

Lenora R. Fuller-McCall
lenora.fuller.mccall@verizon.net

Memo

Date: March 27, 2024

To: DC Office of Zoning
DC Office of Planning and Economic Development
Janeese Lewis George, Ward Four Council Representative

Re: Pending Development at 71 Kennedy Street N.W.

I am a senior citizen, a native Washingtonian and a long-term resident (since January 1955) of the unit block of Longfellow Street N.W. As a former President of South Manor Neighborhood Association (SMNA) and former President of the Unit Block Longfellow Street N.W., and daughter of a former Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner, I want to express my complete and total support by REI, LLC to make the building at 71 Kennedy Street N.W., previously known as the Kennedy Lofts, a residential building in its entirety. Our home is less than 250 square feet radius from the proposed residential building and will be directly impacted by construction plans for the site. My husband and I, Dr. Louis A. McCall, are strongly opposed to making the planned project a mixed-use development for several reasons. Long-term residents of this neighborhood have also expressed their concerns about some of these plans.

First, there has been little sharing of information with our community about specific plans to incorporate commercial operations. Members of South Manor Neighborhood Association and the Longfellow Street Block Club, in which I am active, have not been informed or briefed about specific details for commercial use plans nor have we been given an opportunity to comment on what is proposed. For example, what is planned, what are the implications for mixed use, and what are the environmental impacts depending upon what is to be constructed in the commercial space. Although we had seen posters and flyers placed in our mailboxes from “concerned citizens” opposed to residential only units, we have no idea who these people are given they do not identify themselves and resent them pretending to represent the interests of long-time residents. It is our collective sense that many supporters of mixed-use development do not live in this neighborhood. Members of our community are concerned about environmental pollution impacts and air quality.

Second, we are concerned about the limited parking availability in this neighborhood. We do not look forward to accommodating a 47-unit apartment building without sufficient parking for its occupants. Currently, residents of the Kenn-Manor Apartment at 31-33 Kennedy Street N.W. are forced to park in the Unit Block and one hundred Block of Longfellow Streets N.W. as well as on Madison Street N.W. and other neighboring streets. For years, the Kenn Manor residents have complained at our community meetings about their need for parking and lack of available places to secure their cars. Seniors citizens, neighbors with health issues and disabilities, who are

residents, often find it difficult to park in this block, much less close to their front doors. We are concerned that a mixed-use project will present even more parking challenges to those who live here. Long-term residents who live on neighboring streets voice the same concerns even though they possess zoned parking permits. They report that they too encounter difficulty parking and the city does little to enforce parking permits. We have people who have left cars parked on our street for six months or more that have not been moved and the city appears indifferent to this as a problem, although the lack of parking for residents is being further exacerbated.

Moreover, we are also genuinely concerned about traffic congestion and difficulties accessing the Kennedy Street corridor without the pressure of accommodating another commercial property. Several new buildings have been constructed in the unit block of Kennedy Street N.W. in the past year and the traffic flow is much heavier than before. Although it is our understanding city planners anticipate that more residents will rely on public transportation or bicycle/e-scooter rentals to get around, we do not agree. Quite to the contrary, the traffic flow is worse than ever.

Understand this, my home of almost seven decades is under threat. Although we remodeled our home and invested a great deal to remain, these so-called plans will add more congestion and chaos to an already crowded area is making life here untenable. I love my community. I would like to remain here but this mixed-use proposal is making it less and less appealing. I am not opposed to more retail businesses in the community, just not at this location. Please consider the needs and concerns of long-term residents who desire a livable space.

Yours truly,

LENORA R. FULLER-MCCALL

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