

Carl Roller
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February 10, 2009

VIA FACSIMILE TO (202) 727-6072

Anthony Hood, Chair
DC Zoning Commission
441 Fourth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Re: ZC Case Number 08-15

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO.

08-15

EXHIBIT NO.

118

2009 FEB 10 PM 1:25

Dear Chairman Hood:

I am writing in support of the PUD application in Case Number 08-15. My husband and I moved to Washington, DC in late 2007 and purchased a condominium in McLean Gardens, located about two blocks from the site in question. One of the major motivating factors for purchasing a home where we did was the news that we would soon have a new, modern grocery store in the neighborhood and the current store, along with the vacant G.C. Murphy's, would be torn down. We believed that the completion of the project would improve our property value, something that we are particularly conscious of given that the value has, in fact, declined in the one-and-a-half years since we purchased due to the depressed housing market. I have since learned that this "new, modern grocery store" has been subject to debate and delays for more than eight years and that its construction was anything but certain. It is time for this project to move forward, and for the delays to end.

I have attended several public meetings on this topic, and have heard all the complaints: traffic will be terrible, parking will be terrible, the character of the neighborhood will be destroyed, our homes will be damaged, and so on. Very rarely have I heard any of those people offering complaints also offer suggestions or reasonable compromises. For many years, Stop and Shop has been working with the community to try to address the concerns as they've been raised. Parking has been moved underground, double the requisite spaces are being provided for residential units, multiple traffic studies have been made at Stop and Shop's expense so that appropriate traffic calming and mitigation measures can be undertaken, and the plan and layout of the buildings have been significantly modified by taking community input into consideration. It seems to me that Stop and Shop has bent over backwards to accommodate all the reasonable concerns voiced by the community, yet we continue to hear an unending string of, "Yes, but..."-concerns and complaints. It is time to move forward.

As a resident of McLean Gardens, I know first-hand how difficult parking can be. Every night around 9:00 p.m. I try to find on-street parking and am usually forced to park three or four blocks away. I also know how bad traffic can be. Every day when walking my dog, I see vehicles cutting through at unsafe speeds on Newark Street to get from Wisconsin to Massachusetts Avenues, oblivious to the children and dogs in the neighborhood. But these are not issues caused by the existing grocery store, nor are these issues that will be made worse by a new store or issues that are the responsibility of Stop and Shop to resolve. They are community issues and are simply a fact of living in an urban environment.

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You can never please everyone. Whether the new Giant is built or it isn't, people will be upset. It is incumbent on the city to identify what will be best for the neighborhood overall, and I have trouble seeing how the existing buildings, with their vacant storefronts and dilapidated appearance are anything but a blight.

Please approve Stop and Shop's PUD application and allow the project to move forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carl Roller', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Carl Roller