

Good evening, my name is Joelle Rudney, a resident of Harbour Square Coop. I am one of over 300 Ward 6 signatories of the petition from Residents of the Waterfront Metro Area in Opposition to the Forest City proposed development for the 2 corner lots at 4<sup>th</sup> and M streets SW. I oppose it for three main reasons:

- 1- it will deprive Southwest of one of its last free spaces
- 2- It will chase away older, less affluent residents from the neighborhood
- 3- It will make this intersection even more dangerous than it already is.

When my husband and I chose to relocate to DC a few years ago, we chose Southwest because of its distinct neighborhood feel as well as its demographic and architectural diversity . We felt that this was a welcoming community, with its own cultural history as demonstrated by all the Heritage Trail signs as well as by events such as the Jazz and Blues nights at Westminster Presbyterian Church, or Blind Whino. We realized that Southwest was also changing and we **welcomed** the arrival of more businesses and venues such as the Wharf. Since we arrived, the population of Southwest has increased considerably – Ward 6 is the 2<sup>nd</sup> fastest growing ward in the city-- and quite a few new community events have taken root to serve both older and newer residents. Where have these community events taken place? In large part at the corner of 4<sup>th</sup> and M Streets, because this intersection is so central to this neighborhood, right next to the Waterfront Metro and to our only supermarket. These community events like the Farmers Market or the DC State Fair, or the Friday Night Markets have become very important to our residents. The Farmers’ Market provides fresh local produce to everybody, including food stamp holders, thus encouraging healthy eating. The Friday Market offers opportunities for people of all ages and incomes to mingle, show their crafts and enjoy free music on some Friday nights. The DC Fair has showcased a lot of associations and activities for people to participate in. Indeed these events and the space where they take place play as they rightly should –an essential part in our rapidly changing neighborhood. **More residents imply a need for more green space where people can breathe, walk around and socialize!**

The Forest City plan even as it was revised recently, is going to crowd more than 600 housing units into 2 huge 12- story towers which will be the tallest in the neighborhood (according to the developer s’ own statement during the last ANC meeting) . They are going to block the view and the light of the inhabitants of all the neighboring buildings and take away one of our last remaining green “lungs.” The community space that Forest City has included in its latest plan will not provide enough outdoor space for the community events that the increasing population needs to socialize freely ,without patronizing restaurants or businesses.

The second reason why I oppose this development is the fact that out of the 605 units, only 8% (EIGHT!!) are reserved for households making 60% of the AMI. **Instead of providing good accommodation for long time residents, it will actually chase them away from the neighborhood.** Moreover most of these apartments are meant to attract young affluent singles and couples who will leave the neighborhood when they want to start a family, since out of the 605 units proposed, only 4 (FOUR!) will have 3 bedrooms. All others will be studios, one and two bedroom units.

The last reason why I oppose this plan is the fact that it will create more traffic in an already very busy and dangerous intersection. In December, I was actually hit by a car while crossing 4<sup>th</sup> Street at this intersection during rush hour, and suffered a broken wrist. The driveways that lead to the garages of the existing buildings on either side of the Metro station are also dangerous to pedestrians.

This is why I urge this neighborhood commission not to approve the proposed plan as it is. I urge the Zoning Commission to ask Forest City to decrease the height of its buildings, leave more open space for community events and propose a project that will **truly serve the inhabitants of Southwest, old and new, rich and poor.**