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c/o Donna Hartley
3051 Chancellors Way NE
Washington, DC 20017

7 July 2015

Chairman Anthony J. Hood
Washington DC Zoning Commission
441 4th Street NW Suite 200S
Washington, DC 20001

Re: DC Zoning Commission Case 15-02

Dear Chairman Hood,

We learned recently that there is a planned development of 40 townhouses on the property formerly owned by Holy Redeemer College at 3112 &th St. After listening to the DC Zoning Commission proceedings from 29 June, 2015 (<http://view.earthchannel.com/PlayerController.aspx?PGD=dczoning&iID=2805>), we feel compelled to write.

The maintained lot to the south of the Holy Redeemer College building is currently used by people in both Chancellors Row and in the surrounding Edgewood neighborhood. People play with their dogs, throwing sticks or balls. Children play soccer and baseball when the weather is nice and this past winter they enjoyed playing in the snow there. It is used as a picnic and sunbathing space.



There is no alternative green space of any size in proximity of this lot for the surrounding neighborhood. The lawn in front of Holy Redeemer College is not an acceptable substitute. This side lot has been used as a commons by the surrounding community for many years, making it a de facto park, with all that implies. It features mature and magnificent trees and open multi-use space. All of this would be destroyed by the proposed PUD 15-02 before the Commission.

The area surrounding Holy Redeemer has evolved during the last 4 years to become one of much higher density. Chancellor's Row, containing 237 townhouses was built just behind it (2011-2014). Bozutto is currently building 45 townhouses (2 blocks away) for delivery in late 2015 and 2016. Monroe St. Market (4 blocks away) has been built (2012-2014) with 562 apts. The lot on 7th and Monroe (currently the sales office for Bozutto's townhouses) is planned for mixed use development with 156 apts. And yet there is no park nearby. That function has been served by the large maintained lot next to Holy Redeemer College. This is the last nearby green space of any consequence. Depriving the Edgewood community of this space would cause irreparable harm.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.15-02
EXHIBIT NO.15

In the hearing on 29 June, both Ms. Vitale from OP and Commissioner May mentioned that the developer had asked for "relief" from the requirements for front, side and rear yards. This suggests that the developer seeks to evade the standards that were developed to make Washington, DC communities livable. It is not an unreasonable expectation that the people who live here want to preserve some basic qualities that have been enjoyed for years.

Another major concern is the parking situation. In the hearing, Ms. Vitale said that the OP had asked the applicant to eliminate surface visitor parking and narrow the driveways in order to come closer to compliance for front, side and rear yard standards. Either way, the community standards are reduced and the Edgewood community loses. Further, OP has already approved the reclassification of this property from R-5-A to R-5-B which reduces the parking space requirement from 1 parking space per dwelling unit to 1 parking space per 2 dwelling units. In fact, this means that on-street parking in the community will be significantly more congested than currently, which places an unfair burden on the current neighborhood residents. We remember at an ANC meeting with 5E01 commissioner Debbie Smith Steiner in March 2014 that area residents were angry about the loss of available on-street parking on Jackson, Hamlin and 7th Streets, and that was well before the Bozutto construction (2 blocks away) had started or the Holy Redeemer project was under discussion. It is often the case that if someone arrives after 7 p.m. in the evening, there are no street parking spaces in Chancellors Row proper. The 45 townhouses under construction by Bozutto will have no parking in the development (other than assigned spaces) and no parking for visitors. This will necessarily result in increased public street parking by residents and visitors in the already overburdened area. The addition of 40 townhouses on the Holy Redeemer site, with NO on-street parking in the development, will only exacerbate the situation. Developers must not be allowed to pass on the impact and cost of their development to those who have lived in the community for years.

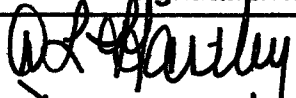
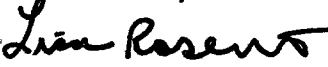

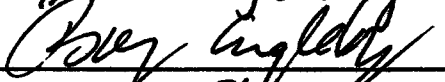

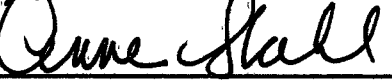
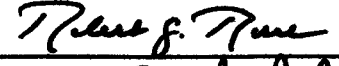

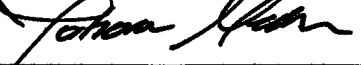
In the June 29 hearing, Commissioner May said that this development "screams low budget, from site planning to choice of materials." Low budget is different from affordable housing. We object to what seems to be requests for relief from city requirements for parking and yard sizes, in order to squeeze in as many townhouses as possible and build them as cheaply as possible. These decisions place an unfair burden on the existing residents of the Edgewood neighborhood with no clear public interest benefit. In the long run, they raise the issue of their sustainability and they immediately impact quality of life for residents.

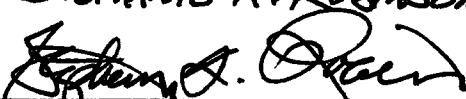

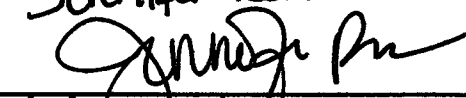
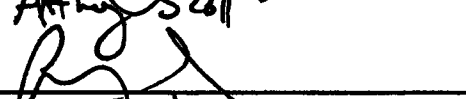
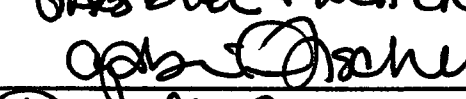
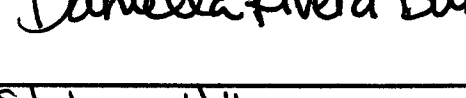
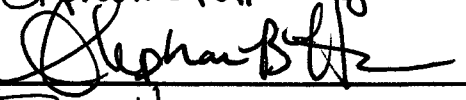
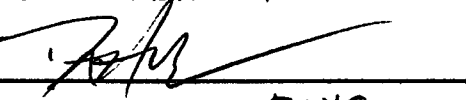
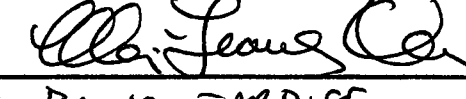

Chairman Hood, we plead with you to challenge this development as it has been proposed and to help our community in Edgewood remain livable with a long-functioning park for the entire Edgewood community. If that is not possible, then a real sizable green space and sufficient parking in the new development are minimal requirements.

Sincerely,

(attached signature sheet)

Attachment to DC Zoning Commission letter of 7 July 2015

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