

FROM EMILY S. ANDREWS (October 13, 2020)

I have given considerable thought to the upcoming PCA vote (online Oct. 13-16) on the Trammell Crow Company's (TCC) Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for rezoning the Safeway site. Should the current MOA be approved by PCA membership and by the DC ANC 3D, it would lend support to TCC's Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) rezoning proposal. The BZA hearing is to be held on November 4th and will not be delayed.

As a PCA member, I will vote NO for the following reasons:

The current MOA is provisional and is in the process of being updated. Consequently, to vote YES, in favor of the proposal, would lend support to a proposal that may be changed substantially and will not reflect the final MOA presented by TCC to the BZA.

Unfortunately, provisional elements are substantial.

1. For example, (a) the plan for a small grocery store is still in limbo; (b) there is no operating plan for the community parking lot; (c) no traffic mitigation plans or pedestrian safety plans for the community are specified; (d) there is no final decision on how residential permit parking would be handled; (e) no employee parking plan is proposed; (f) there is no protection for current community parking in streets contingent to the new development; and (g) the construction management plan is incomplete.
2. In the past, numerous promises were never implemented: (a) a valet parking plan was abandoned; (b) the initial TCC plan consisted of a community of many independent living units – now there are only ten; and (c) community benefits such a café tables and a new neighborhood kiosk apparently have been swept away. These are only a few of many unexpected changes in TCC's plans. A lack of consistency and timely prior community notification suggests that key elements of the current MOA are likely to be changed as well.

In sum, my trust in TCC has been eroded by incomplete planning and unanticipated shifts in project structure. Since there will not be time for the neighborhood to evaluate the final document, I cannot in good conscience vote in favor of this preliminary MOA. Perhaps others will share my view.

October 14, 2020

DEAR PALISADES NEIGHBORS:

RE: **PRESERVE OUR RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD & VOTE NO** (on proposed MOU re Safeway site)

Emily Andrews has shared with us her proposed listserv post (ABOVE), which we commend and endorse. As 41-year residents of V Street, we strongly urge you to vote "no support" for the proposed MOU with Trammell Crow that so seriously affects our neighborhood by proposing to convert residential zoning to commercial in a place that is clearly residential.

Thanks to each of you for your community leadership, service, and instincts evident from recent conversations. To add background to your thoughts, below is a snippet of a conversation chain involving those of us on V Street, by far the most affected by the TC proposal.

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.20308
EXHIBIT NO.35

The short take:

1. We are sorry that the community is missing an opportunity for a potentially transformative neighborhood asset (Palisades Community Plaza). But that apparently is for another day.
2. Today, we are disappointed that the decision-making issues, opportunities, and elements with TC seem to have been largely below the radar for the community at large.
3. A quick scan of this “final draft” version suggests that it:
 - Is entirely silent on the issue of traffic, which, especially given the certain increase, is a safety and livability concern for the neighborhood, substantially beyond even that of parking; and
 - Is absent any meaningful *quid pro quos* for removal of the residential zoning on V Street.
 - The paucity of significant items in the list of the developer's commitments is compounded by the fact that they are not commitments—merely stated (and not even loosely binding) intentions.

This is the sort of community high stakes item, the PCA will want to make sure in people's in-boxes for comment well in advance of any vote, but neither of us has received (and we're lifetime PCA members). Neither have we received a ballot or supporting material.

Unless we are missing something around the timing and logistics, it seems like our neighborhood's very own version of an “October surprise”. We fear that with the absence of due deliberation to date, the vote will merely be used to misrepresent community consideration and judgment. Given the current state of play, we strongly urge rejection of any rezoning at this time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael and Pat McGinnis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Michael and Pat McGinnis | 4827 V Street NW | Washington DC 20007