

January 28, 2015



801 Mount Vernon Place NW
Washington, DC 20001

P 202.249.3000
F 202.249.3255

eventsdc.com

Anthony Hood, Chairman
District of Columbia Zoning Commission
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210S
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Z.C. Case No. 14-09 – QC 369, LLC
PUD and Related Map Amendment at 9th & L Sts., N.W.

Dear Mr. Hood and Members of the Commission:

As the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Washington Convention and Sports Authority t/a Events DC, I write to you in strong support of the planned unit development (“PUD”) and related map amendment presently before you as Z.C. No. 14-09 for the hotel, residential, and retail project to be built at 901 L Street, NW, at the southeastern portion of Square 369. The Authority owns and operates the Walter E. Washington Convention Center directly across 9th Street NW from the proposed project. The Center contains 2.3 million square feet, receives over 1 million visitors per year and has generated over \$3.9 billion in direct delegate spending since opening in 2003.

In addition, the Authority led negotiations with the selected private developer in a \$520 million public-private partnership for the 1,175-room Marriott Marquis Washington, DC, located immediately south of Square 369. Our continued needs and goals embrace the additional hotel units at a lower and varied market, as well as more retail along 9th Street NW in close proximity to the Convention Center. We have been directly involved in supporting this important addition to our neighborhood and ask that you approve the pending application as soon as possible.

When the Convention Center was conceived, a fundamental need and expectation was the timely development of as many hotel rooms as possible in close proximity. Other major cities, like San Diego for instance, compete with us and know that one of the main reasons that a destination is selected for conventions is the ease and convenience of hotel rooms near the convention venue. In our case, we believe that we are still very short of a needed range of units and attractive retail to improve our competitive position.

The original feasibility studies for construction of the Convention Center anticipated a need for, and economic benefits associated with, a significant number of additional guest rooms. The Marriott Marquis, originally planned for 1,500 rooms, was scaled back to 1,175 guest rooms. The additional 501 rooms contemplated for the Square 369 development will go a long way to help satisfy the demand. Square 369 is the ideal location for this supporting mix of uses. In short, we will greatly benefit from the maximum number of hotel units that can be developed on this square.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.14-09
EXHIBIT NO.58

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This development, especially the two hotels and related retail, is essential in helping meet the visitor demand serving our Convention Center. Washington, DC, as our nation's capital, is one of the most visited cities in the United States and in the world. In our view, serving visitors and providing a full range of transient housing for those attending conventions is critical to the well-being of our wonderful city.

In this case, not only are the goals relating to tourism promoted through the provision of approximately 500 additional hotel units, but the developer has carefully and arduously gone to great lengths to preserve historic features in the square, provide 200 units of housing, and to work with neighborhood groups and individuals in shaping the design to best fit the community.

We urge you to approve the application as soon as possible.

Respectfully,

Gregory A. O'Dell
President and Chief Executive Officer