

January 2, 2019

Mr. Anthony Hood, Chairman  
District of Columbia Zoning Commission  
441 4th Street NW  
Suite 210 S  
Washington, DC 20001

*RE: Case Number 16-23, Proposal for Design Review and Development by Valor Development, LLC, Square 1499, Lots 802, 803, 806, 807. **Letter in Opposition***

Dear Chairman Hood:

Our names are Francesco Valentini and Lauren Sun, and we live at 4301 48th Street NW with our two young children. Our home is within 200 feet of the proposed development. We strongly oppose the revised plan proposed by Valor. We incorporate by reference our prior Letter in Opposition (Docket 139), testimony made in opposition on January 24, 2018, and accompanying presentation (Docket 201).

Our home is at the corner of 48th Street and Warren Streets NW, directly across from the AU alley. Because Valor proposes to route nearly all of its residential, retail, and loading traffic directly in front of our home, you see our home in many of Valor's drawings and designs. While prior iterations of Valor's plan had routed some traffic through the Yuma Street alley, the revised plan appears to route the vast majority, if not all, of the vehicular and truck traffic into the AU alley directly across from our house.

We moved to the AU Park neighborhood last year, shortly before the first two hearings in this matter, in large part because we wanted our children to have the opportunity to live in a residential neighborhood where they could safely play outdoors. We were not alone in making that choice, as the neighborhood is popular with young families. As you are no doubt aware, there are a number of elementary age children living on 48th Street, Warren Street, and Windom Street.

In addition to the reasons we stated in our January 5, 2018 Letter in Opposition, we write again to emphasize the negative impact the added congestion the project will bring to our neighborhood, and specifically, our street and home. The revised traffic study notes that, each

day, the project will add a minimum of 225 additional residential vehicle trips,<sup>1</sup> 252 grocery vehicle trips, and 21 truck deliveries<sup>2</sup> to the street in front of our house. At a peak, that is a combined 322 vehicles per hour -- *more than 5 vehicles per minute* -- during the evening hours, when families like ours are home. That type of congestion will make playing outside impossibly dangerous, compromise the safety of our children, and upend the character of the neighborhood.

At the last hearing, we discussed some of the deficiencies that we saw in the traffic study. One of those deficiencies was that the original study was conducted at a time when the AU building was not at full capacity and before the additional retail locations on Massachusetts Ave. (such as Millie's and Pizza Paradiso) opened. Over the past year -- from December 2017 to December 2018 -- we have observed a spike in the vehicular traffic along 48th Street, as well as an increase in the number of cars parked on the street in front of our house and along 48th Street during the day and evening hours.<sup>3</sup> The parking situation on 48th Street is especially troubling, because the road cannot accommodate traffic in both directions when cars are parked on both sides of the street. 48th Street surely cannot accommodate even more parking and traffic congestion -- which Valor's project is bound to bring about. In addition, last year we expressed concern with Valor's apparent assumption that traffic will turn directly from Massachusetts Avenue into the AU alley. Under current traffic laws, that turn is unlawful. Once Valor's misapprehension is accounted for, the likely outcome is yet *more* traffic flowing onto 48th Street and other neighborhood streets.

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As we stated in our January 5, 2018 letter, we do not oppose all development at the site. We see some improvement in Valor's adoption of townhomes in place of the prior Building 2. That is a first step in the right direction. It should be followed by more steps toward rational development. Regrettably, in so many other respects, Valor's latest proposal still threatens the safety of our children and the character of the neighborhood. We oppose such folly. We trust that you and all

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<sup>1</sup> This estimate is low. For example, the study estimates that the 5 townhomes will produce 0 morning trips per hour and only two afternoon trips per hour. That's implausible. Most neighborhood households have two cars and at least one commuting adult per household.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably the truck-delivery figure is higher, given the additional grocery and retail, although we were unable to find the exact figure in the Grove/Slade Supplemental Transportation Information Memorandum dated Nov. 23, 2018. The 21 truck trip figure comes from last year's materials.

<sup>3</sup> One of the two large oak trees along the east side of 48th Street was cut down this year, which has also opened up more parking along 48th Street itself. Of course, elimination of this oak tree will also reduce privacy between the houses on Windom and 48th Streets and the development site.

the other District entities will be deliberate, thoughtful, and responsible about the development at the former Superfresh site. We are confident that, together, we can do right by our community.

Sincerely,

Lauren Sun & Francesco Valentini  
4301 48th Street NW