

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 8B



SMD 8B01 – Khadijah Watson
SMD 8B02 – Paul Trantham
SMD 8B03 – Thomas Von Williams, Jr.
SMD 8B04 – Kimberly Little

SMD 8B05 – Joseph Johnson
SMD 8B06 – Alyce McFarland
SMD 8B07 - Juanita Beltran

RE: Opposition to ZC Case No. 24-07 – Skyland Place LLC

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Dear Chairman Hood and Commissioners,

On behalf of Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 8B, I write to formally express our opposition to the proposed map amendment in ZC Case No. 24-07 concerning Skyland Place LLC. This opposition follows extensive discussions and deliberations during our regularly scheduled monthly meeting held on Tuesday, December 17, 2024, where the Commission voted unanimously (5–0) against supporting the map amendment.

It is critical to note that during prior zoning hearings, the Zoning Commission provided guidance to separate deliberations on the map amendment from the associated development project. Despite this directive, it is impossible to ignore the deeply intertwined impacts of this proposed amendment and project, which raise serious concerns about displacement, transparency, and tenant rights in our community.

The concerns shared during the December 17 meeting, as well as those previously expressed, reflect a consistent pattern of harm that this development poses, particularly for vulnerable populations such as seniors and low-income families. Specifically, the following issues were raised:

1. Displacement of Residents: Seniors and families residing at the property have reported significant fears of eviction and rent increases, which threaten their ability to remain in the community. Displacement would disproportionately harm residents who have lived in the neighborhood for decades.

2. Tenant Association Concerns: DC law requires an active and legal tenant association with adequate participation from residents to ensure fair representation in property-related decisions. At the time of purchase, the property was reportedly 98% occupied; however, the tenant association consisted of only six members—far below the threshold needed to establish a legitimate and active body under the law. This lack of representation raises questions about the transparency of the developer's engagement process.

3. Broken Promises by the Developer: Numerous residents have reported inconsistencies between the developer's stated commitments and their subsequent actions. While assurances were given to work with tenants and ensure stability, residents have instead encountered legal actions filed against them, exacerbating fears of displacement.

4. Community Mistrust: Former Commissioner Paul Trantham, after speaking with many constituents, highlighted widespread concerns about the developer's practices. Promises made during initial discussions have not materialized, deepening mistrust and reinforcing the belief that this map amendment will harm rather than help the community.

Given these issues, ANC 8B finds it impossible to support a map amendment that would facilitate a project likely to harm our community and displace its most vulnerable members. It would be irresponsible to endorse a measure that prioritizes development over the well-being of our residents, particularly when there are clear violations of tenants' rights and a lack of genuine engagement with the community.

We urge the Zoning Commission to consider the overwhelming concerns expressed by residents and ANC 8B, and to reject this map amendment. Our responsibility as leaders is to advocate for sustainable and equitable development that uplifts our community rather than displaces its members.

Commissioner Betty Scippio, who was sworn in on January 2, 2025, has not yet had the opportunity to fully review and familiarize herself with this map amendment proposal. Therefore, we respectfully request a postponement, if possible, to allow all parties sufficient time to conduct their due diligence. Based on input from residents and the former commissioner, the commission continues to oppose this map amendment.”

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to continued dialogue on this issue and hope that the concerns of ANC 8B and our residents are given the serious consideration they deserve.

Sincerely,



Joseph B. Johnson
Chair ANC 8B, Commissioner 8B05