

Frederick Douglass
Community Improvement Council
The Civic Association for Old Anacostia, Its Historic District and Surrounding Areas

URGENT FAX

Documents Including Cover ~~[11]~~ 12 5/7/99*

Date: 5.6.99

OFFICE OF ZONING
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
'99 MAY -7 P3:37

To: Mr. Hart Fax# 727-6072
Board of Zoning Adjustment

From: Carolyn Johns Gray, President Tele: 678-3532

MESSAGE/SUBJECT MATTER:

Written testimony from the association.

* Added copy of Activity report which reflects OK for transmittal to Zoning

If there is a problem with this transmission call 678-3532

BZA
CASE No. 16457
EXHIBIT No. 52

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16457
EXHIBIT NO.52

ACTIVITY REPORT

TIME : 05/07/1999 08:26
NAME :
FAX : 2026786887
TEL : 2026783532

DATE	TIME	FAX NO./NAME	DURATION	PAGE(S)	RESULT	COMMENT
04/13	13:37	3016276927	29	01	OK	TX ECM
04/13	17:11	7757477	01:05	02	OK	TX ECM
04/14	09:24	7248156	32	01	OK	TX ECM
04/16	07:58	8897339	51	01	OK	TX
04/16	08:02	4425198	43	01	OK	TX ECM
04/16	08:13	7248055	43	01	OK	TX ECM
04/16	09:23	8898732	50	01	OK	TX
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04/17	22:09	*823015055109	01:06	02	OK	TX ECM
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04/17	23:19	*823015055109	01:15	02	OK	TX ECM
04/19	11:09	*823015055109#	22	01	OK	TX ECM
04/19	16:44	7248965	02:25	05	OK	TX
04/20	12:47	3017723119	01	00	CANCEL	TX
04/20	12:52	3017723119	22	01	OK	TX ECM
04/20	12:52	3017723119	02:01	02	OK	TX ECM
04/22	13:53	7037501943	06:38	05	OK	TX ECM
04/22	16:16	7035243907	01:17	02	OK	TX ECM
04/27	08:07	4429451	47	02	OK	TX ECM
04/29	13:14	1 502 327 5326	01:03	02	OK	RX ECM
04/29	13:19	19042885067	01:08	02	OK	TX ECM
05/02	22:16	7033796599	05:08	08	NG	TX
05/03	15:37	7271687	45	01	OK	TX
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05/06	15:12	7276072 ZONING	05:58	11	OK	TX ECM

BUSY: BUSY/NO RESPONSE
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Frederick Douglass
Community Improvement Council
The Civic Association for Old Anacostia, Its Historic District and Surrounding Areas

2009 18th Street, S.E. - Anacostia, D.C. 20020-4201
Telephone: (202)678-3532 Facsimile: (202)678-6887

TESTIMONY BEFORE
Board of Zoning Adjustment
Public Hearing on Application No. 16457
Wednesday, May 5, 1999 - 1:00 p.m.
441 4th Street, N.W. - 2nd Floor Hearing Room

SCHEDULED TO TESTIFY: Bernard A. Gray, Sr., General Counsel[1]
Frieda Murray, Member and Preservationist[2]
Carolyn Johns Gray, President

1 Rental Housing Hearing Continued to 1:45pm Unable to testify
2 Had an emergency Unable to testify

TESTIMONY WILL BE IN OPPOSITION ON BEHALF OF THE COMMUNITY
Please note the association does not object to new housing, just the congestion of it.

OTHER TESTIMONY: Our association supports the position taken by the Fairlawn Citizens Association relative to the apartments to be built in Ward 8 which will have a direct impact upon our community.

INFORMATION RE ANC 6C: Comm. Robert Adams, Chairman, nor any other officer of ANC 6C prepared testimony on behalf of the community even though the Commission was obligated to do so. Rev. Oliver Johnson, Commissioner for the area in which the proposed housing will be located, will testify as a Single Member District Commissioner, in opposition, on behalf of his constituency.

REQUESTED DOCUMENTS NOT RECEIVED FROM DEVELOPER:

1. Environmental Impact Statement
2. Soil Borings
3. Statistical Report on Public Transportation
4. Traffic Impact Survey Rec'd 5/4/99
5. Student Impact on the Local Schools
6. Name of Developer Replacing Anacostia Economic Development Corp.

My name is Carolyn Johns Gray, a native Washingtonian, a resident of 23 years in Ward 6/Anacostia residing at 2009 18th Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. All of my 37 years of marriage, my husband and I have lived east of the Anacostia River and worked in the community.

I am the president of the Frederick Douglass Community Improvement Council, the civic association for Old Anacostia, its historic district and surrounding areas. The housing planned for Ward 6 is within our boundaries.

Our association met with Mr. Knapp of KSI at our February meeting where representatives from Environment Justice, Environmental Protection Agency were also guests speakers. He was met with opposition and concerns relative to the environment, schools, limited services, bus/train, traffic, congestion of houses and apartments, cost of housing and the scheduled developer of the houses having already developed substandard housing in our community.

