

Anthony Hood, Chairman  
DC Zoning Commission

May 2, 2014

Subject: Testimony against the VMP PUD

Dear Chairman Hood:

Today I will focus my testimony on the Medical office building, but I will be submitting broader written testimony I am very concerned about the overall density and height of the proposed development and in particular about the size and height of the proposed medical office building.

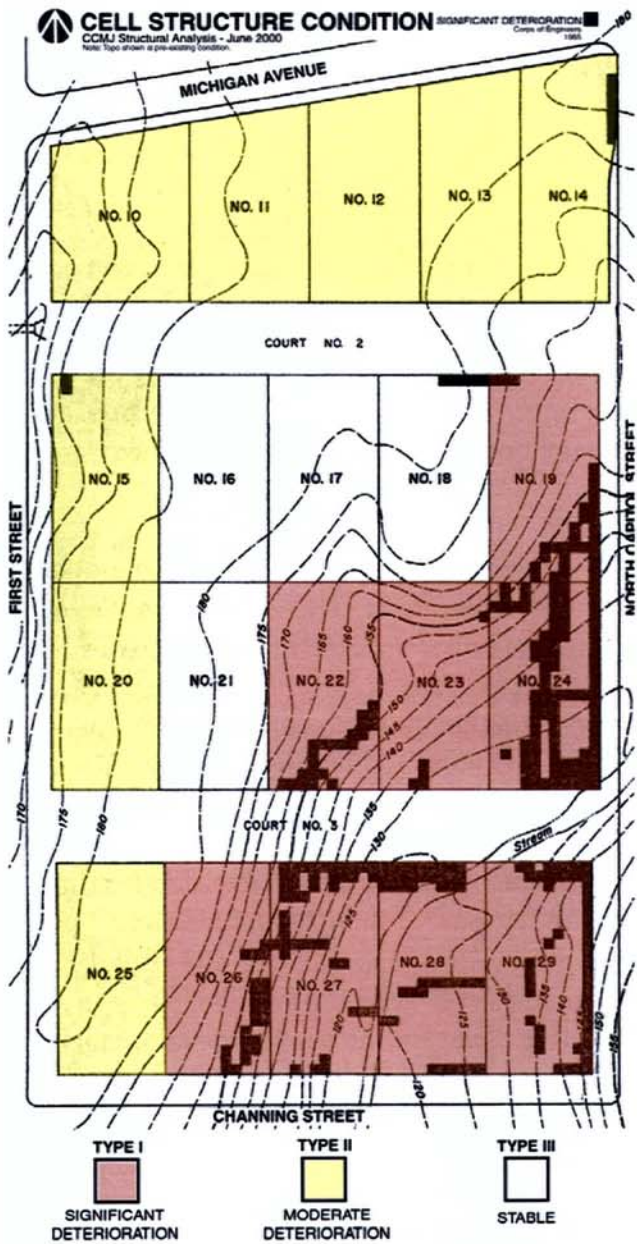
The current PUD application was submitted by VMP but on behalf of the District of Columbia through the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, who is the current owner of the property I would like to know why the Deputy Mayor has allowed the developer to completely disregard the findings and recommendations of the February 2002 report, *McMillan Sand Filtration Site Summary of Recommendations for Site Revitalization* which was prepared by the DC Office of Planning & Department of Housing and Community Development Many of my concerns would have been addressed if these recommendations had been followed.

This report was prepared in 2002 which was a long time ago, but the only RFP issued for the current McMillan development plan was issued by the National Capital Revitalization Corporation in 2006 for the master-plan of the project (pre-development, site assessment, land use, planning, and land development activities designed to deliver ready-to-build, pad and super-pad sites for a mixed-use, master-planned project) – not for the vertical development, but more on that in a moment The report on recommendations for site revitalization was prepared as part of the preparation for the issue of the RFP. So I cannot understand why the report seems to have been completely disregarded

At this point, I need to make very important side note The RFP that was released in 2006 stated “Vertical Development Partners [will] be solicited in subsequent phases” In testimony, VMP stated that in 2007 “the decision was made” to transfer vertical development to the VMP. I have a major question on how that decision to “transfer” vertical development to VMP was made and the legality of that transfer

I want to focus on the contents of the Office of Planning recommendation report The report was based on data on existing and projected traffic and infrastructure constraints, structural engineering conditions, and input from area residents and local developers. Findings include.

- High rise offices were found to be “undesirable for the site”
- Hospital/medical facilities were found to be “undesirable for the site”



- The 4 TYPE III Cells are the most stable and **should be preserved and adaptively re-used** as well as the 2 courts. These cells are in the best location and in the best condition to accommodate a central community open space.
- The 8 significantly deteriorated TYPE I Cells are beyond preservation and should be demolished. However, **parts of the column grid system could be maintained and incorporated into future uses.**
- 5. The 8 moderately deteriorated TYPE II Cells can be **preserved for adaptive re-use above and below grade** or used as needed to accommodate uses compatible with proposed revitalization efforts.

