



ANC 6D02

Southwest/Navy Yard

Single Member District 6D02
1101 Fourth St. SW, Suite W130
Washington, DC 20024

19 April 2018

Anthony Hood
Chairperson
440 4th Street, NW
Suite 200S
Washington, DC

RE: 07-13G Randall School Modification

Dear Chairman Hood:

As you know, the Randall School project has been nearly two decades in the making. Having read over the submission by DC 4 Reasonable Development, it seems necessary to rehearse the background in order to rebut the arguments in their document.

When the Corcoran was unable to complete its ambitions, the property was sold to Telesis/Rubell with the legal requirement for a museum still in place. In addition, the statute permitting the sale to Telesis allowed a hotel as one of the potential uses – something the ANC is grateful is not in the current proposal – and mandated twenty percent (20%) of all residential housing be made available to District residents at eighty percent (80%) of area median income (AMI). These provisions are commemorated in law which is one reason why, when the developer offered to go to sixty percent (60%) of AMI for fourteen percent (14%) of the units, the change was not allowed. The sale to Telesis/Rubell was permitted by the City Council at least partially because the Rubell's vast collection of modern art would help to fulfill the provision for a museum and would do so with a period of art which is underrepresented in the District of Columbia.

The expense of refurbishing and preserving this building would make many other projects too expensive for the space. Continuing to allow the building to become derelict abrogates our duty to preserve the historic building and greatly hurts the neighborhood. Having a museum, free to all District residents will enhance the character of Southwest and help to cement the quadrant as an arts district, a goal under the District's Comprehensive Plan.

DC4RD advocates for a deeper band of affordable housing which is a laudable goal. In the time since this project was originally proposed, the District's population has grown and the economic impact has been noted. The current Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) legislation has no impact on the project currently before Zoning which is already providing affordable housing at more than double the percentage required by the new IZ law.

The necessity for IZ and for deep affordability bands (under fifty percent (50%) of AMI) is noted by ANC6D. When it was possible, the PUDs which came before this ANC before the new IZ legislation

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was passed included provisos for a thirty percent (30%) band of affordable housing; this includes The Wharf and the new PUD for the lot next to 1100 4th Street, SW.

Economic integration cannot be accomplished by only including the families under 50% of AMI. In order for the District to thrive economically, people of all financial strata need to be able to live as well as work within its boundaries. Making provision for people who are at the lowest AMI levels is huge and important, but having the lowest economic bands of affordability and market rate apartments as the only two bands available leaves a large economic gap which needs to be filled with a thriving middle class. The 80% affordability band will allow a single income DCPS teacher's family – as a simple example – to live in the area where s/he works.

Moreover, this is already a neighborhood within the SW quadrant and ANC6D which has a great deal of economic diversity. Capitol Park Plaza and Twins welcomes Section 8 vouchers. The new Ward 6 Family Homeless Shelter is being built between Capitol Park Plaza and the Randall School. Greenleaf Gardens is cater-corner to the school. The condominium/townhouses at Capitol Park IV provide good quality single family homes at the other diagonal corner. There is a diversity of racial, social, and economic spheres in these few blocks that any area of the District should envy. As neighbors to the project, these stakeholders would like to see the Randall School development begin soon, as the current state of the school creates a dead space between them and Randall Recreation Center. This allows for vandalization, vermin, and litter to fill the area. Recently, a small fire broke out just outside the site which has disturbed many of the immediate neighbors.

The submission by DC4RD references "the Ward 6 Study Group." Nowhere at their website or on the document are the members of the study group listed, nor are there mentions of which studies were conducted using which methods, nor what standards were used to produce the analyses stated in the document. DC4RD may have worthwhile aims, but, in this case, they are letting the perfect be the enemy of the good and some of the facts in the matter may have been missed. As an example from the document, not only does ANC6D stand squarely behind building first for the renovations to King Greenleaf and Greenleaf Gardens, this discussion was held publicly with Councilman Charles Allen at the January ANC6D Business meeting. At that time, the council member agreed to ensure that "build first" would be used for this major project impacting our quadrant. There are places in this neighborhood where that is likely to be the best use of the land available. Randall School, for the reasons outlined above, is not the appropriate site, as the membership of DC4RD would know had they attended that meeting or indeed any recent ANC6D meetings.

There is no reason to stop the long awaited Randall School Redevelopment. Doing so is detrimental to the neighborhood economically and aesthetically. Much needed employment is being held up as well. If the project is not begun soon, it may not begin at all which would mean losing approximately 80 residences in one of the workforce housing bands. Lowe Enterprises along with Telesis/Rubell has presented solid plans. They have been cooperative with the ANC, Zoning, and other neighborhood or District organizations. The applicants even expanded their requirement for the 80% AMI from the finite years required in the law to "in perpetuity." These apartments could be a long-term anchor for economic diversity, but only if the development is allowed to move forward.

Sincerely,

Cara Shockley

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