

**TO:** District of Columbia Zoning Commission

**FROM:** 525 Water Street Board  
Brad Neilley – President  
Will Beale - Vice President  
Dennis Korber - Vice President  
Marsha Baker - Treasurer  
Lori Farrell - Secretary

**DATE:** October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**SUBJECT:** Wharf Parcels 6 through 10, First Stage PUD Modification, Second Stage PUD Application, and ANC-6D Report for ZC #11-03J

We all agree that Phase I of The Wharf redevelopment plan has succeeded in beginning the transformation of the Southwest DC area— if not all of DC. The grand opening events were quite impressive and portends a notable project completion.

That being said, we've concluded that there are considerations that should not be overlooked now that the next stage of development is nearing residential housing. The housing we represent, **525 Water Street, is the only residential building adjoining Phase II.** Therefore, we respectfully ask that the District of Columbia Zoning Commission give our concerns extra attention. They are as follows:

### 1) Parcel 10

While we support the overall plan for this parcel, we believe that its current design will create major safety and traffic concerns.

Specifically, the loading dock and underground access is on Water Street (**Exhibit 1**), which will direct all vehicular activities, including truck deliveries, trash pick-up and underground parking, directly onto Water Street. This will result in...

- Increased commercial traffic resulting in an increased safety risk for the building residents and neighborhood residents who frequently walk or bike through the street.
- Increased frequency of vehicles stuck at one of multiple "Pinch Points" (**Exhibit 2 a & b**) a phenomenon where Water Street's arc on both sides of the front entrance to our building is so narrow two vehicles cannot pass one another. We have already witnessed multiple times when trucks have had to back up out of the street and we feel that an injury or fatal accident is not far in the future if this is not changed.

Therefore, we ask that loading access be moved from Water St to another access point (i.e. Maine Avenue, or an access road between Parcel 9 and 10) (**Exhibit 3**).

### 2) CRUISE STAGING & TRANSPORTATION

We don't believe the current "Motor Coach Pick- Up / Drop- off" area, identified on the plans, is sufficient to accommodate the amount of the demand anticipated and the access point is not in a tenable area.

Currently the motor coach staging area for Entertainment Cruises is on Maine Avenue at the corner of Water Street just before St. Augustine Church (**Exhibit 4**), and appears to be in violation of the DDOT guidelines and causing safety concerns (**Exhibit 5**) including “Blind Spots” for oncoming traffic. And, since the residents at 525 Water Street have balconies, the opening of windows triggers a quality of life challenge due to rising bus fumes and noise from commercial motors.

We understand that with the closure of the Colonial Parking Lot—now Waterfront Park—two years ago, bus management has been problematic for riders of Spirit Ships. While Entertainment Cruises (operator of Spirit Ships), has demonstrated that they can effectively manage busses during normal times, efforts fail during peak summer season. With the completion of Phase II, activity, overall, will increase, and in turn, have a negative impact on visitor accessibility and 525 Water Street resident quality of life.

Existing residential waterfront neighbors: 525 Water Street, ANC-6D, Tiber Island; Harbor Square and Street, will all be impacted negatively should the Phase II transport plan fail. It bears stating that the elimination of buses in front of the above-mentioned residential waterfront buildings was a significant factor in the agreement that the SW Community made with the District and the Applicant for embracing the overall Wharf build. Further, we understand the Applicant signed an agreement with the ANC memorialized in the Phase One Zoning decision to prohibit busses on those streets.

