

Ms. LaToria E. Brent

President, Stronghold Civic Association

July 16, 2014

Mr. Anthony Hood, Chairman,

District of Columbia Zoning Commission

**Re: Request to reopen the record for case 13-14 to give the Stronghold Civic Association the opportunity to respond to ANC 5E actions concerning the Community Benefits Agreement for the McMillan Project which were taken after the closing of the record for this case on May 27, 2014.**

Dear Chairman Hood,

On June 23rd, almost one month after the record for case #13-14 (McMillan site development) was closed, the applicant submitted a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) (exhibits 832G1 and 832G2).

This CBA was drafted by the ANC and the applicant, with the participation of the communities represented. The Stronghold Civic Association, representing the Stronghold community immediately adjacent to the site, was not informed of nor invited to participate in discussions at which the CBA was drafted, nor were Stronghold's four representatives to the McMillan Advisory Group (MAG) invited to the discussions. This CBA does not represent our community and we strenuously object to it, in general and specific.

We request your permission to reopen the record for case #13-14 to include the Stronghold Civic Association's response to that CBA, submitted by the Applicant without consultation with our association. This response letter was drafted at the July meeting of the Stronghold Civic Association on Monday, July 7th, and a majority of the members present voted in approval of it. This letter thus represents a formal response to the CBA as submitted to you.

Sincerely,

LaToria E. Brent

  
President

Stronghold Civic Association

July 7, 2014

To: Members of the District of Columbia's Zoning Commission:  
Anthony J. Hood, Chairman  
Marcie Cohen, Vice-Chairman  
Robert Miller, District Resident  
Michael G. Turnbull, Architect of the Capitol Designee  
Peter G. May, National Park Service Designee

From: Stronghold Civic Association  
LaToria E. Brent, President

Re: Submission of CBA by ANC 5E/VMP for the McMillan PUD

Dear Chairman Hood:

We write to request that the docket be reopened for Case #13-14 and that you consider the following information regarding ANC 5E's submission of a CBA for the McMillan project (Exhibits #832G1 and 832G2). We respectfully make this request as the CBA was submitted after the docket was closed and without presentation, discussion, or voting by the Stronghold Civic Association (SCA). In fact, the CBA was only made public hours before it was voted on at the ANC 5E meeting on June 17, 2014. This request was discussed at SCA's July meeting on July 7<sup>th</sup>, and supported by a near-unanimous vote of the membership.

In summary, SCA had multiple meetings over several months to provide thoughtful and specific input into the MAG CBA process. This information was collected and submitted to the Zoning Commission (Exhibit #146). In comparing the elements of the SCA input with the one passed by ANC 5E, many significant and important topics were either ignored or not included. Stronghold is very disappointed in this decision due to the fact we are the neighborhood that is most directly affected by the McMillan Project. Stronghold does not agree to the ANC 5E/VMP CBA and request that the Zoning Commission not except this version as the final one for the project should it move forward.

We strongly request that continued discussions on McMillan CBA include the following topics:

- A regional traffic study to be conducted that includes not only McMillan but also the multiple other developments planned within a one mile radius from the site. We discourage approving additional developments for our area until meaningful and successful traffic mitigation strategies are developed and fully implemented.
- Reduction in commercial density, including building heights, in scale with the District's Comprehensive Plan. In the absence of an adequate traffic mitigation strategy, the only solution remains to be substantial reduction in the number of planned residential and commercial spaces.
- Implementation of successful mitigation strategy(s) for on-street parking and prevention of vehicles using alleys within Stronghold when traffic on North Capital becomes a parking lot.

- To date, VMP has not presented or discussed a Construction Impact Plan to Stronghold or in any public forum to our knowledge. We expect that such a plan be forthcoming and that it require the support of SCA, not just ANC 5E.
- We strongly request that the Park and Community Recreation Center be governed by a public/private partnership similar to NYC's Central Park. We would expect that there would be significant community representation and disagree with VMP's proposal of a business-only model. In addition, we believe that it is most important to have Department of Parks and Recreation activities offered as part of the assurance of community access and engagement.
- We remain disappointed by the lack of specifics VMP has offered regarding the extent and purpose of preserved/repurposed sand filtration cells. Given the vast opportunities for both historic preservation and beneficial community amenities, we believe that a successful CBA would include: preservation of additional cells and full details regarding to what extent and how cells will be revitalized.
- We believe that a successful CBA must have specific structures in place for accountability, sustainability, and transparency. The ANC 5E notes these concepts but does not provide details of how funds will be spent, who will make allocation decisions, how they will be sustained into the future, and corresponding timelines with project milestones (e.g., certificate of demolition, occupancy, etc.) to ensure that benefits/amenities will be provided in advance and, in some cases, prior to project completion.
- Funds for neighborhood beautification were allotted in an unfair manner. Neighborhoods more than a mile from the site are receiving the same or more monies than SCA which is directly across from the site.

In closing, we hope that the Zoning Commission will require VMP to work with the civic associations, the McMillan Advisory Group, and other community groups to continue to discuss, negotiate, and endorse a final CBA for the project. To be successful, a coalition of community groups, not just ANC 5E, should be included in all phases of the CBA process, including both negotiations and final voting, to insure that the community is a part of the process.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



LaToria E. Brent  
President  
Stronghold Civic Association