

Monday Dec 5 2016 Testimony for:

Planned Unit Development Hearing Case 16-12

Good Evening Chair and Members of the Commission. My name is Patrick Nelson, I have lived in DC for 27 years and as a home owner in the Pleasant Plains neighborhood for 23 years, where this project is located. I am a member and vice president of the Pleasant Plains Civic Association, actively participate in my anc, which abuts the property that will house this project, currently chairing the Zoning Preservation and Development Committee, which during my tenure I have worked on a number of PUDs that come before us. Some have been contentious but none like this one. I would like to take just a few minutes tonight to express my opposition to this pud as it is currently proposed. The city through its partnership with its development team has decided that instead of putting before the commission a request to change the zoning of a portion of square 2890 lot 849 to build a matter of right project, they elected to use the easier route of the PUD process, for greater flexibility, more height and density, in exchange for providing a project that is supposed to be of higher quality, with meaningful public benefits than what would have been gotten if the project had been developed as a matter of right. The city has laid out what it wanted the project to produce and the development team came up with the designed project that you now see, a large big bulky box. There has been no real input from concerned residents about the design because they had already decided how to make it work to have the units needed on the site as the city requested. When concerns were made about how the building looked the answer given was that this is how we envision it to look and we have done other buildings that look the same. When asked why there is no plan for any retail to be put in a building zoned and on a commercial corridor, the answer is we cannot do retail because it does not work in the plan. When asked to consider putting two story flats on the bottom of the building along the Irving St side to fit in with the character of the abutting row houses, the same on the new cross street that is being proposed, and along the proposed park side of the building to engage the connectivity of area, then maybe step back a bit above them to add on the apartment building which could have maybe ~~have~~ cut outs for small balconies and even step back a bit on higher floors so the building is more complementary to its surroundings. Consider moving the shorter senior building to the front of the site on Georgia Ave and possibly add a nice ground floor lobby area inviting at the street level with some kind of meeting/community room, since you don't want retail, the answer is the same. Trying to work with a development team that only sees and hears what it wants to do is like trying to negotiate with someone who

cannot see or hear, nothing goes in so nothing will come out. The pud process is designed to be interactive but will not get any traction if there is only one side willing to work on compromise.

The city and development team started working on the project and had finished its design in Oct of 2015 and rushed to submit the pud in July 2016, 8 months later so that they could submit under the old zoning regulations, and not have to deal with the new 2016 changes that have been put in place. We have yet to date been given or shown an official list of what they are claiming as their benefits package although they been asked to show one. We were shown what their initial ideas were and informed they were working with the city on it. The anc commissioner that represents the smd of the project site, which should be reaching out or holding meetings for residents to give feedback on the potential project benefit ideas or requests removed herself from any input about the project because of a conflict with her government job. So the residents lost that voice in the process. The anc commission rushed through at city/developers request a resolution that stated their support of the pud if the items that the anc suggested were incorporated into the benefits package, but nothing has been produced showing that they have been considered or approved. Also there have been no letters to date showing their support for the benefits package from any community organization or civic association. It is of some concern to me that they seem to make little of it and do not see it as an important issue that should be addressed. With that said I do not think the city and the development team have done enough to date to earn the support of the pud being approved. I appreciate the opportunity of being able to present my testimony for your consideration and thank you for your time.