

Hanousek, Donna (DCOZ)

From: Charlotte Legates <charlotte.legates@oracle.com>
Sent: Monday, January 1, 2018 7:02 PM
To: DCOZ - ZC Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: RE: Case Number 16-23, Proposal for Design Review and Development by Valor Development, LLC, Square 1499, Lots 802, 803, 807 Letter in Opposition

Mr. Anthony Hood, Chairman
District of Columbia Zoning Commission
441 4th Street NW
Suite 210S
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Chairman Hood:

RE: Case Number 16-23, Proposal for Design Review and Development by Valor Development, LLC, Square 1499, Lots 802, 803, 807 Letter in Opposition

As a resident of the Spring Valley / American University neighborhood, I oppose the project currently proposed by Valor Development, LLC. for Lot 807, because

- **Size and Density**

The size and density of the project are greatly out of scale with the surrounding residential community. The density issue will be even worse if the Commission approves Valor's request for a 10 percent increase (from 219 to 240) in number of units.

- **Parking**

Parking is inadequate. The 12/21/17 "Applicant's Pre-Hearing Statement" ("Statement") gives the impression that residents of Valor's 219 units will have access to 224 in-building parking spaces--85 on the G1 level and 139 on G3 level. But Valor also states that it plans to build 370 parking spaces of which 236 are allocated to American University ("AU") and 90 are allocated to retail use. $236 + 90 = 326$ spaces for non-residential use. $370 - 326 = 44$. This is inadequate for a neighborhood in which most residential units will have at least one car because of the distance to the Metro (a mile uphill), the lack of frequency of the N4 and N6 buses outside of rush hour, and the failure of nearby retail to fully satisfy the typical needs of a Washington family or single resident. Parking will be even more inadequate if the Commission approves Valor's request for a 10 percent decrease in the number of parking spaces.

At a community meeting, Valor proposed to lease back some of the spaces on Lot 807 currently allocated to AU. It's unclear if this leaseback has been agreed to by AU and will last for a substantial period of time (preferably for the life of the Ladybird project).

Valor has also stated at a community meeting that it would prohibit residents from seeking Residential Parking Permits. Even if such a prohibition were legal and enforceable, the Statement does not refer to such a prohibition. The addition of cars owned by the residents of the 219 (or 240) Ladybird units to the Residential Parking Permit program, which is already very heavily used,

would be a significant imposition on current residents, many of whom would be unable to park near their homes.

- **Grocery Store**

Some in the community have supported this project based on Valor's promise to bring a full-service grocery store to the community. Valor has announced that the store selected is Balducci's.

Balducci's may technically fulfill the District's definition of a "full service" grocery store. But its emphasis on high-cost gourmet items substantially duplicates the Wagshal's grocery business already present in the Spring Valley Shopping Center. It is unlikely that the community could sustain these two competing businesses, especially as Valor proposes to eliminate space on Lot 807 that Wagshal's currently uses to support its business.

- **Pick-Up and Delivery**

The project lacks adequate package, passenger, and mail delivery points.

In community meetings, Valor has proposed additional parking on the south side of Yuma Street with a "no parking" zone in front of the residential entrance. At 30 feet, Yuma Street is narrower than the District's minimum width for two-way travel plus two-sided parking (32 feet, with a preferred width of 36 feet). This proposal also fails to acknowledge regular American University buses serving the 4801 Massachusetts building next door to the site (at least 4 and sometimes up to 10 per hour).

- **Community Relations**

Valor has "encouraged" the community to support its proposal by:

- Threatening to build a far less desirable building on the site as a "matter of right."
- Making statements about parking, delivery, and retail use not included in its Statement.

Clearly, development of Lot 807 is desirable. But Valor's current proposal threatens substantial change to the look and the density of the neighborhood while also failing to address community needs.

Sincerely,

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