-based planning process. In addition, Boston Properties and KSI Services launched www.square54.com, a website dedicated to the Square 54 project.

WORLD CLASS DEVELOPMENT TEAM

- GW has partnered with industry leaders **Boston Properties, Inc.** and **KSI Services, Inc.** for the redevelopment of Square 54.
- The project team also includes world-renowned architecture firm **Pelli Clarke Pelli**, noted landscape planners **Sasaki and Associates** and nationally-recognized retail development consultants **Street-Works**.

SMART GROWTH & TRANSIT-ORIENTED PLANNING PRINCIPLES

- Given its **location adjacent to the active Foggy Bottom-GWU Metrorail Station**, the proposed design concept for Square 54 incorporates Smart Growth and transit-oriented development principles advanced by land use planning experts – including the DC Office of Planning.
- The proposed Square 54 Transportation Management Plan will further **encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation** for those who work, live and shop at the Square 54.

DESIGN RESPONSIVE TO COMMUNITY INPUT

The following elements have been included in the design concept for Square 54 as a result of **issues raised by the community** and the Office of Planning throughout the **collaborative planning process**:

- The height of the office building at the **Washington Circle** property line has been set to **90 feet**.

- The top floors of the office building at Washington Circle have been set back to provide articulation to the façade and break down the massing of the site.
- The project has been designed so that it presents as multiple separate and distinct structures and includes a detailed landscape and streetscape plan with multiple open space and public areas.
- The entire loading facility for Square 54 has been set below-grade to alleviate traffic congestion on neighboring city streets.
- 84,000 square feet of retail space has been included on the ground floor of both the office and residential buildings and also below-grade in the residential building at 22nd and I Streets – specifically including a neighborhood-serving grocery store, with appropriate parking and loading facilities.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DESIGN ELEMENTS

- Both Boston Properties and KSI as well as the architect team involved in the Square 54 project have a demonstrated record of environmentally-conscious design, construction, and facilities operation.
- A substantial portion of the 26,000 square foot internal courtyard (which is constructed above the internal loading facility) is being designed as a “green roof” – which help reduce the urban heat island effect and reduce the rate and quantity of stormwater runoff.
- “Green roof” structures have also been included on both the office and residential buildings. As mentioned above, these “green roof” components will help reduce the urban heat island effect and reduce the rate and quantity of stormwater runoff.
- In total, over half an acre of the Square 54 site will be designed as a “green roof”.
- Boston Properties and KSI have committed to achieve the equivalent of a LEED score of 16 points on both the office and residential components of the Square 54 project, utilizing a variety of LEED-recognized “green building” elements.

PUBLIC ENVIRONMENT AND STREETSCAPE

- The Square 54 project will provide substantial landscape and streetscape improvements aimed at creating a unique neighborhood gathering place, including a 60-foot wide retail plaza along I Street and an open and inviting internal courtyard.

PARKING AND TRAFFIC CONCERNS

- The entire loading dock facility for Square 54 has been **internalized and set below-grade** to help alleviate traffic congestion on neighboring city streets. This **below-grade loading dock facility** will service the office, residential, retail (including the grocery store) uses for the site.
- Parking for retail, residential, office and University users has been provided below grade.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

- The Square 54 project will have a significant and lasting **economic impact** on the District of Columbia, including an estimated:
 - **Nearly \$12 million in direct annual District tax revenue**, of which **\$4.6 million represents real estate taxes**.
 - The addition of over **400 new District residents**.
 - Over **2,000 full-time equivalent jobs**, including over **1,700 office jobs**, nearly **230 retail-related jobs**, and over **10 project support jobs**, responsible for some **\$140 million in annual District-based payroll** (this job generation is in addition to the **over 500 construction-related jobs** estimated to be created spanning each month of the project's 30-month construction period)
 - Over **\$75 million in additional economic activity** from visitors/vendors affiliated with the office, retail and residential components of Square 54
 - Over **\$4 million in direct District of Columbia revenue** from recordation fees and development processing/permitting fees

AFFORDABLE AND WORKFORCE HOUSING PROGRAMS

- **8% of the total residential units (27 units)** will be provided as **Affordable Dwelling Units** (based on 80% of the area median income).
- **5% of the total residential units (17 units)** will be provided as **Workforce Housing Units** (based on 100% of the area median income).