

# Elia Law Group, PLLC

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December 10, 2015

Anthony Hood, Chairman  
DC Zoning Commission  
441 4<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Suite 210S  
Washington, DC 20001  
[zcsubmissions@dc.gov](mailto:zcsubmissions@dc.gov)

Re: Case No. 15-03-1315 Clifton Street NW

Dear Chairman Hood,

My name is Elizabeth Elia and I am writing on behalf of my clients, the tenants associations at 1309 and 1315 Clifton Street NW. I represented these neighboring tenants associations in the exercise of their rights under the tenant opportunity to purchase act ("TOPA").

After conducting competitive RFP processes, both tenants associations voted independently to assign their TOPA rights to Aria Development. In making their decisions, the tenants associations were influenced by Aria's strong references among community organizers and other TOPA technical assistance providers and Aria's strong track record with the Alden, another TOPA project on 13<sup>th</sup> Street, NW. Also, Aria's offer to the tenants was the best. Every tenant was given the opportunity to choose between the right to permanently remain a tenant in the fully renovated property at their current rent subject only to the "automatic" increase allowed under rent control or a significant payment in exchange for terminating their tenancy. Many tenants in the property selected the buy-out and have literally moved all over the globe in pursuit of their dreams. For example, one tenant who had been saving money to move back to Africa was able to move back several years early. Another tenant was able to use the buy-out to pursue her long-held dream of starting her own business. Other tenants have chosen the right to remain tenants with protected rents in the new building and they eagerly await completion of construction.

Aria has been an outstanding development partner throughout this process for both tenants associations. Aria and their development team (legal counsel, management company, relocation specialists, and escrow agents) have exceeded both my expectations and Aria's contractual obligations in the performances of Aria's obligations under the development agreements in accommodating individual tenant needs and desires, responsiveness to complaints, and requests for last minutes changes. It is clear that Aria appreciates the diverse residents and buildings of Columbia Heights, values historicity, follows through on its promises, expertly develops beautiful buildings and seeks to provide true value to the communities where its properties are located.

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On behalf of the 1309 and 1315 Clifton Street Tenants Associations, I ask that you grant Aria's PUD request. Based on Aria's high level of performance in its properties on 13<sup>th</sup> Street and in its dealings with the tenants in the 1309 and 1315 Clifton Street Tenants Associations, there is no doubt that Aria will deliver a beautiful, well-integrated, well-managed property for existing tenants who have chosen the right to remain in the property and for new residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Elia', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Elizabeth Elia