

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I am writing to let you know that I am **OPPOSED** to the proposed **Planned Urban Development (PUD)** to be **located at 1401 – 1433 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E. (PUD 15-12)** as it is currently planned and designed.

As explained to me by a representative of the Developer, CAS Riegler, this development is currently projected to include **190 residential RENTAL units** in a **seven story tall (80 feet!) structure** that takes up 100% of their property, located at the corner of 14<sup>th</sup> Street & Potomac/Pennsylvania Avenues and continuing along the block (East on Pennsylvania Avenue and South on 14<sup>th</sup> Street) to occupy nearly 1/3 of the entire block (Square 1065); casting shadows and overwhelming the surrounding two story row houses. This building will be towering at least 55 feet higher (five stories **taller!**) than our surrounding homes in this community!

I believe this project needs to be scaled down to no more than half (1/2) of the proposed size (four stories/forty feet), and the number of rental units reduced in order to be more fitting with our neighborhood and our community.

My reasons for opposing this PUD are as follows...

In a February 2, 2016 meeting with a representative from the Developer, my wife and I were told that the proposed PUD will include 190 residential units, in addition to new retail shops on the first level, and that the Developer "**may**" make half of the residential building available for purchase; meaning that it is likely that **all 190 units will be retained as RENTALS for TENANTS; not property owners!** It was further explained that the original plans, which had included three bedroom condos for "families" to purchase, have been revised and that all of the 190 units will be one or two bedroom apartments, available as rental units.

The current proposal includes a structure that will stand nearly 80 feet tall! This is **three times (3 X's) the height of our own twenty-five foot (25 feet) tall houses!** In their efforts to maximize the number of rental units for maximum return on their investment, the Developer attempts to mislead our community to believe that his project will not overwhelm our neighborhood. But the fact is, this structure will cast a shadow over our homes, and will impose on our privacy while at the same time blocking the natural light and the circulation of fresh air around our homes. This is not just a nuisance, but a major intrusion into our private lives and a major impact on our own quality of life!

The Developer proposes to provide only 58 underground parking spaces for the 190+ new tenants, as well as for the new shop owners and the dozens of clerks

and staff working in the retail shops below, along with any shoppers who may visit these shops. Our already limited parking spaces will be much further limited on a very drastic level!

As all of the “green” space currently occupying the property will be taken up and replaced by this massive structure, leaving no useable “green space” contiguous to the property, or included in the project except possibly on the seventy-eight foot high rooftop, the Developer promises to off-set our loss of green space by assisting in the enhancement of the plaza at the Potomac Avenue Metro station on the opposite side of Pennsylvania Avenue and to support upgrades which may be proposed for some parks and playgrounds that are located several blocks away from their seven-story tall building. How does that enhance our lives?

We currently live in what is known historically as a “medium” density residential neighborhood, offering low profile, owner-occupied, single-family row houses with open living space and sun-filled gardens. This is the reason that we purchased our homes here in the first place, and why we have invested so much personal time, money and energy in our community.

But our waning sense of peace, privacy and serenity will change overnight as the currently proposed project at 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Pennsylvania Avenue will have a MAXIMUM density impact on our community.

Had we wanted to live in an environment of enormous and imposing high-rise buildings, with hundreds of detached and unconcerned tenants, we would have purchased our homes in places like Columbia Heights, “downtown” D.C. or in Rosslyn, Virginia, There is a reason that we all choose to live in this residential neighborhood of low lying townhouses.

Considering all of the other development going on in our immediate neighborhood, none as massive and overwhelming as this particular development being proposed here; this project is massive, too big, and it will cause too much congestion for our “small town” atmosphere and community to absorb. This project, as currently proposed, will stand 20 feet taller (or more) than the Jenkins Row/Harris Teeter condo building directly across the intersection of 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Potomac Avenue.

In contrast to District of Columbia posted policies such as...

**Policy LU-2.4.5: Encouraging Nodal Development – Discourage auto-oriented commercial “strip” development and instead encourage pedestrian-oriented “nodes” of commercial development at key locations along major corridors.**

Zoning and design standards should ensure that the height, mass, and scale of development within nodes respects the integrity and character of surrounding residential areas and does not unreasonably impact them,

**Policy LU-2.4.6: Scale and Design of New Commercial Uses** – Ensure that new uses within commercial districts are developed at a height, mass, scale and design that is appropriate and compatible with surrounding areas,

and,

**Policy CH-2.2.6: Potomac Avenue Metrorail Station** – Support the revitalization of vacant commercial space and additional moderate density mixed use development around the Potomac Avenue Metro station. Such development should be located on existing commercially zoned property and developed in a manner that is consistent with existing zoning (including established provisions for planned unit developments and pending programs for inclusionary housing). Any infill development should be relatively low-scale, respecting the character of the adjacent row house community...

