

Oral Testimony of Robert Kerr
in favor of the Stop & Shop/Giant PUD application (case number 08-15)
before the District of Columbia Zoning Commission
April 6, 2009

Good evening Mr. Hood and members of the Zoning Commission. My name is Robert Kerr and I am a 17 year resident of Cleveland Park. I live within a quarter mile of the proposed development and support the application. I believe the proposal is reasonable—i.e., it fits within the historic neighborhood; responsive—i.e., accommodates a multitude of neighborhood demands; and, desirable—i.e., provides a useful and beneficial anchor to the community. I believe common sense dictates approval.

Why approve the PUD? For a variety of reasons, among them that the proposal:

- benefits or does not harm the vast majority of those who live near the development;
- is consistent with the District's Comprehensive Plan;
- acknowledges that we do in fact live in an urban area and that walking access to commercial services is ordinary and reasonable;
- is supported Counsel Member Cheh, the DC Office of Planning, the McLean Gardens Board of Directors, some 175 members of AWARE, and unanimously by ANC 3C;
- is the result of extensive dialogue between Giant and local residents;
- provides workforce housing;
- includes green design; and, as an added bonus,
- provides valuable construction jobs in a down economy.

Considering the common good, does it make sense to scuttle the development due to parochial concerns:

- the president of a local community association, after applying for party status opposing the PUD, rounds up 32 votes at a meeting four days prior to the first Zoning Commission hearing?
- roughly a dozen members of an *ad hoc* group are concerned about a few extra cars traveling on their block and have commissioned an ostensibly independent traffic study?
- a handful of residents on an adjacent block are concerned non-residents may park on "their" block or the highly unlikely event that a delivery truck might travel down "their" block?
- a few homeowners adjacent to the Second District Police Station dislike the loading dock design, which Giant has significantly modified in response to those very concerns?

Considering the common good, does it make sense to turn away Giant's investment because of concerns of questionable merit? Is it reasonable to:

- characterize the 140 ± residences as "massive" and "neighborhood changing" in a community of 40,500+ within a one mile radius of Newark and Wisconsin?
- suggest the current proposal is not—but should be—perfect in every dimension?

I suggest to you Mr. Chairman and members of the Zoning Commission that the answer to all of the above questions is no. Giant has worked with the community for roughly ten years, has made many alterations to its original plan, and has demonstrated the patience of Job. Frankly I am astounded the company remains committed to the multimillion dollar investment.

ZONING COMMISSION

CASE No. 08-15

EXHIBIT No. 195

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I ask you to please consider the merits of the proposal, its overwhelming support, and the common sense reasons in its favor. Ultimately, we cannot allow perfect to be the enemy of very good. The proposal is reasonable, responsive and desirable and I urge you to approve the PUD with all due haste. We needn't wait any longer than we already have.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.