

## **The Testimony of St. Mary's Episcopal Church On Zoning Commission Case No. 06-11P**

Given by Windon Ringer  
July 16, 2018

I am Windon Ringer, former Senior Warden of St. Mary's Episcopal Church, located at 724 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, NW in Washington, DC and testifying on behalf of, and with complete authorization from St. Mary's Vestry and congregation.

As the original principal coordinator of the efforts of St. Mary's to forge a productive relationship with the adjacent Hillel group and its facilitator the George Washington University, I became intimately familiar with the arduous process that has culminated in my presence here to speak in support of the application being considered today.

The Historic St. Mary's Church, founded by former slaves in 1867, was the first African American congregation of the Episcopal Church in the District of Columbia. It has endured as an essential, connected institution in the Foggy Bottom neighborhood, evaluating and re-visioning its purpose and religious mission as the surrounding community has evolved over the last one-hundred and fifty years.

On June 4, 2018, St. Mary's Episcopal Church requested "Party" status in Support of Zoning Commission Case No. 06-11P, Modification of Significance to Order No. 06-11L, and additional Special Exception relief for Square 42, Lots 820 & 84. Previously, St. Mary's was granted "Party" status in Opposition of ZC No. 06-11L. Also previously, St. Mary's and the West End Citizens Association (WECA) which was also a Party in Opposition, filed a joint Appeal (No. 16AA-491) in the DC Court of Appeals of ZC Order No. 06-11L.

After working with the Hillel's newly appointed Director, Adena Kirstein, and with Peter Chew, Vice President of Prospera U.S., and the West End Citizens Association's members, Barbara Kahlow and Sara Maddoux to provide input to the Hillel redesign, St. Mary's is pleased to now support the Hillel team's current request for Modification of Significance to their proposed, new facility, which no longer includes two crucial Variances from this body, the results of which would have adversely affected St. Mary's operations and potentially its structural stability.

It is our understanding that the redesign as proposed will meet Hillel's current and future space and programmatic requirements, and provide the structural protections and physical separation that we required, as described in the Construction Management Agreement. (CMA), co-signed by St. Mary's Church and Hillel. We ask that the Commission include the full text of this protective CMA as an attachment to its Order.

We are thankful for your consideration of St. Mary's history, mission, and relevance to the Foggy Bottom community in deliberating this case. We look forward to a cordial and productive relationship with the Hillel, going forward.

Finally, I thank St. Mary's Episcopal Church for this opportunity to represent them for this very important assignment. If I may answer any questions, please feel free to ask.

7/16/18 Testimony of Barbara Kahlow  
on Zoning Commission Case No. 06-11P  
Modification of Significance to ZC Order No. 06-11L for Hillel (2300 H St., Square 42)

I, Barbara Kahlow, live at 800 25th Street, N.W., which is less than two blocks from 2300 H Street. I am testifying on behalf of the West End Citizens Association (WECA), the oldest citizens organization in the Foggy Bottom-West End area. One of the WECA's goals is maintaining the quality of life for the residential community in Foggy Bottom-West End.

On May 31, 2018, the WECA requested "Party" status **in support** for this Modification of Significance to ZC Order No. 06-11L case for which the WECA was a "Party" and for which the WECA testified **in opposition** on June 23, 2014. After issuance of the 2016 ZC Order No. 06-11L, the WECA jointly with St. Mary's Episcopal Church (the Church) which abuts the current Hillel building filed an Appeal (No. 16AA-491) in the DC Court of Appeals.

As indicated in our request for "Party" status, the WECA is pleased with Hillel's agreement to: (a) downsize to an approximately 20 percent smaller replacement building and one which meets matter-of-right lot occupancy and rear yard, and (b) replace the 1-sided 4-page Construction Management Plan (CMP) with a fully protective co-signed (with the Church) Construction Management Agreement (CMA). The WECA led the successful negotiations, especially regarding the CMA.

The downsized building will better protect the foundation and structure of the landmarked Church buildings as well as the air and light to all three Church buildings, especially the Rectory and the Parish Hall.

In the WECA's 2014 testimony in opposition to the several requested variances, the WECA also discussed some potential adverse effects on the Foggy Bottom residential community. For example, the WECA stated, "there could be adverse effects on pedestrian safety (e.g., from the loading activities across the heavily travelled sidewalk) and already limited on-street residential parking" and "the bus stop will probably have to be removed since there will be a sidewalk closure on H St as well." Today, the WECA wants to again request that the heavily-used bus stop at H and 23<sup>rd</sup> Streets be returned to use after construction of the new Hillel building.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.