

Trinity Baptist Church
1814 Central Place, NE
Washington, DC 20002

May 22, 2015

Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 200S
Washington, DC 20001

RE: Letter of Support for Case No. 15-01 PUD and Map Amendment at 320 Florida Avenue, NE

Dear Zoning Commissioners:

As the Pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, I would like to express my support for Level 2 Development's *The Highline at Union Market*, a 315 unit multi-family Planned Unit Development located at 320 Florida Ave., NE. Trinity Baptist Church has been a part of the Ward 5 community for over 120 years, and I have served as Pastor for nearly 18 years. As a community leader, I care deeply about the growth and success of the neighborhood, and I believe this project will benefit the community for the following reasons:

1. **Public Park:** Level 2 Development (Level 2) has proposed to dedicate up to \$600,000 for the design, construction, and maintenance of a public park on the site of the overgrown District-owned land between 320 Florida Ave., NE and the train tracks. The park will include community herb gardens, trees and planting areas, lawns, light fixtures, seating areas, a public plaza, a widened sidewalk, and an ADA accessible pathway from Florida Avenue up to the adjacent property line for future connection to Morse Street. This park will provide Ward 5 with desperately needed green space, and the pedestrian pathway will provide a convenient connection between the NoMa – Gallaudet U. Metro Station and Union Market.
2. **Affordable Housing:** Providing housing that is affordable to residents of all income levels is one of the most critical issues that the District of Columbia faces today. Level 2 has proposed a creative way to provide a greater amount of affordable housing that will reach lower income households by partnering with Habitat for Humanity (DC Habitat), a 501(c)3 nonprofit, and providing a mix of on-site and off-site affordable housing.

Through Level 2's proposed \$1.4 Million contribution to DC Habitat, Level 2 and DC Habitat will co-develop 13 for-sale houses (13,865 NSF) off-site for low income households earning an average of 50% AMI. The homes will average 2.5 bedrooms and over 1,000 NSF. At least seven of these homes will be located in ANC-5D, and all 13 homes will be located in Ward 5. DC Habitat has demonstrated that it is committed to ANC-5D and Ward 5 with the development of 28 low income homes within a few blocks of our church, and has proven that it can execute on life-changing, low-income homeownership opportunities.

In addition to these 13 homes for low income households, Level 2 will provide 13 units (7,865 NSF) on-site at the Highline at Union Market for households earning a maximum 80% AMI.

As a long time community leader and Pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, I recommend that the Zoning Commission vote in support of the PUD.

Sincerely,

William Banks, Jr. (MAB)
Rev. William Banks, Jr.