

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Brandon.Bortner@lw.com
Sent: Wednesday, September 12, 2018 12:07 AM
To: DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)
Cc: Cheh, Mary (COUNCIL); pac@harkinscunningham.com; anitaliviamitra@yahoo.com
Subject: Letter in Opposition to Case Number 19816 (Application of InSite Real Estate Investment Properties LLC)
Attachments: Email.pdf.pdf

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re: Letter in Opposition to Case Number 19816 (Application of InSite Real Estate Investment Properties LLC)

Members of the Board of Zoning Adjustment:

My name is Brandon Bortner and I reside with my wife and two young children at 67 Observatory Circle NW. I write in opposition to Case Number 19816 (Application of InSite Real Estate Investment Properties LLC), which relates to the proposed KinderCare development at 2461 Wisconsin Avenue NW (the "*Proposed Development*"). While I understand that the seven day pre-hearing deadline has since passed for comment, I am hopeful that, based on the below, you will nonetheless allow for this letter to make it into the record and give the questions/concerns outlined below due consideration as traffic and pedestrian safety is of critical importance to my family and my neighbors. Please note that (i) I am not an elected or appointed official, just an impacted resident with questions/concerns and (ii) I have copied certain individuals to this email for informational purposes only, and my doing so should in no way be considered an endorsement by them. I would have much preferred to have raised these questions with the developer directly, however, while I did attempt to connect by phone, a lack of time has left this letter the only realistic alternative.

As an initial matter, it is vital to understand that, while the Proposed Development sits within the borders of ANC 3B, it is immediately adjacent to ANC 3C and nearly all of the traffic and safety issues identified by DDOT in its report posted on August 31, 2018 regarding the proposed Development (the "*DDOT Report*") solely impact ANC 3C. More specifically, the brunt of such traffic and safety issues impact the neighborhood bordered by Wisconsin Ave to the West, Garfield St. to the North, Massachusetts Ave. to the East and Observatory Circle/Calvert St. to the South, which is referred to as the Massachusetts Avenue Heights Community Association ("*MAHCA*").

It is also important to understand that neither I nor, to my knowledge, any of my MAHCA neighbors necessarily oppose the idea of a daycare center at 2461 Wisconsin Avenue NW. In fact, of the 25+ households that recently indicated they would like to learn more about the Proposed Development, several indicated their support for development of 2461 Wisconsin Avenue NW into a daycare facility. My concerns, and I know those of several others, exclusively relate to traffic engineering and vehicular and pedestrian safety in the vicinity of the Proposed Development.

It is unfortunate that MAHCA residents were not alerted to the Proposed Development until late-summer (with the exception of the residents of Georgetown Heights Condo). In mid-July, a BZA Referral & Notice of Public Hearing was delivered to ANC 3C, however, MAHCA was not alerted to the existence of this letter. In fact, the hearing was neither publicized within MAHCA nor did the ANC SMD 3C08 representative at the time alert MAHCA residents to the Proposed Facility. ANC SMD 3C08 is currently without a representative, however, during her last days as ANC Commissioner for SMD 3C08 before moving to ANC 2E, our former commissioner submitted a letter in favor of the Proposed Facility (to the surprise of many MAHCA residents). Therefore, it is important to understand that to the best of my knowledge (following neighborhood inquiry), this letter was not based upon a similar collective endorsement from MAHCA residents (see the attached email).

As far I as know, only residents of Georgetown Heights Condo were consulted with respect to the Proposed Development, although 3625 Calvert St. NW is within 200 ft from the Proposed Development, as might be several residences at the south end of 36th St. NW. I would also note that several residences along Observatory Circle NW would be directly impacted by InSite Real Estate Investment Properties LLC's (the "Applicant") recommendation of adding a dedicated left turn lane on Observatory Circle NW, which would result in the loss of residential parking spaces.

In short, I, like other MAHCA residents, only very recently learned about the Proposed Development, yet SMD 3C08 will be most directly impacted by the Proposed Development. Given my lack of awareness of the Proposed Development and that the related DDOT report was only made available five business days prior to the date hereof, I hope that you will consider and reserve for my questions/concerns that follow as well as allow for other MAHCA residents to weigh in if they so choose. I would also ask that you give the letter from the former SMD 3C08 commissioner no more weight than that of a resident of ANC 2E (or this letter for that matter).