We apprised Mr. Knapp of the community's desire to have developers give back to the community when they come to us for support. A meeting room was offered, but we have plenty of places to meet. It was felt that the club room for the gated community should be a recreation center for the community.

The drawings here today were not shared with us. We saw some, but they were more like detached town houses than these reflected today. These drawings do not reflect that some of the houses will be built in what appears to be an alleyway. They have failed to show all of the apartments [most of them vacant] that surround their planned development.

We made it clear we were not in opposition of new houses, we wanted to see more land around the houses and definitely no apartments. We shared with him the limited services presently in the community and that the shopping center he kept referring to with the Safeway was actually in Ward 7 and a good distance from our community.

CONGESTED HOUSING: We are concerned that if too many houses are built, it will cause parking problems, fumes from the automobiles that will hang in the air over the community; overcrowd our schools, make an already deplorable public transportation problem worse and exacerbate the present traffic congestion.

We don't want these houses to cause us to lose our park. The houses are going to be built around the park and we fear the same thing happening to our park that happened to Lorton Penitentiary.

We are concerned about the houses being built on land that has been waterlogged for over 20 years. Too many houses crammed into such a small space creates a haven for drug dealers and prostitutes. Drug dealers, pimps and prostitutes have moved from northwest into our community and are more sophisticated in their trades

The Environmental Protection Agency staff met with our civic association the same night as Mr. Knapp and warned us about the impact certain types of development have on communities and how communities perceived as being poor receive the most violations.

It would be nice if developers would develop in our communities as the Japanese do in their country, keeping in mind a community needs to be healthy, functionable and contain needed services.

This company acts as if it could care less about anything but its profit. It has ignored the wishes of the residents, the city council and mayor as far as the apartments are concerned.

INADEQUATE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION: It has been an annual fight with the city to get adequate, clean and safe buses for our community. While the bus schedules reflect 15 minutes, the actual waiting time is almost half an hour. Without notice to the community schedules change to longer periods in between. Any development will add to the problem, but less houses and no apartments will greatly decrease the impact.

TRAFFIC BACKUP: Good Hope Road stays congested during and other than rush hour. During the rush hour, many of our streets within the community are also congested with one automobile behind another.

ENVIRONMENT: The rush hour traffic leaves a cloud of fumes over our community every morning and every evening. 37 houses with garages, coupled with the poor public transportation, will surely increase the number of automobiles and make a thicker cloud of fumes over our community.

The Anacostia Garden Club plants trees in the community and the developers cut trees down. What was done in the Ward 8 portion should have been criminal, trees just destroyed. KASS will cut down trees that clean our air. We are not saying they cannot build on their land, but to cut the trees and replace them with matchbox houses will affect our air quality.

We fear mud slides from this development because of the configuration of the property, the hill will have to be flattened. We do not want this dirt deposited in our community. We already have members whose homes have been destroyed by mud slides because AEDC made arrangements for METRO dirt [during the time the Anacostia Subway Station was being built] to be deposited behind the homes located in the 2200 block of Hunter Street, S.E.

This mud took over the homeowners' yards and then broke the windows and flowed into their basements. It has been a nightmare for these people since the dirt was placed behind their homes.

STREET/SIDEWALK: At the present time there is no sidewalk on U or 18th Streets which adds to a sort of country look. If sidewalks are put in, will the land be taken from the developer or adjacent properties. What happens if the city widens the street? The drawing reflects a street for access to the houses. What affect will this street have on the existing street and the adjacent park?

STRUCTURAL/LOT CONFIGURATION: The developer is cramming houses in a snakelike formation as if in a subdivision in Maryland or Virginia instead of planned blocks in the District of Columbia. The streetscape will be different from all other properties in the area. Some of the houses are mashed in between the park and the back of existing apartment buildings. Houses in the community are facing the street.

SIZE OF HOUSES: The houses are too small to afford stability because people are seeking space in their homes and their yards. Many residents have moved from here to larger homes in Maryland and Virginia.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: These new houses are suppose to be economic development. We see economic development as bringing us retain stores that provide goods the community needs and has to shop in other communities to obtain. The new housing will bring in more "sleepers" -- people who sleep here but purchase, utilize social and recreational establishments, educate their children and work in other communities. Housing could be a big part of economic development. In our community, renovating the vacant apartments and houses and putting them back on the market would make the community a better place than one with new and abandoned houses.

We have been told that the developer will bring us quality homes. We have quality homes. They may not be new, but quality they ARE!

MISREPRESENTATION: The developer's drawings shown at the Zoning Hearing were different from those shown to the community. The developer states it wants to enhance our community when in reality it is hurting us.

OUR REQUEST OF ZONING: We request that the application for a variance be denied or in the alternative the developer be required to return to the community ~~a~~ AND redo the process with the new renderings, furnish the documentation requested by our association, work with the National Park Service and Council Member Sharon Ambrose and that this developer be made an example for future developers to keep the community apprised of their actual plans before appearing before your Board.

FAIR SHARE OF TIME FOR COMMUNITY: The community should have at least one fourth the time the developer has before this Board.

STUDENT IMPACT ON SCHOOLS: We have no statistical information from the school system. We requested this information from the developer. We are aware that there are waiting list every year for the earlier grades [prekindergarten, kindergarten] and that classrooms have more children than are desirable for learning.

