

**THE GEORGIA AVENUE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE
733 Euclid St. NW
Washington, DC 20001**

14 January 2015

**Mr. Anthony Hood
Chair
Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia
D.C. Office of Zoning
441 Fourth Street, N.W. Suite 210 South
Washington, D.C. 20001**

**Re: Howard University Campus Master Plan ZC Case No. 11-15D
Barry Place Partners ZC (PUD) Case No. 14-21**

Dear Chairman Hood:

The Georgia Avenue Community Development Task Force (GACDTF) supports the Planned Unit Development (PUD) in ZC Case No. 14-21. The GACDTF is an organization with over 1,300 members on its mailing list who represent merchants, non-profit organizations and individual community residents. It was founded in December of 2009 to promote active citizen involvement in the redevelopment of Georgia Avenue and the neighborhoods adjacent to it. GACDTF members are pleased to see additional housing and retail developed in the community, and having been members of Howard University's Community Campus Master Plan Task Force, we are pleased to witness the actual implementation of the plan.

GACDTF members heard presentations by the development team at the University's Community Advisory Committee meeting on September 11, 2014 and at two of its own meetings held on October 13, 2014 and January 12, 2015. Plans for the PUD were presented and discussed thoroughly, including a proposal to amend Howard's Campus Master Plan in ZC Case No. 11-15D, where Howard-owned vacant lots that would have been governed by the plan would instead be governed under the provisions of the PUD. We also learned that to build the project in its entirety, an alley on the site needs to be closed. No opposition was raised to either of these elements of the project by those attending GACDTF meetings.

Most of the issues that were raised centered around the need to have significant affordability built into the project in both the total number of units that would be offered, and the depth of the affordability that would reach households of more modest incomes. Questions also arose about the number of units that would be set aside for faculty, staff and graduate students of Howard, the coverage of residents who would initially be eligible for job training at no cost to themselves; the reasons for the developer's not using the entire zoning envelope being requested in the PUD, and the reasons for not wrapping retail around three of the four sides of the building.

At the GACDTF meeting of January 14, 2015, the team presented a community benefits package intended to address the concerns that were voiced in earlier meetings. As it relates to housing, the package included provisions for.

1. 8% of the residential square footage of the project (approximately 27 units) being set aside for households with incomes of no more than 80% of the area median income (AMI), as required in the Inclusionary Zoning regulations. Of these, at least 4 two-bedroom units would be reserved for households whose incomes are no greater than 60% of the AMI.

2. In a separate agreement with Howard University, 59 units of housing will first be offered to Howard faculty, staff and graduate students. An additional 3% of the residential square footage of the total project (approximately 9 of the 59 units set aside for Howard) will be set aside for Howard-related households with incomes not exceeding 80% of the AMI. Of these, at least 2 two-bedroom units would be reserved for households whose incomes do not exceed 60% of the AMI.

3. As it relates to the job training being offered, the HVAC technician training, including EPA Type I CFC certification, will be provided free of charge to 50 people over the next five years. Instead of a preference going to residents who live within a one mile radius of the site, it was decided that preference would go to persons residing within zip codes surrounding the site, which broadens the coverage of the training being proffered.

It was explained that the full envelope of the zoning being requested was not being used in order to control the overall cost of constructing the project, and thereby also the cost charged for the units. In addition, it was explained that the reason for limiting the retail to the Sherman Avenue frontage was that at this point in time, unlike the "U" Street, 14th Street and Georgia Avenue corridors, demand to lease retail space was too limited at this location.

The amendment to the Howard Campus Master Plan was not opposed because the intent of the plan to house Howard faculty, staff and graduate students at this location was being preserved in the PUD. The alley closing was also not opposed.

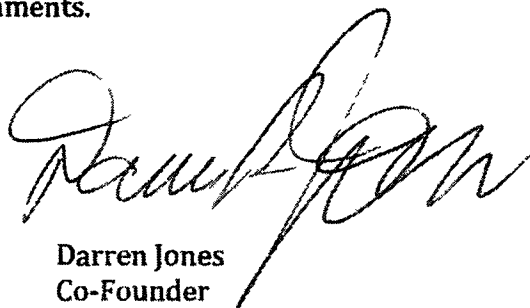
The Georgia Avenue Community Development Task Force encourages the Zoning Commission to approve ZC Case 11-15D and ZC (PUD) Case 14-21 conditioned on the provisions of the community benefits package itemized above and presented elsewhere in the PUD application.

We thank you for your attention to these comments.

Regards,



Sylvia Robinson
Co-Founder



Darren Jones
Co-Founder