

THE PALISADES CITIZENS ASSOCIATION



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November 20, 2008

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

2008 NOV 20 PM 3:53

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U.C. OFFICE OF ZONING

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

Dear Ms. Kress:

As mentioned in our letter to you of November 14, the Palisades Citizens Association (PCA) determined its formal stance on the above referenced case through a general membership vote. This letter is to formally inform you and other interested parties of our support for the application, subject to the following conditions:

- That any approval by the Zoning Commission of the application be granted only to The Athena Group, LLC and be made nontransferable;
 - Building Number Three shall be 38 feet and three stories high to the top of the roof; all other buildings and units shall be limited to 40 feet and three stories in height;
 - In advance of construction and in cooperation with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and the District of Columbia's Department of the Environment, the entire delineated wetland area shall be reflagged. The delineated area, including the stream, shall be flagged and protected in perpetuity through a conservation easement by a uniform setback of 25 feet from all structures and other human interference from the outermost wetland boundary, in the event there is disagreement on such boundary;
1. The width of interior roads shall be a minimum of 25 feet;
 2. An ample turn-around shall provide access for all types of emergency vehicles;
 3. The site shall contain 25 on-street parking spaces for guest vehicles and service and delivery vehicles and each unit shall have two parking spaces;

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District of Columbia

CASE NO.

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EXHIBIT NO.

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4. The two affordable housing units shall be indistinguishable from other housing within the development;
5. The total amount of impervious lot coverage shall not be greater than 50 percent for the entire project;
6. By means of a covenant on the title to the land, the proffered green spaces (i.e., the central plaza, butterfly garden, rain garden and walking path), identified by dimensions and GPS and having a combined total of 13,500 square feet, shall be protected in perpetuity as open space and non-developable land open to the public;
7. That the developer shall not be limited to his design that includes a fountain in the central park; and
8. That the developer will collaborate closely with representatives of the Palisades Citizens Association to mitigate traffic impacts over the life of the project and especially during construction.

At a minimum, amenities shall include:

- a) An additional 5,000 square feet of green space on site shall be protected and open to the public;
- b) Hiring a landscape architect to design and oversee implementation of the beautification of lower MacArthur Boulevard—that is the area along MacArthur Boulevard from its intersection with Foxhall Road to its intersection with Q Street; and
- c) Contributions to organizations that improve the quality of life in the Palisades and will enhance the project.

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, our hope is that 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 continue to 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.

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 raised 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. We look forward to discussing these matters on December 1.

Sincerely,



William Spencer
President

Cc: Mary Cheh, Council Member Ward Three
Maxine Brown-Roberts, Office of Planning
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