

DC For Reasonable Development: Ward 6 Study Group Contested Concerns & Comments on ZC Case No. 02-38, April 5, 2018

After many unsubstantiated extensions and many years since its inception of the project concept, the caselaw and understanding of the overdevelopment in the District and in Ward 6 has dramatically changed and accelerated. The reality on the ground in the community around the PUD site shows that the request for further approvals in this zoning case now especially raises up many planning issues otherwise not contended with along the way and remain so in this most recent application.

The Office of Planning Report, states, "The proposal is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan, would not result in unacceptable impacts on the area or on city services, and includes public benefits and project amenities that balance the flexibility requested." Exhibit #64. These are two proposed new buildings standing at 127 feet tall with a two-story base.

OP's statement is unsubstantiated for many reasons as the record across all inter-related applications on this project:

a) Demonstrates a unlawful lack of a thorough and thoughtful impact study that 600 new housing units (+/- 10%), a switch from uses (office to residential use with this application), and commercial/retail will have on the public services serving the surrounding community where Ward 6 Study Group members live, work, and play. There's no study on the infrastructure impacts (transportation, parking, utilities, pipes, etc.), the environmental impacts (noise, refuse, emissions, air/water, construction nuisance, etc.), the gentrification impacts on surrounding vulnerable affordable housing (no surveys of housing-cost burdened residents in the area now), and the impacts on public service capacities/needs that serve our members and community now (schools, libraries, clinics, rec centers, truly affordable housing, police/fire, etc.). Without an impartial and meaningful impact assessment, the Commission cannot reconcile the benefits in determining approval. Despite the duration and extensions of these collective cases, including the significant modifications now, the planning agencies have failed to understand the project impacts. See applicable zoning regulations and Comp Plan policies to this regard, which without protections and mitigations of impacts thus imminently harms the surrounding community where the DC4RD: Ward 6 Study Group members live and enjoy their quality of life.

b) Demonstrates a lack of statutory recognition and duty to mitigate the affordable housing crisis in the city, not exacerbate it. 90% plus of the project and the significant density granted and now modified will for luxury uses, residential and otherwise. The 8% that the Applicant considers "affordable" will consist of "five 3-bedroom units would be

IZ units, an increase of one from the time of setdown.” Exhibit 64. This application of modifications and second stage falls after the regulations requiring much more affordability be included in these types of large projects, especially in light of the gentrification impacts.

c) Demonstrates harm to existing area affordability, in that the Applicant's so-called affordable studio/one bedrooms will be renting at \$1500/month. These are not affordable. **This project could serve as a site for Build-First units for the surrounding public housing families and DC4RD: Ward 6 Study Group members and public housing residents who are imminently facing displacement by the threatened redevelopment of their homes.** Neither the Applicant nor the Office of Planning deal with this issue in any real way despite the tremendous need. There is no “Whole Neighborhood Approach” here, a failure of city planners that cannot be affirmed by the Commission.

d) Demonstrates a complete disregard of the communities wishes for open public spaces, as shown throughout the small area planning policies and in the Comp Plan, PROS chapter.

e) Demonstrates a lack of acknowledgement of recent laws passed before this Application for significant changes was reviewed, such as the law regarding substantial affordable housing for families on land/assets that were formerly public, a law that is backed by Comprehensive Plan policies.

f) Demonstrates a lack of seeking to support local budding entrepreneurs and small businesses in Ward 6 by bypassing any conversation in having a portion of the commercial/retail uses dedicated as affordable or free for our affected community and residents. This disregard to employ local residents and encourage local businesses from the ground up in Ward 6 flies in the face of basic planning policies.

CONCLUSION

This will be largely a luxury project for single professional residents paying significant sums of rent/condo housing costs that will destabilize the area's existing affordability where DC4RD: Ward 6 Study Group members live, work, and play. The amount of luxury units is a net harm, especially since no gentrification studies were done. This project is 10-years on since its inception. Many things have changed in the City and the area around the PUD site in Ward 6. One of these drastic changes is the massive displacement of black families, such as those we represent in the area. The lack of recognition of this fact, along with the approval of this project, and its modifications, shows a huge inconsistency with the fundamentals of the Comprehensive Plan and ignores the affordability crisis we are under in Ward 6.

Further, the Commission cannot claim a project has such benefits to warrant approval without reconciling the project impacts, which even now have still yet to be analyzed, not in accordance with the law.

The DC4RD: Ward 6 Study Group (elders, families, working residents and low-income longtime District people in the area) asks the Commission to meet their statutory duty to protect the surrounding community and Ward 6 residents from overdevelopment impacts according to the rules, policies, and principles that have been a part of the purpose of zoning and planning for decades.

Sincerely,
Chris Otten, DC4RD co-facilitator

** Associated and incorporating all concerns/issues from the others in opposition to this PUD application.*

Referencing Comp Plan policies, among others:

LU-2.3.2; LU-2.3.3; LU-2.3.4; LU-2.4.8
H-1.1.3; H-1.2; H-1.2.1; H-1.2.7; H-1.2.B (office)
H-1.3.A ; H-2.1; H-2.1.3; H-2.1.1; H-2.1.4; H-2.1.A; H-2.1.E; H-2.2.3; H-2.2.E
E-4.1; E-4.1.3; E-4.2; E-4.3; E-4.3.5; E-4.5.C; E-4.8.2
ED-3.2; ED-3.2.1; ED-3.2.6; ED-3.2.7; ED-3.2.A; ED-3.2.D; ED-4.2.4; ED-4.2.7; ED-4.2.12
UD-2.2.1; UD-2.2.2; UD-2.2.4; UD-2.2.8
CSF-1.1; CSF-1.1.1; CSF-1.1.2; CSF-1.2.2; CSF-1.2.6; CSF-3.2 ; CSF-4; CSF-4.2;
IN-1.2; IN-1.2.2; IN-2.1.1; IN-5; IN-6; IN-6.1.3