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2015 MAY 11 PM 2: 38

Zoning Commission of the
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Re: Case No 14-13 Proposed Rooftop Penthouse Text Amendments

Dear Members of the Zoning Commission,

I am writing to express my support for the proposed rooftop penthouse text amendments that are currently before you in Case No 14-13. This is an exciting opportunity for the Zoning Commission and to residents and visitors of the District of Columbia. As a result of the recent amendments made by Congress to the 1910 Height of Buildings Act, which increase the maximum height of rooftop penthouses and more importantly permit human occupancy, you have an opportunity to implement a new set of penthouse regulations that will undoubtedly provide long-term social, aesthetic, and economic benefits to the District of Columbia for many generations to come.

Undoubtedly, large high-rise commercial and residential developments are the types of projects where the public and private sector stand to gain the most from the benefits provided by the proposed rooftop amendments. There are a number of these projects within the District that are already underway or in the late planning stages, but are still at a point where design modifications could be made to take advantage of the new penthouse regulations. One such project is The Wharf, a joint venture between PN Hoffman and Madison Marquette that will transform Washington's southwest waterfront into a world class mixed-use destination containing residential, commercial, retail, cultural and entertainment uses, and over 12 acres of open space. The Wharf project would benefit greatly from adoption of the new penthouse regulations through increased development potential and greater utilization of previously unused penthouse space. In return, the District will gain through increased tax benefit, added affordability in the residential market, and enhancement of the aesthetics and livability of the city.

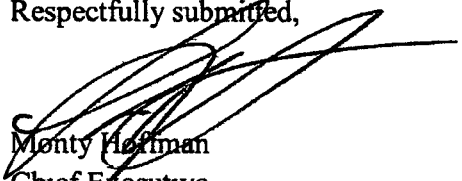
In order for The Wharf project to maximize the potential public and private benefits that will be afforded by allowing occupancy of the penthouse level, there is an urgent need for the Zoning Commission to move quickly with approving the proposed penthouse amendments, or at least those provisions pertaining to high-density commercial and residential areas. The Wharf project is nearing completion of the horizontal development phase, and is quickly approaching initiation of vertical development on several parcels. In addition, there are several projects that are well into the permitting process. Therefore, if there is any time to modify the plans for these

projects that time is now, prior to the commencement of vertical development or completion of the permit process. As I am sure you know, having to retrofit a completed, or partially-completed building, or modify development plans that are fully permitted will entail significant time delay and expenditure of substantial resources. You may recall at the hearing held on this matter last November, I affirmatively responded to a Commission inquiry whether I would return with a consent calendar request to modify the approved Wharf PUD should the new penthouse regulations be approved. I am hopeful that the provisions pertaining to high rise buildings afford that opportunity.

Finally, I urge the Commission to consider providing the maximum amount of flexibility when deliberating options for affordable housing. I am supportive of linking the production of affordable housing to the additional economic value that is created as a result of the new penthouse regulations. However, it is critical that there be options available to either construct the affordable units as part of a project or make a contribution to the Housing Production Trust Fund (HPTF) that is based on a reasonable percentage of the assessed value of the additional habitable penthouse space. This is especially critical to projects that are already underway.

We at PN Hoffman and Madison Marquette are very proud of what has been accomplished thus far with The Wharf project, and look forward to seeing the enormous contributions it will make to the District of Columbia upon its completion. We are also very appreciative of the continued support you have provided to the project over the years. Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Respectfully submitted,



Monty Hoffman
Chief Executive

PN Hoffman and Associates