

VIA EMAIL

July 29, 2019

Chairperson Anthony Hood  
DC Zoning Commission  
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210-S  
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Support of Applicant CityPartners 5914, LLC's Request for the Extension of Time of the PUD Approved by ZC Order No.13-08

Dear Chairperson Hood:

As a Mayoral Appointee to the Workforce Investment Council, and Chair of its Youth Committee, and someone who has worked very closely with the Applicant, I request a waiver to file this letter which details my support of CityPartners 5914, LLC's Request for the Extension of Time of the PUD approved by ZC Order No. 13-08. I am compelled to have my perspective heard because gross mischaracterizations of the Applicant have been allowed into the record, and if that is all the Commission hears, and if the time extension is denied as a result, then the citizens of Ward 8 will suffer. For the reasons set out below, an extension of the PUD is absolutely in the public interest.

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Dear Chairperson Hood,

I want to thank you for your time and for allowing me to share my thoughts regarding Geoffrey Griffis and my support of the extension of PUD 13-08. It is my hope and prayer that I can help give a different perception of the man whose character and whose actions as a businessman have been badly misrepresented by the Attorney General.

I come from very humble beginnings in 1991 I moved to Washington DC with a trash bag of clothes and an eight grade education. I was living in DC Village. My living arrangements was very inadequate from crime, to rodents and mold. I would walk over to Eastover and catch the bus to Iverson mall. I worked three jobs. Walk to work, catch the bus or metro. On good days, I could pay for a cab ride.

Through hard work and someone giving me a chance at Marriott International, I learned the difference from a job to a career. I graduated High School at the age of 35 in 2005.

Here I am today the General Manager at the Hyatt Place National Mall. I was hired by Geoffrey Griffis to open the Hyatt Place National Mall in 2015. I am the luckiest General Manager in Washington, DC. My hotel is not just a hotel. For the some of you that may know me, know that

my hotel is pathway to a career for many of the residents in Ward 8. I am fortunate to have an amazing ownership—led by Geoffrey Griffis—that allows us to be more than a hotel.

Geoffrey Griffis is more than a developer. Working with him over the last five years, I have come to know Geoffrey as a reliable member of the community, father, husband and champion for residents of the District of Columbia. Always going above and beyond what is expected of any developer. When he selected me to open this amazing hotel neither one of us knew the impact and the reach we would have for changing people's lives.

Geoffrey and I developed the CityPartners Pathway's Apprentice Program in September 2015, where 47 young adults have come through the hotel and 42 have been connected to full time employment. We have worked with CSOSA, DOES, Project Empowerment, Goodwill, Covenant House and Grads of Life. For the last four years we also proudly host 10 to 15 young adults from the Marion Barry Summer Youth Program. There is never a doubt that if there is an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of DC residents, I will always have the support of Geoffrey Griffis. Trust me, this is not something most hotel owners would do. In fact, we are the only hotel in DC running an apprenticeship program for disadvantaged young adults.

Another thing about me, I am a mother and I have a nine year old daughter that I am teaching to stand up for people that cannot stand up for themselves. When Mountains block others, it is our innate ability to make a difference. I want to try and make a difference and change the unfair narrative described by others. Please know that the accusations Mr. Griffis is being accused of, I take to heart, as I have lived in those conditions. He is not that type of business man.

Anyone who suggests that Geoffrey Griffis is a "bad actor" is not honestly looking at the kind of man he is and what he has created in this city. He very quietly, without seeking press or fanfare, has helped change how DC provides opportunities in the hospitality business to returning citizens and other underserved youth. Over the last four years, when a resident comes up to him and asks for employment he brings them right to the hotel to see if we can do anything to assist. He deserves credit for his works, not condemnation.

The PUD time extension is critically necessary so that Congress Heights can benefit from the job training and job creation that this development will bring. To deny the extension is to deprive the citizens of Ward 8.

Again, it is my hope that you have allowed me to share a totally different narrative.

Thank you for your time,

*Stacy Smith*

Stacy Smith

Cc:

Mayor Muriel Bowser  
Sr. Advisor to the Mayor Beverly Perry  
Interim Deputy Mayor John Falcicchio  
Attorney General Karl Racine  
Council member Trayon White  
Council chair Phil Mendelson  
Council member Elissa Silverman  
Council member David Grosso  
Council member Robert White  
Council member Anita Bonds  
Council member Brianne Nadeau  
Council member Jack Evans  
Council member Mary Cheh  
Council member Brandon Todd  
Council member Kenyon McDuffie  
Council member Charles Allen  
Council member Vincent Gray

**Certificate of Service**

I hereby certify that I will mail this document by first class mail to the addresses below on July 29, 2019.

7/29/19

Date:



Stacy E. Smith

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Washington, DC 20032

Alabama Avenue/13<sup>th</sup> Street Tenants Coalition  
c/o William R. Merrifield  
Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless  
1200 U Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20009

CityPartners 5914, LLC  
c/o Goulston & Storrs  
1999 K Street, NW Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20006