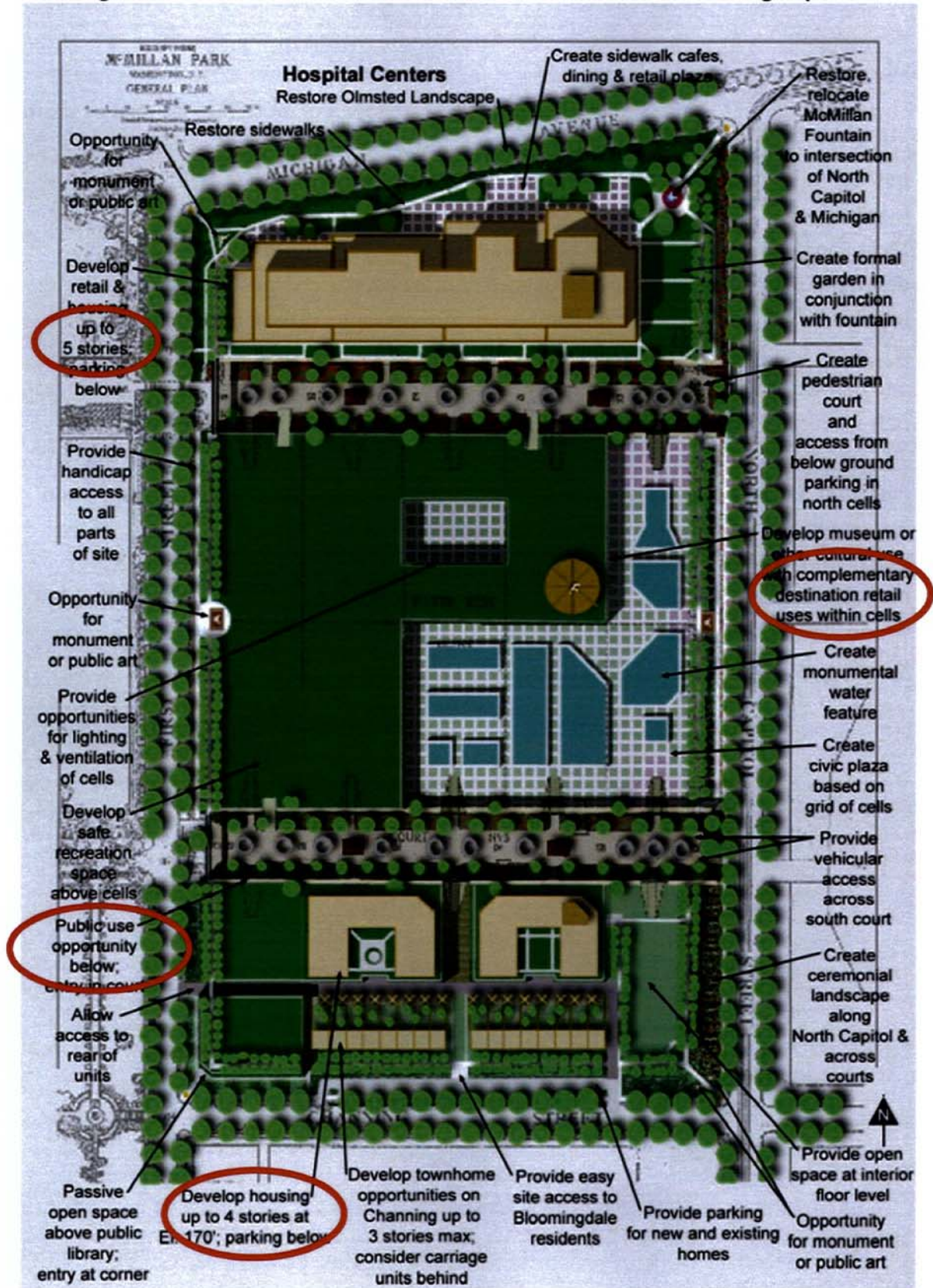
### Underground Caverns at McMillan Park



