



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3E

TENLEYTOWN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY PARK FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS

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Testimony Regarding Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church and Sunrise Senior Living Proposed Development of the site at 3920 Alton Place NW

Greetings Chairman Hill and Board Members. I'm Jonathan McHugh, the ANC Commissioner for the SMD the proposed development is located in. I'll keep my remarks brief, we've submitted two documents, a resolution in support of the Applicant and an MOU that all parties have agreed to if the proposed development were approved. The resolution passed with a vote of 3-1 with one Commissioner not present due to travel.

While the resolution passed, for the reasons noted in its narrative, I'd like to focus one aspect of the proposal that did raise concerns and where we as an ANC would respectfully appreciate more clarity from the BZA in terms of how to evaluate proposals such as this in the future. That aspect is the density requested and the relief from zoning code requirements that relief required. While consulting as much as possible with city agencies, other zoning experts, zoning code and pertinent zoning cases, we were not certain what standard to use in order to determine how much relief is appropriate, especially in cases where there was a proposed mixed-use such as this one. Commissioners differed in their assessment of the proposal with the one vote in opposition deciding that the proposal asked for too much relief.

To be clear, the majority of Commissioners felt the adverse impacts would still be acceptable but that is because of the site's proximity to a major artery, and with the caveat that the proposed density is mitigated to some degree by that proximity. Other factors also contributed to that acceptance, the nature of the use, the nature of the CCRC's operations, as well as agreements in the MOU, but those were not germane to the central concern which was the requested density.

The original proposal had a lot occupancy of 69% which the Commission clearly found to be too much relief, the current proposal has 58% which is still 18% more than the 40% in a R-1-B zone and that is in addition to the relief from the three story limitation. The concern for us how this would be interpreted in other cases that might come before us where a proposal is farther away from major arteries, on residential streets, in R-1-B neighborhoods, but still has an intensity of use, possibly greater than this proposal, that requires mitigation and amelioration. The lack of clarity as to how CCRC proposals, and their attendant intensity of use, are handled is problematic and we would hope there could be some effort to supply ANCs with guidelines in how to interpret them.

As a Commission, we agree with the reasons the CCRC exception was written into the zoning code, but we believe the community would be well-served by standard interpretations on how it is implemented given the impact the construction of these institutions will have on residential communities. We're certain there will be other aspects of the proposal that the BZA will have to rule on but this issue in particular is something we'd very much appreciate getting more clarity on.

Thank you for your time,
Commissioner Jonathan McHugh