

CASE NO. 16-11 (Park View Community Partners & District of Columbia – Consolidated PUD & Related Map Amendment @ Square 2890, Part of Lot 849)

December 5, 2016

Testimony of Elizabeth Heyman

Ward 1 Resident

Good evening Mr. Hood, Mr. Miller, Mr. May and Mr. Turnbull. Thank you for the opportunity to testify tonight. My name is Elizabeth Heyman, I am a ward 1 resident and a community organizer at Jews United for Justice, a DC-based grassroots organization that organizes thousands of people in the local Jewish community and beyond to fight for social, racial, and economic justice.

A central Jewish teaching is the importance of *Shalom Bayit*, a peaceful, harmonious home. Being able to come home to a space that is safe, sound, and where you belong is essential to a dignified life. Jewish tradition also teaches that a home must also be permanent and honorable. While many in our Jewish community don't have to worry about the permanence or dignity of their housing, there are far too many people in our city who do. My community supports our neighbors to ensure that everyone in our city is able to maintain peace in all our homes.

We need to replace the dilapidated apartments of Park Morton without pushing its residents out of their neighborhoods. And that neighborhood badly needs more affordable housing options for hard working residents. As a resident of Ward 1, I have heard the concerns about the park being used for development purposes. While I understand those concerns, under the current redevelopment plan, half of the park will stay intact. We are talking about a rapidly changing, home values rising, desirable urban neighborhood that has other nearby parks and recreation facilities. Under the current proposal, we can have both a generously sized park and more housing for people who really need it without displacing them from their current homes in the neighborhood. Changing the plan in order to hold onto the existing temporary park represents a huge cost to the neighborhood, both in terms of pushing out longtime residents from Park Morton and in terms of losing an opportunity to build badly needed new housing. I am grateful we don't have to choose between dignified homes for DC residents and having recreational outdoor space in our neighborhood - there is enough space for both.

The idea of peace in the home, *shalom bayit*, extends beyond the walls of

one family's apartment. It also extends to the community we live in. In order to create a peaceful, harmonious community, to ensure that DC residents are not displaced and can live in safe, dignified homes, I urge you to approve the application to use part of Bruce Monroe Park to build much needed public housing affordable housing, and market rate housing. Thank you again for hearing our testimonies today.