

DC Zoning Commission
Testimony of TONY NORMAN
Chairman, McMillan Park Committee
McMillan Park Reservoir
Case #: 13-14
March 23, 2017

My name is Tony Norman a member of the MAG and Chairman of the McMillan Park Committee, the community based group that submitted the historic application responsible for the 90 acre site being declared a historic site. I have also served as Chair of ANC 1B, two-thirds of the historic site is in this ANC's boundary. I have also served as President of the Bloomingdale Civic Association and I live one block from the McMillan local and national historic site. I have been involved with the McMillan issue for well over 20 years.

Formal Objection

I first want to object to this hearing only permitting the community to testify before the Applicant, Vision McMillan Partners, DC Deputy Mayor of Planning and Economic Development Office and the parties in interest (Friends of McMillan, (FOMP). To proceed in this form deprive the community of the opportunity to respond to the applicant's oral testimony as well as the parties in interest. I would recommend that the community be given a follow up opportunity to testify after the applicants and parties in interest have testified.

**Issue No. 1 A. Could the other policies cited in the Order be advanced even if development on the site were limited to medium- and moderate-density use?
B. If not, which of the competing policies should be given greater weight and why?**

We would conclude that other policies cited in the order could be advanced even if the development on the site were limited to medium-and moderate density use. In balance the advances by the city of the upfront cost of the development including experts, entitlement cost, reduction in the assessed value , exemption from 30 % affordable housing requirement, infrastructure costs all provided by City would compensate the developer for any loss in density.

If the commission says it cannot reduce the density then the increase in affordable housing to 30% and more accessible open space should be given the greater weight.

Issue No. 2. Do these or other Comprehensive Plan policies cited by FOMP in the record of this case weigh against approval of the PUD?

We would contend the comprehensive plan policies protecting existing historical assets i.e., underground cells, mole holes and vistas (east – west) and (North – south) and accessible open space would weigh against approving the present PUD. The present PUD does not go far enough to protect the underground structures and is not clear on what open space would be accessible to the public other than the park and the recreational center.

Issue No. 3 Is the high-density development proposed for the site the only feasible way to retain a substantial part of the property as open space and make the site usable for recreational purposes?

We contend that if the commission accepts the high-density development proposed for the site is the only feasible way to retain a substantial part of the property as open space and make the site usable for recreational purposes, then it must expand the accessible open space and increase the preservation of historical vistas and structures i.e., the underground cells and male holes.

Issue No. 4 A. Will the PUD result in environmental problems, destabilization of land values, or displacement of neighboring residents or have the potential to cause any other adverse impacts identified by the FOMP in the record of this case.?

We contend that the city does not adequately address the noise and air pollution issues that the proposed dense development would have. The Department of the Environment primarily relies on the EISF, form with information provided by the development team. It does not recommend that an Environment Impact Statement be completed. This is a major mistake. It does not deal specifically on the issue of noise and air pollution as it relate to the PUD as well as well as the new proposed developments come online within in the McMillan plan completion.

The plan does not deal with the major issues of destabilized land values or displacement that of neighboring residents the proposed development will have on the surrounding community. They do not propose any mitigating solutions to the above problems. In fact they conclude that land values and displacement would have very little impact on the community as it relates to the McMillan development. This is contrary to the statement on the record by the Department of Housing.

In terms of affordable housing the VMP and the City does not go far enough relative to the size and ownership and control of the large tract of land on by the City. Under the new City laws the site should have a minimum of 30 % affordable housing. The applicant does not even address the issue of low income housing.

VMP and the City are getting double credit for affordable housing and senior housing. The number of affordable housing should be separated in determining the true need of affordable housing provide on the site. Senior housing is a separate category of housing needed in the city.