

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
Zoning Commission



November 12, 2009

Charles Murn, President  
Michigan Park Citizens Association  
4407 14<sup>th</sup> Street, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20017

**Re: Zoning Commission Case No. 08-24 – Camden Development (Consolidated PUD & Related Map Amendment)**

Dear Mr. Murn:

The Office of Zoning is in receipt of your letter dated October 5, 2009 (but received in our office on October 26<sup>th</sup>), regarding the above-referenced case.

The Zoning Regulations are strict regarding the timeliness of submissions into case records. The record on this case was closed on October 5, 2009, with only specific additional submissions requested by the Commission due on October 26, 2009. Your letter was received after the record closed. On November 9<sup>th</sup>, the Commission decided not to reopen the file to receive your letter. Accordingly, we are returning your letter to you.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (202) 727-0340.

Sincerely,

Sharon S. Schellin  
Secretary to the Zoning Commission

Enclosure

ZONING COMMISSION  
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 08-24  
EXHIBIT NO. 60

5 October 2009

Director, Office of Zoning  
441 Fourth Street NW, Suite 200/210-S  
Washington DC 20001

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RECEIVED  
D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING

RE: Planned Unit Developments Nos. 08-24 and 08-24A/04-25

Dear Zoning Commission Members:

Planned Unit Developments Nos. 08-24 and 08-24A/04-25 ("PUD"), submitted by Abdo Development and The Trustees of Catholic University of America ("Abdo"), represent an improvement over the provisions of the Brookland/CUA Metro Station Small Area Plan ("SAP"). While the area included within the PUD is not within Michigan Park, it abuts the portion of Michigan Park within the area of the SAP. Therefore, for better or worse, it represents for the residents of Michigan Park and for the Michigan Park Citizens Association ("MPCA") a significant de facto prototype for any future development under the SAP in Michigan Park. For that reason, the MPCA views the PUD as directly affecting our community's interests. By the same token, MPCA's position on the PUD derives from our position on the SAP.

Some Concerns Met by the PUD

Abdo's details in the PUD are in many ways commendable. In several blocks, the height of proposed townhouses is generally below that allowed by the SAP, which the MPCA viewed as excessive in areas abutting existing residential structures. The quality of building design and construction surfacing materials is generally as high as the character of the existing structures requires, where they are shown. Further, the PUD conforms to the disappointing requirements of the SAP in reconnecting the street grid in the affected area.

More specifically, the PUD meets the MPCA's demands for provision of place and space west of the Metro station for drop-off of passengers by various shuttle buses serving institutions on the west side of the railroad tracks. While the MPCA sought a rezoning instead of the process for a small-area plan around the Metro station, the PUD does include zoning changes and acceptable restrictions on allowable uses applicable for the life of the PUD, while offering at least a meager community amenities package.

**MPCA Officials**

Charles Murn, *President* – David Conrad, *1<sup>st</sup> Vice President* – Paul Wood, *2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President*  
Ann Gribbin, *Secretary* – Beulah Sutherland, *Treasurer* – Jessica Hanff, *Editor*  
Roxanne Carter, Barbara Henderson, W. Thomas Lavash, Elizabeth McGowan, *Members-at-large*  
Gwendolyn Means, *Sergeant-at-Arms*

ZONING COMMISSION  
District of Columbia

CASE NO.

EXHIBIT NO.

*08-24*  
*100*

Several Existing Owners Impacted by Abutting Building Height

Of particular concern for the MPCA in the SAP is the allowed heights and limited requirements for step-downs from those building heights. That concern translates into opposition to insufficient step-downs in a couple of instances. Several owners of existing residential structures on both sides of Lawrence Street NE between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Streets NE face excessive heights due to insufficient or nonexistent step-downs. While the nonexploitation of the maximum allowed building height is generally commendable where it occurs, the fact remains that under the PUD, the two-story structure on the south side of Lawrence on the corner with 7<sup>th</sup> Street faces three- and four-story townhouses to the west and a four-story step-down across Lawrence. Certainly, the four-story buildings in these oppositions are well beyond the scale of the existing structure.

The four-story end of the proposed structure on the corner of Lawrence and 7<sup>th</sup> Street also abuts an existing house on the same north side of Lawrence that is only two stories, with two other structures to the east having three and two stories, respectively. Those houses also back up to towering buildings through the block that face Monroe Street. In both instances, these height differentials are not acceptable to the MPCA. They are especially hard to accept, given that proposed structures along Monroe Street and along 6<sup>th</sup> Street that do not abut existing residential structures do not appear to have taken advantage of allowed heights under the SAP. This fact suggests that utterly maximizing heights is not essential to the financial success of the PUD. Therefore, considerations of scale and proportion must be given expression in the named instances, in favor of lowering these structures so near shorter existing residential structures.

In closing, I would like to thank the Zoning Commission for the opportunity to submit these comments for the record.

Sincerely,



Charles Murn  
MPCA President

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