

TOM GRAHAM

D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING

2009 FEB - 9 AM 11:34

February 5, 2009

Anthony Hood, Chair
DC Zoning Commission
441 4th St NW
Washington DC 20001

Dear Mr. Hood,

I am writing to you about the Giant PUD; Case 08-15. While I strongly support the overall goals for redevelopment of this two block site with a revitalized neighborhood commercial center including a new grocery store and other retail, I have several major concerns with the plan as it currently exists.

The PUD request goes far beyond the intentions of the Comprehensive Plan, existing zoning and the neighborhood overlay and I respectfully request the Zoning Commission address these concerns before granting the extensive exemptions requested in the PUD.

My concerns are as follows:

1. Traffic flow and parking. Despite numerous attempts to get answers at public forums, there is little known about how traffic around this project will be handled and mitigated. This is a residential neighborhood but the scale of the project will create significantly more traffic. Neighbors on Idaho Street, behind the proposed Giant will be particularly impacted as a new loading area will be literally in their backyard with access along their front and side yards.

Similarly, the parking for this project is inadequate for the scale of retail space, especially for the north block of the project. None of this seems well planned out or fair.

2. The project does not honor the limits and intentions of the Comprehensive Plan, existing zoning, and the neighborhood overlay to create a neighborhood-serving shopping district with a variety of retail establishments. While I support a larger scale project than would be allowed under current zoning, I believe the scope of the existing project goes too far beyond these regulations. While this is subjective,

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 08-15
EXHIBIT NO. 09

Page Two
Anthony Hood, Chair
DC Zoning Commission

you and the Zoning Commission have the expertise to objectively determine what would be appropriate in a historically protected neighborhood like Cleveland park.

The developer has leveraged the desire for a new grocery store to the point that neighbors (including myself) would be willing to accept the Empire State Building in exchange for a clean grocery store. It is my hope that the Zoning Commission can bring an objective perspective to the debate and negotiate a project that respects current regulations while simultaneously granting fair exemptions from them.

3. The plan is simply too large in scale and density to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and address my other two concerns. There is little green space in the plan, the south side grocery store is enormous and the north side retail and housing is too tall. The scale of the project also indicates a heavy reliance on automobile traffic rather than local foot traffic but without adequate parking or traffic management. Slightly scaling down the entire project in height and density, would make this a more appropriate project for the neighborhood, would mitigate many of the neighbor's concerns and be more consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, existing zoning, and the neighborhood overlay.

With a little compromise, the developers could address these concerns and still have a very commercially viable project. I hope that you and the Zoning Commission will be able to guide the developers to a resolution within the spirit of the Comprehensive Plan, existing zoning, and the neighborhood overlay.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Graham', with a long, horizontal, wavy line extending to the right.

Tom Graham