

Good evening, My name is Betsy McDaniel; I am a homeowner/resident on First Street NW, in Bloomingdale. Thank you for allowing me to speak about this important project on North Capitol Street and on what is perhaps the only vacant lot in the virtually intact Victorian rowhouse neighborhood of Bloomingdale.

While I support development of the long vacant lot at North Capitol and Q Streets, NW, I would like to go on record as requesting that the Zoning Board approve these changes to the PUD, and the subsequent time extension, contingent upon the owner retaining the retail space, retaining the promised green roof with the reduction in height, formalizing a promise to the community regarding parking, and providing future updates to the community as was requested with the extension in 2011.

Retail

The applicant promoted the mixed-use character of the development, which received community support and is part of the January 2007, Zoning Commission order. Yet, now, they are requesting a significant modification, a loophole, to allow them to abandon the proposed retail to create additional housing units in lieu of ground-floor retail, rendering the project all residential, eviscerating its "mixed-use" character, and eliminating any potential "economic development". The project will increase density in a low density area with no benefit to current residents.

"This project will add special value to the surrounding neighborhood by bringing a mixed-use development to the community."

The Office of Planning has just released their draft recommendations for the Mid City East Small Area Plan. The Vision includes the following: "The Mid City East area will be an attractive area with successful existing business, emerging small businesses, vibrant retail, and a growing residential base. It will be well-served by retail, dining, and amenities along North Capitol Street."

Building height

I support a reduction in the building height as I think the current height is out of character for our neighborhood. Hopefully, the change to stick construction, the owners decision for reasons of economy which necessitated the lower height, will not result in a diminished facade. I urge that the promised height step down aspect be maintained.

Stormwater management is of great concern to the Bloomingdale neighborhood, and is also noted in the Mid City East plan. The reduction in the height of the building, and any resulting roof design change, should maintain, perhaps enhance, the promised green roof. Hopefully, streetscaping and landscaping projects will incorporate Low Impact Design.

Parking -

I would like to see the second floor of parking retained only if it would be available for public use. If not, I have no objection to the reduction to one level, provided the building's residents are ineligible for RPP stickers, a request that the owner's attorney promised. DC may have fewer cars than in years past, but that is far from true in Bloomingdale. DDOT should re-evaluate how the rapidly growing population that is reliant on pedestrian, bicycle and public transit. will work with the increased density in commuter traffic on North Capitol and Florida. Will the traffic created by the garage entrance create a hazard to pedestrians and cyclists, as well as clogging an already busy intersection?

Please note the BCA support was conditional upon the retention of both floors of parking or an exclusion from RPP for the building's residents, and the retention of ground floor retail.

BCA motion:

Bertha made motion - BCA supports the approval of the amended PUD contingent upon the developer retaining the second floor of parking, with the second floor preferably to be available for public parking. Betsy made a friendly amendment to the motion, which was accepted, that the developer retain the retail space and not convert it to living space.

Motion passed - 6 yes, 5 no.

Amenities

As for the amenities package, I am a member of the Board of two of the recipients, and will offer no opinion on the redistribution of funds. In my opinion, the only amenity of significant value offered to my neighborhood is that of ground floor retail.

Additional Request

I respectfully request that the design be tweaked to reflect that the lot was the entrance to the original Bloomingdale estate and is not part of the current NoMa area of development.

Thank you, and I will be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Link to Mid City East draft recommendations:

http://engage.midcityeast.com/feedback-on-draft-recommendations?kmi=bloomingdame%40gmail.com&kme=E-mail+Clicked+weekly+Project+Link&km_email+type=weekly&utm_source=weekly+e-mail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=weekly+e-mail