

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Marilyn Richert <marilyn261@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 11:49 AM
To: DCOZ - ZC Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: Case Number 19-10 Valor Development, LLC, PUD Square 1499, Lots 802, 803, 806 and 807

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Letter in Opposition

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

Dear Chairman Hood and Members of the Commission:

My name is Marilyn Richert and I live at 4811 Yuma St. NW, directly across the street from the proposed Valor project. I have written to you about this project

three times previously, in zoning Case 16-23 Design Review, so you are well aware of my opposition to the size of the project. In order to visualize the impact on

the neighborhood, I tell people to imagine a flat sheet spread out on a plot of land. Then, I ask them to visualize Valor upending a gallon of red paint on a

portion of that sheet. The garish wound left on that sheet symbolizes the damage that will be inflicted on our neighborhood if the Valor project goes forward

as it stands. Architectural drawings provided by Valor and seen in ZC Case 19-10, Exhibits 2C3, 2C4 and 2C5 nicely illustrate how the proposed building

will LOOM over the surrounding neighborhood.

In reviewing my notes on this project, I find that I and my neighbors first heard about the proposed development at an ANC3e meeting exactly four years

ago, on September 30, 2015. Since then, I have spent a goodly number of hours at endless meetings in various venues with my neighbors and with Valor.

Valor claims that they have made numerous changes in response to input from the neighborhood. True, they have made some changes, but in fact, they

have always maintained a 1-acre behemoth of over 5 stories, with a set back penthouse.

Valor has had two bites at the apple. When there was not ZC consensus on the voluntary design review, they were allowed to switch to the Planned

Unit Development (PUD) route to seek Zoning Commission approval. I believe that the neighborhood could handle a building of three stories in

height, but when I asked Valor representatives about a smaller building, they said that a smaller building would not be economically feasible for them.

I am told that Valor has obtained some new funding sources, so again I would ask, why not a smaller building.

One of the good results of our four year effort to obtain a reasonable-sized building for this empty plot of land is that I have had the opportunity to become

familiar with the Comprehensive Plan for the District of Columbia. In Case No. 19-10, Exhibit No. 2F, Valor discusses their alleged congruence with the

Plan. They note that the Plan's Rock Creek West Element calls for protecting the low- density stable (I have lived here for half of a century) residential

neighborhoods west of Rock Creek, and recognizes the existing scale, function and character of these neighborhoods, as well as the contribution they

make to the character, economy and fiscal stability of the District of Columbia. It is further noted that development in both residential and commercial areas

must be carefully managed (this is where the Zoning Commission comes in) to protect and enhance the existing scale, function and character of these

neighborhoods. The Plan also states that heights and densities for developments should be appropriate (emphasis on "appropriate") to the scale and

character of adjoining communities. Additionally, the Plan's Urban Design Element calls for, regardless of neighborhood identity, avoiding overpowering

(emphasis on "overpowering") contrasts of scale, height and density as infill development occurs.

Of course, Valor stresses how their proposed development is not inconsistent with the Plan. The same passages can, however, be read to indicate just

how much the Valor proposal is in direct opposition to the guidance detailed in the Comprehensive Plan. Again, I note that the absolute incongruity

of the development is well illustrated in Case 19-10, Exhibits 2C3, 2C4, and 2C5.

A major point that I want to convey is that just because you CAN build such a building does NOT mean that you SHOULD. Will the Zoning Commission

step up to the plate and protect our neighborhood from over-zealous developers? Hope springs eternal!

Thank you for the opportunity to address my concerns,

Sincerely,

Marilyn Richert