We are also aware that a number of children from our community and especially Ward 8 attend schools in upper northwest and private schools. If the children from this housing development do not attend our schools, they will add to the public transportation congestion.

MIDDLE INCOME AND AFFLUENT PURCHASERS: The developer stated in several meetings that it was bringing middle income and affluent people to our neighborhood. Our association has always asked for a working class of people who would be paying taxes, maintaining their properties and being a part of the community. The gated apartments and the gated atmosphere the developer reflects for the houses, are not what we need. People who feel they are living in a "Vatican" do not become a part of the community. A classic example is the 1000-1100 blocks of 3rd Street, S.W. where high-rise apartments are on one side of the street and public housing on the other. The public housing residents, plagued with drugs and crime, enjoy themselves while the middle income, affluent residents are prisoners within their own homes. The original Marbury Plaza tenants lived in a "Vatican" and it hurt them not being a part of the community as a whole. It was not the low income but the "low life" that could afford to pay the rent that invaded their haven forcing many original tenants to move.

APPLICATION NO 16457
Kass MA, L.L.C.

CALL FROM MR. KNAPP, KSI:

On Tuesday, May 4, 1999, Mr. Knapp called the home of Carolyn Johns Gray, President, Frederick Douglass Community Improvement Council because he had seen a letter of opposition in the Zoning file and needed a telephone number for a Fred Bradley so he could offer him some work.

He stated he thought he had the association's support because after the meeting he attended, he talked to some of the members and they liked his project.

He was told that the people he was talking to were invited to participate in our meeting but were not members and did not live in our community. Our association shares with surrounding communities and invite them to participate in our programs.

He was also told that we were remaining in opposition because his company did not respond to our requests for documents relative to soil borings, traffic impact, environmental impact, public transportation impact, student impact on the schools.

Mr. Knapp requested a telephone number on Fred Bradley and was referred to the business association for the telephone number of Mr. Bradley's construction company.

Mr. Knapp stated he was going to give us the documents at the Zoning Hearing and was told that at the hearing was insufficient time to view the documents, allowed for no discussion with our members, so that a decision could be made and voted on for the hearing. He requested the fax number and stated he would fax the transportation study and that there was no problem.

He was told that there was a serious transportation problem and his development would only add to it.

He shared with Mrs. Gray that Ward 8 had given him a nice letter and that something must be wrong with the people in Ward 6. At this point the conversation was ended by Mrs. Gray.

APPLICATION NO 16457
Kass MA, L.L.C.

QUESTIONS FOR DEVELOPER:

1. Please explain why your company did not supply the documentation requested at the meeting with our association, specifically soil borings, traffic impact, public transportation impact, student impact on the schools, environmental impact?

2. Why is it your company does not want to respect the wishes of our residents, city council and mayor as far as the apartments are concerned?

3. Did you do the survey of the community relative to the affect the gated community would have on the present community?

4. Did you research the exiting residents and why they moved?

5. Are you aware that the Marbury Plaza has monthly evictions?

6. Why are you building 37 houses in Ward 6 instead of 5, 6 or 7?

7. If you want us to support you, why didn't you give something to the community such as a much needed recreation center instead of the limited recreation provided for your gated community?

8. Why are the renderings here today different from the ones you displayed at the ANC 6C meeting and later at the Frederick Douglass Community Improvement Council's meeting?

9. Are you aware that the Anacostia Economic Development Corporation is facing litigation for the substandard housing they built in Ward 6/Anacostia?

10. Are you aware that Anacostia High School has the state of the art computer science lab and that many of the churches and service organizations offer computer classes?

11. Do you plan to make it clear to your purchasers that the park you are building around is a public park and that no action is to be taken to have it closed to the public or made a private park for the homeowners?

12. Have you thought of the impact the concentration of fumes from the massive amount of automobiles of the 37 home owners will have on the air quality of the community?

APPLICATION NO 16457
KASS, MA L.L.C.

INFORMATION RE SUBSTANDARD HOUSING OF AEDC:

The residents of new housing located at 15th and V Streets, S.E., made a complaint to ANC 6C [Rev. Oliver Johnson] that they were having problems with their homes and the Anacostia Economic Development Corp. [AEDC] was responsible for water in their basements, cracks in the wall, etc.

When the lot was cleared it was wet and when the houses were being built, water was being drained.

We object to this developer because it violated the laws of the historic preservation when building the houses, demonstrated no concern when building new houses on wet land and refused to correct the damage to these homes.

We are concerned that KSI or KASS will develop the houses and apartments in Ward 8 but they are not going to build the ones in Ward 6. The quality they speak of will not be in the houses in Ward 6 if AEDC builds them. AEDC has demonstrated to this community that it cuts costs to make big profits.

PLEASE NOTE: AEDC has been in our community for 25 or more years and has done nothing to improve it, using government funds for salaries and surveys, etc., but no development in our community. Its current planned development is not what the community wants, will be detrimental to the community, consists of demolishing buildings rather than renovating them and in violation of historic preservation laws.