

Prepared for the hearing on March 16, 2015 which was postponed until May 7, 2015

District of Columbia Zoning Commission  
ZC Case No. 14-18  
Testimony by Keisha Howard  
Brookland Manor/Brentwood Village Residents Association

Members of the Zoning Commission,

My name is Keisha Howard and I live at 1303 Saratoga Ave NE I've lived at Brookland Manor for 16 years with no incident at the property I'm here because I have concerns about Mid-City Financial's plans to redevelop Brookland Manor

My first concern is that Mid City has not considered how much the redevelopment will be a disruption to the lives of current residents Without any guarantees we don't know how to prepare or where we'll live in the coming years For example, Mid City claims to want to begin construction in August of 2017, however that is when many residents will learn about where their children will go to college. My daughter is an outstanding student with hopes to attend Howard University. If my daughter is accepted to Howard, she will be eligible for a generous scholarship which is for DC residents only However, if the renovations start august 2017, I don't know what will happen Without any guarantees, I might have to move to Maryland because there's nowhere else to go in DC. If that's so, she would have to decline the scholarship and lose out on the chance to get a great education at Howard The disruption is part of the problem with Mid City's plans.

And what makes it worse is that there's nowhere to go! The homeless shelters are overflowing with families. Even if we received vouchers, where are we to go since everywhere is already filled to capacity My daughter's godmother went thought a similar experience when the affordable property in Germantown where she lived was demolished. Even though she recieved a voucher, she had to struggle to find a new place to live. Everywhere she looked was so full that she wasn't able to find a new place to live. She eventually lost her voucher becuase she didn't use it in time Now she lives in Silver Spring, she works two jobs, and struggles to make rent each month

To avoid disrupting our lives, it's important that Mid City builds the new buildings first and relocate us around the property as they go Any renovation of the property should be done while the residents of Brookland Manor remain on site And IF there will be any need for relocation off of Brookland Manor, we need a guarantee of an absolute right to return to the property once it's ready We need to know in writing that we will be allowed to return

Additionally, Mid City has said much about housing for seniors, but what about household that have people with disabilities or children with special needs? Both of my children have disabilities and if I leave DC, I will lose their DC health insurance that provides more services (important services!) than the insurance in Maryland Mid City's plan leaves my family out and it ignores the many homes that have people with special needs at Brookland Manor. Does Mid City have plans to help my family and other households with special needs?

Finally, Mid City's plans will not have enough affordable units at the property to take care of current residents Many of the units they claim will be "affordable" will not be affordable to current tenants

at Brookland Manor If a resident is on TANF, SSI, or Disability or receiving unemployment or child support, that will not be enough money to live at Brookland Manor unless they expand and strengthen their affordable housing units We should not have to use half of this money toward our rent because we need it to take care of our families

Unless Mid City provides guarantees for current residents and expands their plans for affordable housing, I don't understand how someone can support their plans for redevelopment

Thank you.