

Written Testimony of Serena Viswanathan

In Support of the Friendship-Macomb SC Inc. (Giant Foods) PUD Case No. 08-15

Thank you Chairman Hood and Members of the Zoning Commission for the opportunity to speak in support of this PUD.

I have lived in McLean Gardens, the neighborhood immediately to the west of the Giant supermarket, since 1999, and before that lived in Woodley Park since the mid-90s. At the time I bought my condominium in 1999, I was told by people who lived in the area that new development in the neighborhood was planned. I moved to the area expecting change, but ten years later, the neighborhood looks even worse than before, and I am still waiting for the promised revitalization.

With the support of the DC Office of Planning and the DC Department of Transportation, as well as ANC 3C's resolution in support of this project, I am pleased to finally see progress toward this goal.

I support the Giant development because I believe in that our area of DC should be a pedestrian- and public transit-friendly neighborhood. In my first ten years as a DC resident, I did not own a car and relied on walking, Metrorail, Metrobus, and car-sharing for my transportation needs. I stayed car-free for as long as I could in the hope that new development and businesses would open nearby.

Unfortunately, I now find myself driving my car more frequently due to the lack of amenities in the Wisconsin Avenue corridor nearby. Ironically I can find more lively street life in places like Bethesda and Arlington, rather than right here in my own city neighborhood.

In my opinion, the new Giant development will be an asset to the community. Personally, I look forward to being able to shop, dine, and do my daily errands right in my neighborhood, without having to drive. I feel safer walking around at night with busy sidewalks and streets. I believe that bringing more residents to our neighborhood, which has such potential, will be a positive change. And finally, I believe my property values will rise with proximity to a new supermarket, attractive architecture, and a variety of businesses. Therefore, I request that the Zoning Commission approve the PUD for this project.

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