

THE PALISADES CITIZENS ASSOCIATION



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November 14, 2008

Jerrily R. Kress
Director
Office of Zoning
441 4th Street, NW
Suite 200/210 South
Washington DC 20001

Re: Case No. 08-21 (Athena Group, LLC – Consolidated Review of a Planned Unit Development and Related Map Amendment @ Square 1356)

Dear Ms. Kress:

The Palisades Citizens Association (PCA) wishes to participate as a party to the above referenced case. Since the proposed development falls within the membership and service area of the PCA, our members and organization would be significantly affected by the proposed zoning action than other persons in the general public. The PCA is composed of approximately 1200 households who live in the area of the District bounded by Foxhall Road, Loughboro Road, and the Potomac River. Our monthly newsletter is sent to over 1500 households in the Palisades.

Here follows required information as part of our request:

(a) *The organization's name, address, and daytime telephone number:*

Palisades Citizens Association
PO Box 40603
Palisades Station
Washington DC 20016
202.363.7441
202.363.7441 (fax)
palisadesdc@hotmail.com

(b) *A request to appear and participate as a party:*

Since the proposed development falls within the membership and service area of the PCA, our members and organization would be significantly affected by the proposed zoning action than other persons in the general public. Therefore, the PCA wishes to participate as a party to the case before the Zoning Commission.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO.

EXHIBIT NO.

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(c) Whether the person will appear as a proponent or opponent of the application;

The PCA will appear as a proponent of the application with conditions.

(d) Whether the person will appear through legal counsel, and if so, the name and address of legal counsel;

The PCA will not appear through counsel.

(e) A list of witnesses who will testify on the person's behalf;

Witness: William Spence Spencer, PCA President

(f) A summary of the testimony of each witness;

The PCA held a general membership vote on November 12 to determine its final position on the application; members opted to support the application with several conditions attached. These include:

- Limits on building height;
- Appropriate setbacks, demarcation, and protections for previously existing wetlands;
- Wider interior roads and provision of a turn-around for emergency vehicles;
- Increased parking for residents, visitors, service and delivery vehicles;
- Improvements on the quality and appearance of affordable housing units;
- Placing caps on the total amount of impervious lot coverage;
- Preservation of currently proposed green spaces and provision for additional green spaces;
- Applicant development and implementation of a beautification plan for MacArthur Boulevard, from Foxhall Road to Q Street; and
- An ongoing commitment from the developer to consult and collaborate with the PCA on all traffic issues, including the timing of construction traffic.

The PCA membership wishes to associate itself with the similar resolution passed by Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D, and notes that by supporting the application with strong conditions, the developer can build a financially viable townhome development, while adding to the fabric of the Palisades as a neighborhood.

The PUD process is designed to encourage "high quality developments that provide public benefits." We urge the Commission to consider ways to improve the "benefits" side of the PUD equation, and mandate amenities that can make a difference across the Palisades neighborhood. These amenities could follow

suggestions made as part of the Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D resolution.

This project, for better or for worse will have a significant impact on not just the lower MacArthur Boulevard area, but across the Palisades. The application's proposed high density, issues surrounding the presence of wetlands, stormwater management questions, and the impacts of additional traffic and density on an already congested MacArthur Boulevard all raise questions across the neighborhood. By opting for support for the application with conditions attached, we seek to address these fundamental concerns, while preserving options for development to occur in a neighborhood-friendly way, in conformity with our city's requirements, while achieving the developer's financial goals.

(g) An indication of which witnesses will be offered as expert witnesses, the areas of expertise in which any experts will be offered, and the resumes or qualifications of the proposed experts:

No expert witnesses will be offered.

(h) A written statement setting forth why the person should be granted party status, including reference to the following:

- (1) The property owned or occupied by the person, on in which the person has an interest, that will be affected by the action requested of the Commission;*
- (2) The legal interest the person has in said property, such as owner, tenant, trustee, or mortgagee;*
- (3) The distance between the person's property and the property that is the subject of the application before the Commission;*
- (4) The economic, social, or other impacts likely to affect the person and/or the person's property if the action requested of the Commission is approved or denied; and*
- (5) An explanation of how the person's interest as identified in response to paragraph (4) would likely be more significantly, distinctively, or uniquely affected in character or kind by the proposed zoning action than those of other persons in the general public.*

The Palisades Citizens Association serves the area bounded by Foxhall Road, Loughboro Road, and the Potomac River in Northwest DC, and has approximately 1200 households as members. The PCA's monthly newsletter is sent to approximately 1500 households in the neighborhood. The PCA, founded in 1916, exists to make the neighborhood a better place to live through advocacy and implementation of community initiatives. The PCA has the following elected officers:

- William Spence Spencer, President;
- Jay Rouse, First Vice President;

- William Slover, Second Vice President;
- William Barnard, Treasurer; and
- Christine Hackett, Secretary

The site of the proposed project falls within the membership and service area of the PCA, and our members and organization would be significantly affected by the proposed zoning action than other persons in the general public. The PCA represents both neighbors that live close to the project, as well as other members who live in the greater Palisades area.

This project will have impacts that will not just affect the immediate area, but also the Palisades neighborhood writ large. Traffic impacts alone will have a unique effect on neighbors. Real estate values will be affected depending on the design and land use of the project. Potential environmental impacts will directly affect the local community. Stormwater management issues could be significant. Most of all, a project of this scope has the ability to change the character of the Palisades as a neighborhood.

The Palisades Citizens Association appreciates the Zoning Commission's consideration of our request for party status, and notes that approval of a Map Amendment to the R-5-A residential zone and a PUD would bring significant and distinct change to the surrounding neighborhood. We look forward to your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



William Spence Spencer
President

Cc: Gene Tucker, Canal View Homeowners Association
Robert Avery, Foxhall Citizens Association
Betsy Sandza, ANC 3D Chair
Stuart Ross, ANC 3D
Anne Heuer, ANC 3D
Alma Gates, ANC 3D
Ann Haas, ANC 3D
Tom Smith, ANC 3D
Nan Wells, ANC 3D
Lee Minichiello, ANC 3D
Gary Cohen, Willco Residential
Phil Feola
Maxine Brown Roberts, DC Office of Planning