1. Traffic Safety: The Proposed Development is located at an extremely narrow and highly trafficked portion of Calvert St. The Applicant's traffic study indicates that Calvert St. and Observatory Circle between Wisconsin Ave. and Massachusetts Ave. ("*Observatory Calvert*") will feel the brunt of the traffic volume increase related to the Proposed Development. With its multiple elevations, blind turn at the entrance of Guy Mason Recreational Center and limited visibility as a result of Observatory Circle's continuous curvature, Observatory/Calvert experiences unacceptable accident volume under existing conditions. From 2008 to 2016, there were 45 reported accidents on Observatory/Calvert, including the intersection of Wisconsin Ave. and Calvert St. to, but not including, the Observatory Circle and Massachusetts Ave. intersection. During the same period, 13 reported accidents occurred in the vicinity of Calvert St.'s primary access point to Guy Mason Recreation Center. The Applicant's traffic study similarly reported 30 accidents from at the Wisconsin Avenue/Calvert St. intersection from 2015 to 2017. As an aside, the Applicant's traffic study incorrectly states the three-year accident volume of the "Massachusetts Ave/Observatory Circle" intersection, as the 26 accidents cited includes multiple Massachusetts Ave. intersections (Observatory Circle, 34th Pl and Edmunds St.). The 26 accidents in the Applicant's study is a statistic DDOT has since corrected in connection with another matter.

The Calvert St. portion of Observatory/Calvert, and particularly the blind turn where Calvert St. connects to Observatory Circle at the entrance of Guy Mason Recreational Center, has high pedestrian volume and is particularly dangerous, yet the Applicant's traffic study simply says "More detailed information regarding the direction of travel would be required to develop specific recommendations to improve safety at the [Calvert St. and Wisconsin Ave.] intersection."

The Applicant should be required to obtain such detailed information from the Calvert/Wisconsin intersection extending to the entrance of Guy Mason Recreational Center and recommend remediation and traffic calming/safety measures given the heavy pedestrian traffic, including very young children, who frequent the area. The Proposed Development's impact on accident volume in this area should be considered and carefully assessed.

2. Feasibility of Proposed Development's Entrance and Drop off/Pick up: The Applicant has indicated all vehicular traffic to the Proposed Development will enter/exit from a singular curb cut with over 60% of the traffic returning to Wisconsin Ave. by making a left directly out of the Proposed Facility's lot onto Calvert St. notwithstanding traffic entering the facility both ways on Calvert St. and extensive two-way traffic volume on Calvert St. during both the AM and PM rush. It is not clear from the diagram below how vehicles entering the lot will be able to turn around following drop off/pick up to exit given the various parking spaces indicated and additional vehicles entering the lot from Calvert St. The Applicant also suggests that drop off/pick up will occur via new 15 minute street parking in front of the Proposed Facility. The Applicant's diagram below indicates that the entrance onto Calvert St. will have limited visibility as a result of parked cars and will further be crossed by the pedestrian sidewalk (heavily used). These parked cars, per the Applicant, will also be picking up and dropping off children. In sum, cars will be entering and exiting the Proposed Development across a lane of oncoming traffic while also navigating potential pedestrian traffic, while children will be at the same time entering and exiting immediately adjacent cars on Calvert St. Cars exiting the Proposed Development and seeking to make a left, will do so with limited visibility, across a pedestrian sidewalk and while navigating additional drop off/pick up on Calvert St.

The Applicant's drop off/pick up plan on its face doesn't seem practical or safe and the Applicant should be required to test its validity, reevaluate and propose an alternative plan before any curb cuts are made.

