

January 23, 2019

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

RE: Case Number 16-23, Proposal for Design Review and Development by Valor Development, LLC, Square 1499, Lots 802, 803, 806, 807. Letter in Opposition

Chairman Hood and Commissioners:

We attended the meeting on January 4. It is most unfortunate that time got away and necessitated a follow-up meeting that we are unable to attend. This is written to add voice for the absent. We would be most grateful for your consideration:

The development project plans are exceedingly important to us because, unlike the developers and others who have written letters of support, we live in Spring Valley close to the proposed development of the Superfresh site. We and our neighbors will be directly affected and will live with the consequences of this ill-conceived development that has no place in the community. In four words: it is too large. It does not take into account the surrounding neighborhoods and the burden that is already on them because of increased traffic.

The developer, Valor, has made repeated unsatisfactory and perhaps disingenuous efforts to make their plans more palatable to nearby neighbors. Thus far, their changes have been unsuccessful in scope and design. Overall, the plans lack respect for the preservation of the character and integrity of the community and surrounding areas.

We appreciate the desire to develop the former Superfresh, certainly a grocery store would be a welcome addition for many of us. However, with news that Wegman's has broken ground at the Fannie Mae site, two Whole Foods stores, Trader Joe's, Giant, and Safeway within a 5-mile range, it seems unlikely that a suitable grocer would commit as promised.

The density, size, and height of the design have no context in this part of town. The added traffic on streets that have already seen an increase in traffic flow would make the environment untenable for residents both in terms of driving and safe walking to nearby businesses. Parking is already nearly impossible on many days at most any hour thanks to new businesses that have opened in the recent past. Moreover, delivery trucks in the streets, often illegally parked, make driving challenging and rather dangerous in those areas.

It is incomprehensible that developers turn a blind eye to the surroundings they seek to develop and seem only to want to squeeze the most profit for their investment at the cost of those who live in the affected neighborhoods. The goal appears to be to build large and dense no matter what part of town they aim to develop with seemingly no thought given to the quality of life for residents. Increasing the population density and shadows due to unreasonably high building height will not enhance the quality of life for anyone.

The development needs to be significantly reconsidered with integrity and respect for current residents. It would be a critical error to paint all of the city with the same brush. Being the capital of the country, this beautiful nationally and internationally significant city offers many different neighborhoods for us to enjoy. Please do not succumb to the striving to transform every inch of Washington into the highest payoff to the promoters of development run amok.

We are not alone in the value we place on peace, quiet, and quality of life that is near downtown and world-class museums, architecture, restaurants, and more. If we wanted to live in Adams Morgan or U Street, to name two happening neighborhoods, we would be there.

We urge you to consider the consequences this project as it stands would have on the quality of life for the residents of Spring Valley, AU Park, and nearby. Once a mistake like this is made, there is no way to reverse and correct. Please avoid the fate of destroying the beauty of space and respect for options to live in neighborhoods that offer individuals and families different lifestyles in which to live, simply to pay developers for their grand ideas to extend downtown to the outer limits. There is no reason to duplicate Bethesda.

Thank you for your consideration of these important issues.

Respectfully,

The image shows two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature on the left is a cursive signature that appears to be 'Deborah G. Barry'. The second signature on the right is a more stylized cursive signature that appears to be 'Carlos D. Ferreira'.

Deborah G. Barry and Carlos D. Ferreira
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