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Zoning Commission for the District of Columbia  
441 4<sup>th</sup> St NW, Ste 220-S  
Washington DC 20001

February 23, 2017

RE: CASE NO. 14-18A (Mid-City Financial Corporation – First-Stage PUD Modification and Second-Stage PUD @ Square 3953, Lots 1, 2, and 3 – RIA Block 7)

Dear Zoning Commission Officers and Staff,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in front of you tonight. I am speaking today as the executive director of the Friends of Rhode Island Avenue NE and the Rhode Island Avenue Main Street program, in reference to Zoning Amendment Case 14-18A.

When Friends of Rhode Island Avenue NE got it's start in 2011, we came together as a group of neighbors that not only wanted to attract new community-serving retail to the RIA corridor, but to also make sure that community members had a say in what type of development might come to our neighborhood. We continue to carry forward those goals, now as the Rhode Island Avenue NE Main Street program. Over the last few years, community members have spoken loudly and clearly when they say they want more neighborhood-serving retail and dining options. They want a more safe, vibrant and attractive commercial corridor. Based on various urban planning studies that have been conducted for Rhode Island Avenue NE, it is clear that in order to attract and support the types of businesses that our neighbors have indicated they want, we must encourage and support appropriate development projects that will bring increased residential density to the area.

When Mr. Meers first reached out to us in 2012 to get our thoughts on the re-development of Brookland Manor, we of course asked many questions. We were determined to make sure that such a project would be a positive addition to the community – and to the existing tenants of Brookland Manor. This was the first of many meetings we had with Mr. Meers, and with each meeting, we became more confident in our ability to support the project.

I also had the opportunity to meet Mr. Gene Ford Sr., the founder of Mid-City Financial Corporation, in the months before he passed away. After talking to him, and doing some research on my own, I came to greatly respect his vision for providing quality housing and amenities for low-income residents. Indeed, Mr. Ford's career was built around not only providing housing, but also supportive services for families in need. Mr. Ford Sr. won numerous honors and housing awards for his innovative approaches to providing assistance through the years. It was his vision and goal for the re-development of Brookland Manor to be his legacy project, and a model for mixed income housing with

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EXHIBIT NO. 129

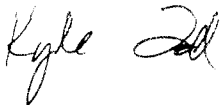
vibrant retail and activity centers to benefit all residents. We believe that the plans presented by Mid-City continue to represent Mr. Ford's vision and legacy.

Mid-City has engaged with the community extensively, including outreach to the surrounding Civic Associations, ANCs, and at events such as the Rhode Island Ave Fall Fest. Our organization has also been impressed by the efforts that Mr. Meers and the Mid-City team have undertaken to reach out to, and work with community members from the entire length of the RIA Main Street corridor.

By approving these stages of the Mid-City PUD application, the entire project can move forward, and will not only create tremendous new opportunities for retail, dining, and other neighborhood amenities, but it will also provide opportunities for new jobs, and a much-needed boost in residential density for the entire corridor. And perhaps even most importantly, it will provide updated, state-of-the-art housing for the many senior citizens currently living in Brookland Manor.

On behalf of Rhode Island Avenue NE Main Street, we support this project and this particular stage of the PUD application, as it is congruent with the recommendations from DMPED and Office of Planning, and when developed, will contribute to an increase in residential density that will help us attract the types of retailers that our entire community wants to support. Thank you again for the opportunity to speak tonight. I look forward to your decision.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kyle Todd". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kyle Todd, Executive Director  
Rhode Island Avenue Main Street  
kyle@riamainstreet.org