

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE DC ZONING COMMISSION – JANUARY 25, 2018

My name is Elizabeth Mohre. I live at 4706 Windom Place, four houses from the intersection of Windom & 48th Street, directly across the street from the proposed development. I've lived in my home for 21 years and raised my daughter there: she went to Janney Elementary. We chose this neighborhood because of both its school and its character, with its convenient small neighborhood commercial area.

Like other speakers I object to the size, mass and scope of the proposal. I am not against thoughtful development and would welcome additional housing and small-scale commercial enterprises, but this proposal is clearly out of character for our single-family residential neighborhood. Moreover, I want to make the point that it is NOT in keeping with other large apartment buildings along Massachusetts Avenue that at some point in this process someone—perhaps one of the ANC commissioners—cited as precedent for development of an apartment complex, and a way to illustrate a supposed lack of traffic issues associated with those properties. However, this is comparing apples to oranges. The properties that were mentioned as comparable are simply not.

Let me detail this:

At 4200 Massachusetts Avenue is the 80-unit, 9-floor **Foxhall**. It was built in 1971, and is set back from Mass Ave by an enormous amount of green space to the front and wooded on one side; beyond similar green space at the rear, on the opposite side of the street are several small apartment buildings. Adjacent to the fourth side of the Foxhall is the **Westover Place** gated community, surrounded by brick walls, and built in 1985, nearly 15 years after the Foxhall. Obviously the original owners of those units had no objection to having the Foxhall as their (rather distant) neighbor.

Across Mass Avenue at 4301 are the **Greenbriar Condos**, now primarily rental units, built in 1951. This 8-floor building is also set back from the avenue by a large sloped green lawn space, and surrounded on two sides by wooded areas, on the other side of which are parking lots for DHS. There are NO residential neighbors. The fourth side adjoins the third property, **The Berkshire**, 750 apartments constructed in the mid-1950's. Similarly, it is surrounded by woods on two sides and fronts on extensive sloped lawn and landscaped green space. There are NO residential neighbors anywhere nearby.

The character and placement of these properties is very different than what the current developers are proposing for our neighborhood. If this 7-story apartment building is approved as proposed, it will directly abut our single-family homes with nothing but a small neighborhood street separating our homes from something 80 feet high, blocking the light in the immediate two blocks and forever changing the character of what was intended by the Comprehensive Plan to be a small neighborhood commercial area.

This is not the place for development of large-scale housing in our area, such as was built above the Best Buy on Wisconsin Avenue. That area lends itself to this type of development, as it is adjacent only to commercial and retail properties with no abutting single-family residences. 48th Street is NOT appropriate for development of this scale, and I respectfully urge you to consider this in reaching your decision.