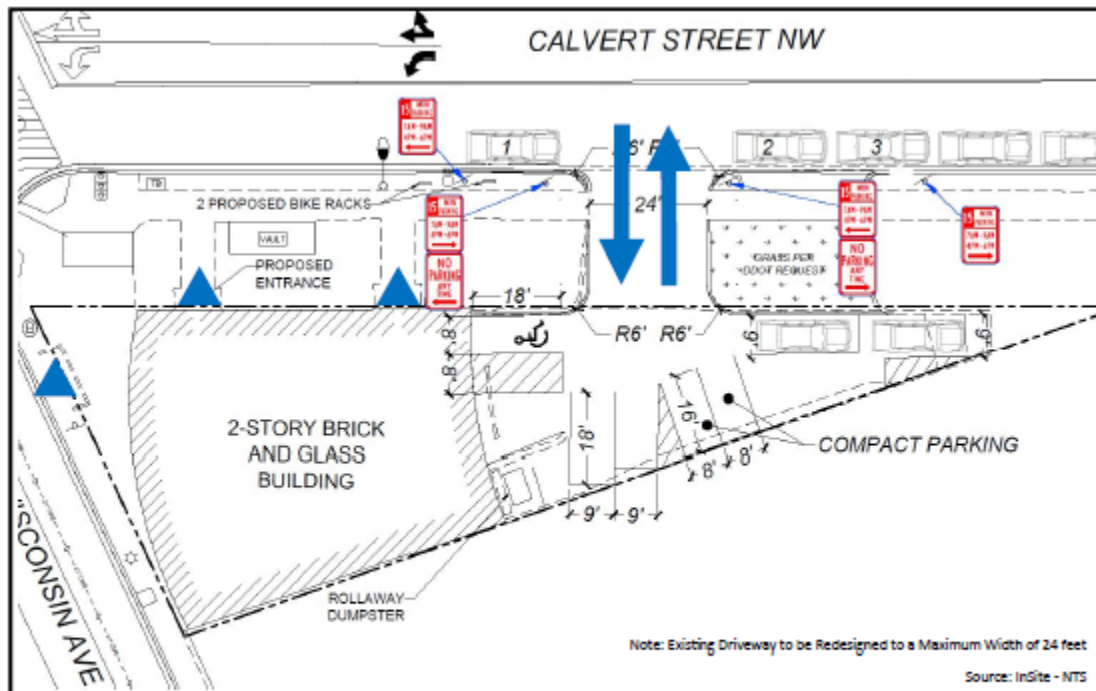
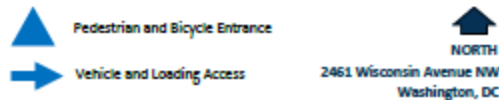


Figure 10
Vehicular, Pedestrian, and Bicycle Circulation



2461 Wisconsin Avenue NW
Washington, DC

3. Traffic Volume and Flow: Applicant's traffic study, and DDOT's related report, indicated a current Level of Service (LOS) of "F" for eastbound Observatory/Calvert AM traffic and that with the additional site trips, the delay would further increase with the queue increasing by 160 ft. This is a meaningful detriment to those living on Observatory/Calvert and the Applicant's suggestion for remediation of adding a dedicated left turn lane from Observatory Circle onto Massachusetts Ave. to the detriment of residential parking spaces is unacceptable (DDOT similarly dismissed this proposal). The Applicant also assumed only 38 of 140 daily site trips would be vehicular (27%), an underestimation noted by DDOT.

So traffic delays will meaningfully increase on Observatory Circle approaching Massachusetts Ave. and accessing Wisconsin Ave. directly from the Proposed Development appears difficult, yet the Applicant's traffic analysis assumes no increase in traffic volume making a left on 36th St. from Calvert St. to either return to Wisconsin Ave. via Edmunds St. or access Massachusetts Ave. via Fulton St. This assumption seems unreasonable given the propensity of traffic to seek alternative routes in the face of delay.

The Applicant should reevaluate the assumption that 36th St. will not be used as an alternative outlet to Wisconsin Ave./Massachusetts Ave. Additionally, the foregoing assumption and proposed future traffic volume and queuing on Observatory/Calvert generally should be reevaluated based on a more conservative (and reasonable) proportion of vehicular site visits.

4. Parking: The Applicant proposes to have several spaces in front of the Proposed Facility's entrance on Calvert St. designated 15 minute parking, which will serve as a means for drop off/pick up. No similar parking has been proposed on Wisconsin Ave. leading up to Calvert St. The number of 15 minute street parking spaces requested by the Applicant does not appear set in stone, but two or three spaces have been indicated. The Applicant does not appear to have run an analysis of the impact on MAHCA resident parking from the loss of longer-term metered parking on Calvert St. in favor of 15 minute parking.

The Applicant should run an analysis on the impact on MAHCA resident parking from the loss of longer-term metered parking on Calvert St. for the Proposed Facility.

As first notes above, MAHCA residents have had very little time to evaluate the Proposed Facility. I, and to the best of my knowledge, other MAHCA residents do not oppose the addition of a daycare at 2461 Wisconsin Avenue NW, but rather would appreciate the opportunity to discuss the Proposed Development and its impact on MAHCA further with the Applicant and with due regard to the recently released traffic study and DDOT response. Some residents may have concerns similar to mind, while others may have no concerns at all. However, as the Proposed Facility would be by all intents and purposes part of MAHCA, I for one believe it is of vital importance that the actual neighbors of the Proposed Facility have a chance to provide input and ask questions as it relates to pedestrian and vehicular safety as well as resultant traffic volume and delay.

Thank you in advance for your time,

Brandon Bortner
67 Observatory Circle NW

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