There is absolutely no precedence for this size development in our neighborhood as there is not an eighty foot tall building in any Capitol Hill residential area thus far..

This proposed 80 foot tall structure with 190 rental units will take up the entire lot (100%), from the corner of the block to the middle of the block and then overflow to the rear property line. There will be very limited pedestrian space along Pennsylvania Avenue, all of it overshadowed by the tallest building in our Capitol Hill neighborhood! The only green space the Developer is willing to provide already exists to the benefit of our neighborhood, but is actually across the street from the project; which street will become much more heavily trafficked as the volume of pedestrian and motor vehicle activity increases, including delivery trucks long after construction is finished. This area will rapidly become heavily congested and our quality of life will decline drastically.

How can a huge building, at least three times the height of our own houses and taking up nearly a quarter of our entire city block, not overwhelm the neighbors? This project will prove to be a great nuisance, and a heavy intrusion on our standard of living, not only by overwhelming the entire block upon which we live, but also by overwhelming the parking upon which we rely when returning home with your own automobile!

The Developer's assurances that he will improve parks and playgrounds elsewhere does nothing to offset the intrusion into our lives or to enhance the

quality of the lives immediately and negatively impacted by this oversized development! How does destroying the open green space that is here now, and improving green space five blocks or five miles from here, help those of us who are immediately and negatively impacted by this huge, monstrous structure?

We have no idea the true negative impact that this PUD will have on our homes and our families, but our community is already inundated with transient apartment dwellers that have no sense of community or of commitment to our neighborhood and our neighbors. Are we really willing and able to house another two hundred plus (200+) tenants, who harbor these same attitudes and this same mentality, temporarily residing at the corner of 14<sup>th</sup> Street & Pennsylvania Avenue?

The reason this late notice of opposition is being delivered now is that it appears CAS Riegler omitted my name and contact information from the "community" notices and mailings which were distributed to neighbors. We learned of the most recent plans to develop this property through several neighbors, often after the fact and on sporadic basis, which prevented my family from learning of the direct adverse impact the project will have directly upon my home.

Once we were made aware of the plans for this development and we sought information from CAS Riegler, such information was not made available in such timely manner that we might determine the true impact of the project, beneficial or detrimental, upon our community.

We were offered an apology for the Developer's "oversight," and told by the "Project Manager" that she assumed we were being kept apprised of the planned PUD by other staff in her office. Huh?

However, it also appears that none of the other property owners who live or own property along the east end of the 1400 block of Pennsylvania Avenue were ever provided proper notice of the proposed PUD plans either, despite the fact that their property falls within the 200 foot "sphere" of influence, and those properties will also be heavily impacted by the PUD.

Additionally, virtually all of the architectural renderings and drawings shown us thus far greatly distort the actual size and exact location of the planned PUD when compared to the surrounding homes and properties, making it quite difficult to properly assess the impact and possible damages the structure will impose on the rest of us.

While I do appreciate the desire to develop the vacant property located near the Southeast corner of the intersection of 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Potomac Avenue &

Pennsylvania Avenue, I'm sure we're all familiar with the various adages, "be careful of what you ask for...", "too much of a good thing is bad..," and "everything in moderation..."

This project, as currently proposed, is excessive. And, in fact, it is extreme excess to the detriment of all of us who have called this community "home" over the years. We must be careful to avoid over-development and actually harming our community.

I propose a reasonable compromise, scaling back the PUD to a more reasonable and less intrusive size, so that we neighbors and our two story tall houses are not so harshly impacted by the presence of the maximum capacity PUD proposed for our medium density community.

This is likely our last opportunity to exercise our rights and demand that the District government and the Developer scale down their proposed development. Please go to the Board of Zoning website at [https://app.dcoz.dc.gov/Content/Search/ViewCaseReport.aspx?case\\_id=15-12](https://app.dcoz.dc.gov/Content/Search/ViewCaseReport.aspx?case_id=15-12) to learn more.

Your Neighbor,



Kirk Beatley  
1435 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20003