

## Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

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**From:** rrmartin@verizon.net  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:13 PM  
**To:** DCOZ - ZC Submissions (DCOZ)  
**Cc:** rrmartin@verizon.net  
**Subject:** ZC case #09-03F Skyland Development (hearing date July 23, 2020)

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Dear Chairman Hood,

**I write to you in support** of the Skyland Development moving forward. During my tenure on ANC 7B (2004-2018), the Rappaport development team was always accessible and responsive to the ANC 7B. The team would attend our ANC meetings when invited. The team kept the ANC informed of the construction status and informed on any pending proposals or changes in the project site plan and retail considerations.

However, I strongly oppose a letter submitted to the Zoning Commission (ZC) record/file written by Earl Williams dated 6/16/2020 in which he request the transfer of community benefits to the Skyland Work force center (paragraph #3 in his letter).

As a former Commissioner and a member of the original Skyland Task force, I feel obligated on behalf of those residents residing in ANC 7B to bring to the attention of the ZC that any all letters submitted from a non-official Skyland Task force signed by Earl Williams are **not official** and should not be given any weight nor consideration as it may relate to changes in the Skyland Development project site plans to date nor in regards to community benefits established and negotiated as early as 2007. The community benefits were negotiated as a contract by: (1) the ANC 7B Commission during that time frame; (2) the Rapaport company designated parties during that time frame; and (3) with hundreds of community engaged members over the years.

During 2001 -2002, the Rappaport Development company won a bid to develop the Skyland shopping center site. At that time headed by Mr. Vincent Spaulding, the President of the Hillcrest Community Association(HCCA), along with the HCCA board of directors and community HCCA membership voted to establish an **official** Skyland Task force to oversee this project from a community prospective and to act as a liaison with the developer to the community. Those who volunteered to serve on the original Skyland Task force and were voted to participate on the task force were: Kathy Chamberlin, Pastor Senger, Ed Wilhelm, Carrie Thornhill, Mary Green, Barbara Savage and Robin Marlin. The task force meetings were open to anyone in the Hillcrest community or Ward 7 who wanted serve, or just attend to give feedback. The meetings were publicly scheduled and regularly held at the Lutheran Church located at the corner of Alabama Avenue and Branch Avenue SE. Minutes on the task force meetings were shared during our monthly HCCA community meeting held each 1st Saturday of the month.

There was a lot of community engagement with the original task force and with the developer. Community charets were held, questionnaires were circulated throughout the Hillcrest community. There was a constant communication of the project by the ANC and the original task force. The ANC created a committee within its governing structure to have a Skyland Committee

where we gave updates to the community during our monthly community meetings that are held each month.

About or around 2014 then Commissioner Zina Williams as a SMD Commissioner decided she would break from the ANC 7B and create her own Skyland Task force, with the understanding told to her by the ANC 7B officers that this body she was forming had no authority in the Skyland project, no real decision making standing. She then handed her responsibility as the SMD Commissioner having direct monitoring ability for Skyland to Earl Williams, an unelected community member. **This hand off was not voted on by the HCCA at the time of the handoff nor was it brought before the ANC 7B for a vote.**

During the ANC 7B June 2020 monthly meeting Earl Williams mentioned he submitted a letter of support for Skyland to the ZC for the proposals to the project now before the ZC for this project. For the record his letter was not read during the June 2020 ANC 7B community meeting. I saw nothing wrong with his letter of support until I read his letter thoroughly. In his letter, at paragraph # 3 he writes, "***The Skyland Task force supports the applicants proposal to reallocate the remaining benefits and amenities requirements to the Skyland Work force center***".

I wrote to Commissioner Tiffany Brown to ask who were the members of Earl's task force. I copied my Commissioner Villarreal Johnson. Commissioner Brown forwarded my email to Earl Williams who responded angrily stating the members of his group were copied on his response to her. Commissioner Johnson also raised the questions to Commissioner Brown who the members of Earl's group were, and he also asked on my behalf, if there were meeting dates, agendas, sign-in sheets, and minutes that could be shared with the Commission. To date Earl Williams has not provided answers to these justifiable questions.

