

Good evening Chairman Hood and fellow Commissioners. I am Gail Fast, Chair of ANC 6D and the single member district commissioner for this development project.

First of all, let me say that if you had asked me 5 years ago if we would be here today in support of ZC 17-21, I would have probably called you crazy. We have come a long way.

And it was through tough negotiations and many compromises by both the Applicant and the Southwest community that I sit before you today. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge all the hard work of my southwest neighbors, including the PTA at Amidon Bowen and the United Neighbors of Southwest.

As I said in my report, it was not Councilman Allen, nor the Office of Planning but the ANC, the United Neighbors of SW and the Applicant who spent the last 2½ years in constant negotiations. And these were tough. The Applicant went back to the drawing board numerous times to show different iterations of the proposed design. And the United Neighbors of Southwest stayed the course continuing to push the Applicant to bring the massing down to where it is today.

To that end, ANC 6D is pleased with what has been proposed by the Applicant.

### **Building Design**

In one of ANC's meetings with the Applicant, we told them that their current design really didn't exemplify the fact that they were touting to the SW community that they were theatrical arts community. Their design lacked, for a better word, "pizazz" – it was dull and boring. No one would walk by it and say, "Wow, the Shakespeare Theatre is here!"

The ANC is pleased their redesign incorporates art panels along I Street as well as mural on the east side of the Annex. The ANC is also pleased that the Applicant heard the neighbors and have incorporated a contextual design of a townhouse rhythm with ground-floor walk-out units and a "flip" of the 6<sup>th</sup> Street sidewalk and tree area to match the sidewalk and planting area layout that is on both the west and east sides of 6<sup>th</sup> Street. This new design reflects the urban renewal design of the surrounding townhouses and for the first time --"fits" into the neighborhood.

## **Affordable Housing**

The ANC is particularly pleased that the Applicant is including three (3) bedroom units in its affordable housing mix. ANC has long advocated for affordable housing designed to attract families to Southwest. With its close proximity to both Amidon Bowen and Jefferson Middle schools, we think this project will be attractive to bringing new families to southwest.

## **Home Ownership**

Building a community and sustaining it -- requires investment by the people who live there. The ANC was excited when Erklitean converted the residential portion of the project to for-sale units.

The ANC appreciates Erklitean's commitment that no less than 90% initially (80% thereafter) of the condominium units be owner occupied. Communities are not built on AirB&B.

## **Shakespeare Theatre Company**

In 2014, an agreement between the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly and the Shakespeare Theatre was signed to provide certain benefits and amenities to the Southwest community upon approval of the PUD and/or completion of the proposed development.

Honestly, Shakespeare did not live up to its end of the agreement. Free tickets, scholarships for Camp Shakespeare, even advertising in the Southwester newspaper never came to fruition. ANC 6D is pleased to see a renewed commitment from Shakespeare on all of these previous amenities and benefits as well as the additional ones detailed in the United Neighbors of SW and Amidon Bowen PTA MOUs, which will now be under the watchful eye of parents and neighbors and not a civic organization. I'm confident the PTA and the United Neighbors will make sure Shakespeare delivers on its promises.

Also, ANC wanted a commitment from Shakespeare that they would be an integral part of the SW cultural community and are pleased to see they plan to stay around for at least 20-years.

### **Curbside Management**

I'm not sure I can get these words out but FOR ONCE, ANC 6D agrees with the Curbside management plan prepared by Grove/Slade Associates attached as Exhibit B. ANC 6D has found several flaws in the DDOT Report, dated March 18, 2019 and will hold all comment/questions for cross.

## **Construction Management**

There is no question that traffic, truck routes, staging and keeping our school kids safe is going to be a challenge. The ANC is pleased that the Applicant is working with Safe Routes to School to ensure parents/teachers are aware of the new suggested walking routes. We were also pleased to see the funding of a crossing guard at Makemie Place during school and after-care hours was included. ANC wants to be sure that the Applicant does not use a flag “person” as a replacement and works with DCPS and the PTA to ensure we have a true crossing guard.

Since this project will be on or about the same time as other development projects in the pipeline (1000 4<sup>th</sup> Street SW; the SW Library; 375 M Street SW) all within feet from each other, the ANC would appreciate a broader discussion with DDOT and the Commission on how DDOT plans to manage all these projects. It cannot be as my esteemed colleague Commissioner Litsky would say, “Fait Accompli” – How are you DDOT going to make this work so residents can get to/from work; that we don’t end up with entire arterial streets closed for days at a time; that we can hear ourselves think?

Tell us!

In conclusion, I have always felt we could figure this out and make it work for the Applicant and the community. And I think we have come as close to success as we possible could. That being said, we are bombarded with new development everywhere you turn; and while the Applicant is doing its part to minimize its impact on the surrounding neighborhood it doesn't absolve my call out to DDOT, the Commission and other District agencies to ensure that our quality of life is not diminished in the process.

Thank you.