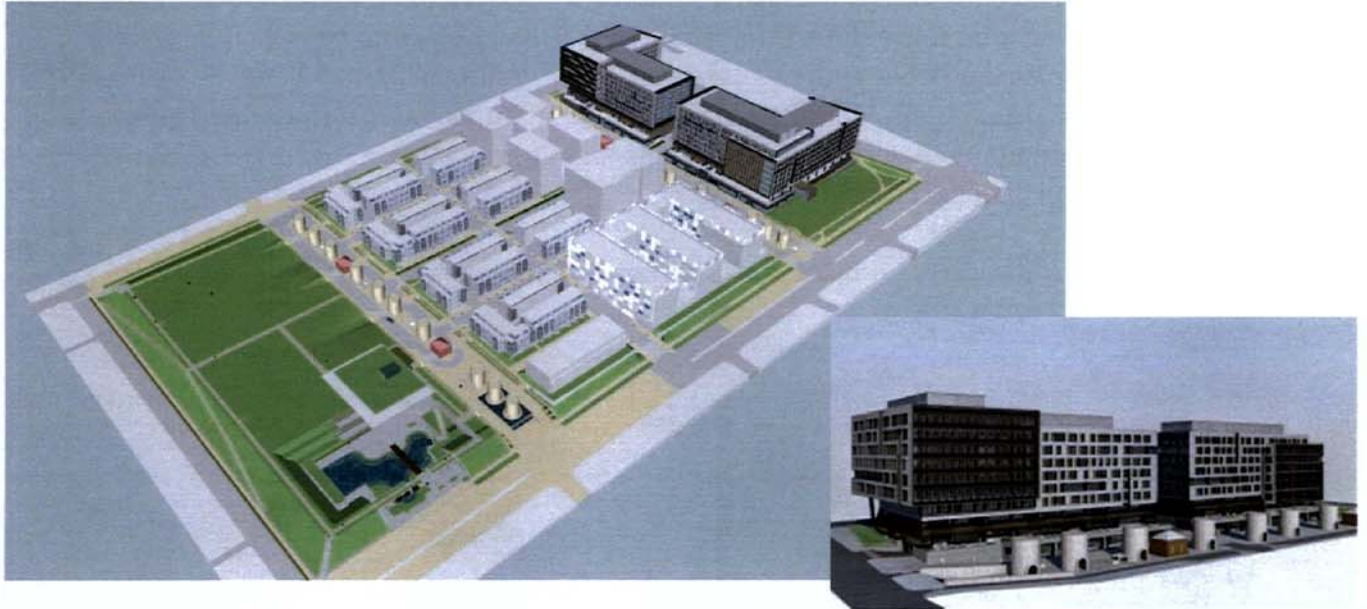
The final recommendations as quoted from the document are:

- A minimum of 50% (approximately 12.5 Acres) of the McMillan site should be revitalized as publicly accessible open space
- The remainder of the site should be developed with **low and moderate intensity** uses to offset the cost of site stabilization and to provide ongoing revenue from which the publicly funded components on the site (open space, gardens, libraries, etc.) are maintained
- McMillan should be zoned to accommodate the following mix of uses at moderate density: publicly accessible open space, a cultural destination (museum and/or memorial), neighborhood serving and destination enhancing retail, and housing
- It is more likely that the TYPE I and II Cells [those deemed by the report to be unstable and moderately stable] will need to be considered for revenue generating uses that help defray ongoing site maintenance costs
- The two courts that cross the site are key plan elements that once linked the Sand Filtration Site with the adjacent McMillan Reservoir. These courts should be preserved and adaptively re-used.
- **Vistas** from the site are significant and should be preserved in conjunction with development of public open space on the site particularly over the stable TYPE III cells where views are possible to surrounding institutions as well as the reservoir. See “Key Planning Elements Diagram.”

**“Making a McMillan Place” Recommendation from the Office of Planning Report**



## Current VMP Plan



### The proposed plan:

- Intensive use of the property – when the Office of Planning recommendation was for low to moderate use
- 130 story, 875,000 sq. ft. medical office building in a neighborhood of 2-3 story historic row houses – when the Office of Planning recommendation was for no more than 5 stories and no office space or medical facilities
- Destruction of 100% of all underground caverns (one is in use by DC water through at least 2025, and the developer says they “hope to use” cell 28, but we know that is badly damaged so they will find they cannot use it) - when the Office of Planning recommendation was for preservation of all 4 stable cells and reuse of all 8 moderately damaged cells
- Total loss of view-scapes of the Capitol, Washington monument, basilica, etc. – when the Office of Planning recommendation was for preservation of vistas

### Bloomingdale Row Houses



I would like to leave the city with a final question – why do we need to destroy this national historical site and amazing architectural monument to build office space, when there are parking lots across the street at the VA, and the Children’s Hospital that would be well suited for office space. There is also currently major development planned at the Armed Forces Retirement community that will include millions (plural) of square feet of office space. The need for this building needs to be reassessed.

**VA Medical Facilitation Parking lot on NE corner of Michigan and North Capitol St**