The community has a right to this information so that we would know who Earl William meant was in agreement to reallocate the community benefits without his group coming back to our community to express their intent to try to reallocate the 2007 negotiated community benefits.

It must noted in my testimony, Earl Williams has no elected position in our community for making decisions for the Hillcrest Community nor Ward 7 or 8 as it relates to zoning concerns relating to the Skyland project.

The Skyland Workforce development center states on it webpage the following;

*"Skyland Workforce Center is not a One-Stop and not a part of the DC Department of Employment Services (DOES). We are also not part of any construction company. Some companies support us and use our services, but we do not work for them. We do not hire and we do not control who gets hired, and we do not promise anyone a job.*

*No quarterly report of how many actually get hired is printed nor made public."*

So it is a legitimate question to ask what has this center done for our(Hillcrest) community to be precipitants of the benefits that were earmarked for all schools for children or libraries for our constituents. .

The center has absolutely nothing do with the community benefits the ANC 7B and Slyland team negotiated under the leadership of ANC 7B Chair Yvonne Moore and SMD Commissioner Howard Ways along with the entire ANC 7B Commission and the Hillcrest community's input and involvement. In a letter dated May 21, 2009, Chair Moore wrote, to Neil Albert, then Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development , "*As you may recall ANC 7B initiated a meeting with you and your development team to discuss community benefits associated with the Skyland development project in December 2007" This meeting was intended to provide a framework for community benefits discussions and included specific recommendations developed by this ANC and some through*

*discussion with other local organizations." The letter goes on to discuss the community benefits and the Skyland land disposition agreement."*

This letter was copied to City Council members, the Office of Planning and to the Secretary of the ZC; and to Nkosi Bradley, Office of DMPED. Also this discussion is documented in the ANC 7B Skyland meeting minutes/noted dated 12/10/2007.

In conclusion, Chairman Hood, Mr. Earl Williams has no community standing nor no legal authority to write to the ZC stating a group not sanctioned by the our community is in favor of reallocating our remaining community benefits and that the benefits be transferred solely to the Skyland Workforce center.

The remaining benefits should remain slated to our schools and libraries and the like as agreed upon in our contract with Rappaport. Based on a letter Commission Tiffany Brown, the current SMD Commissioner for Skyland, sent to the ZC about 3 years ago while I was Chair of the ANC 7B, she stated she was not updated by the developer as what community benefits had been disseminated into the community. Earl Williams to my knowledge has requested funds from the developer for community activities (i.e., Hillcrest Day, or functions he is affiliated with). While I and I am sure our community **appreciates the monetary generosity of the Rappaport company** thus far to the Hillcrest community, someone needs to pinpoint that these funds requested by Earl Williams are reflective of the negotiated community benefits negotiated years preceding Mr. Williams creation of his group.

**In the absence of such proof,, the remaining community benefits should not be transferred solely upon Mr. Earl Williams recommendation to the Skyland Work force without prior notice being given to the community and to the ANC and to our Council Member.**

What is the ZC process for reallocating already negotiated community benefits that are pinned to a already established PUD in place for more than 10 years?

The community benefits was a written contract, not a hand shake agreement. If this contract is ignored or discounted, or thrown out, those entities entitled to the negotiated community benefits will not see the benefits for our community.

If the reallocation is to be done, is there a legal requirement that the reallocation be brought to the entire community and to the ANC for a special meeting to determine if the community agrees on the reallocation?

Sincerely,

Robin Hammond Marlin

Former ANC Commissioner SMD 7B05 (2004-2018)

Past Chair ANC 7B

Past Vice Chair ANC 7B

Past Secretary ANC 7B

Homeowner Hillcrest Community

Past Member original Skyland Task force and member of panel to select the Rappaport development team for the Skyland Redevelopment 2002