The following passage is a portion of Exhibit 104 in First Phase Hearing entitled, “ANC-6D Resolution of Support of Hoffman Madison-Marquette Southwest Waterfront First Stage PUD ZC 11-03.” Page 2 of this 39 page document clearly states the understanding upon which the ANC provided its support for Wharf I. It reads:

*It is our understanding from past meetings, HMW in concert with DDOT and the ANC will develop guidelines to ensure that busses do not park within the residential areas. HMW will provide a more precise diagram to demonstrate how tour busses will arrive and depart from on Site to discharge and pick up passengers at the big boats. If additional bus lay bys are required, they will not be located east of the existing sites as demonstrated on page 3 8. [ANC motion 7-1 1- 11]*

HMW response 7-15- 11

*HSW agrees with the above commitments and will provide the following assurances to the ANC: 1) Lay-by areas for buses (to the extent more are needed, or the location is refined) will be located no closer to the existing residential areas than the Bus Drop Off identified on page 3.8 of this Updated PUD submission. 2) HMW agrees to remove all bus traffic southeast of the completed M Street Landing by the prohibiting via signage along Park Road (the extension of the old Waters Street), 6 Street, SW and M Place SW, or upon commencement of redevelopment of Pier Four, irrespective of its intended use. 3) HMW will create a bus operation plan that details bus lay-by operations, drop-off, pick-up, and bus traffic control as part of the Stage 2 submissions for Parcel 9 or M Street Landing, whichever comes first. 4) HMW will cooperate with ANC-6D and DDOT in mitigating bus impacts in the Southwest Community. [ANC6D Accepts ~ 8-22-11]*

The end goal of the bus plan crafted by Entertainment Cruises was to keep buses away from the residential neighborhood; that is why the ANC embraced repurposing Pier Four (when the town house plan didn’t work), and dropped plans to relocate the enterprise to a new commercial pier in the middle of the project when it likely would have solved the staging area issue we now face.

To mitigate the challenge, we recommend that the zoning commission consider moving the motor coach pick- up and drop- off staging areas further down Main Avenue (in the direction of Phase I), or consider adding a dedicated lane, with dividers, on Maine Avenue, thereby guiding vehicles to a staging area potentially expansive enough to accommodate ride share designated cars.

At the end of the day, it is likely to get more crowded on Maine Avenue; so, we ask:

- Where are the diagrams and written understanding about the interim condition?
- What is DDOT's plan if this bus plan does not work?
- How will the narrowing of Maine Avenue impact the ability to properly negotiate that street once new turn lanes are put in place?

Now is the time to address these questions before construction of Phase II begins. Once underway adjustments may be impossible.

We refer the Commissioners to this paragraph from DDOT's Report to the Zoning Commission on 11-03:

In their report to the ZC on 11-03 DDOT wrote, *"Further, any transportation improvements deemed necessary to serve specific phases of the development must be executed in advance or at the same time of the relevant phase of construction. All changes to the infrastructure should be constructed to accommodate anticipated build out conditions despite being constructed in relation to a specific phase."*

**Uber, Lyft, Taxi, or another Ride Sharing.**

We must face the fact that ride sharing applications are a growing transport option. When the Zoning Commission held hearings on Wharf's First Phase, no one could predict how disruptive this technology would be to traditional forms of transport. And, of course, no one knew Metro would stop running at 11:30pm each night. For these reasons we need to make calculated adjustments to accommodate the need—not just for Phase II, but to adequately support accessibility to Phase I.

**Signage**

This board is also concerned about the placement of illuminated advertising and signage near residential housing. As a precaution, we ask that you share plans for the location and placement of any illuminated sign to best ensure that they do not negatively impact residents of neighboring buildings.

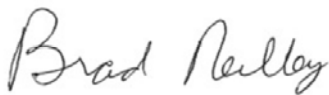
**Pathway**

While the cobblestones are a nice touch from the past in Phase I, for anyone handicapped in a wheel chair it limits their mobility and access, not to mention the increased challenge of cleaning, especially in the winter. A flat surface for walking will serve Phase II much better

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We thank you, in advance, for consideration of our concerns, as well as, the recommendations herein. We are committed to working with all parties involved to come up with a workable plan that everyone can live with.

Sincerely



Brad Neilley Sr., Board President  
525 Water Street  
Washington, DC 20024