

October 10, 2019

Mr. Anthony Hood, Chairman  
D.C. Zoning Commission  
One Judiciary Square  
441 4<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Second Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20001

RE: Z.C. Case No. 19-10: Valor Development LLC – Consolidated Planned Unit Development for Square 1499, Lots 802, 803, 806, and 807

Dear Chairman Hood and Members of the Commission:

I am a Spring Valley resident writing in opposition to Valor's proposal for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) as referenced above. The development does not comply with the requirements outlined in Chapter 3 of the PUD regulations in that it does not provide an appropriate balance of public benefits to justify the density proposed.

In fact, Valor's proposal offers almost nothing in the form of public benefits. Valor is proposing a small number of affordable housing units – only 29 – but not specifying if these units will be work-force housing affordable for the city's first responders and/or public school teachers.

The reliance on an alley system to facilitate ingress and egress for the apartment tenants, American University offices, customers for the limited retail available, and for truck loading and unloading is inadequate and will create new public safety problems, especially for pedestrians using the alleys. Valor is proposing a 3-foot pedestrian pathway (not even a sidewalk) along the north-south alley that will be inadequate, especially for families with young children walking through the site and for people with disabilities.

Although Valor argues that its development will restore retail to the site, the reality is that this proposal will reduce the available retail space at the site by more than half and will force current retail tenants to shut their businesses and move from the site. Although it will be nice to have the convenience of a grocer in the neighborhood, the small size of the grocer and the "boutique" nature of that grocer, as proposed, will not meet the practical shopping needs of most residents, who will continue to shop at other grocery stores within a few minutes' drive. While convenient, the new grocer will not rise to the level of a public benefit as outlined in the PUD regulations.

Although the site may return a grocery to the neighborhood, this cannot justify the safety risks created in the area and the lack of mitigation of those safety risks or the loss of other retail space. The reliance on the existing alleyways also suggests a development that may be too dense and intense for the site, as planned. Valor also has identified some transportation-related benefits, but most of these have not been finalized and will be negotiated with DDOT after action by Zoning Commission without the opportunity for residents' input.

Sincerely,



Thomas M. Smith  
4601 Tilden Street NW  
(Spring Valley)

ZONING COMMISSION  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO.19-10  
EXHIBIT NO.212