

October 2, 2019

Zoning Commission  
District of Columbia

Re: Case Number 19-10

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am a resident of Spring Valley in Washington, DC writing to offer enthusiastic support for the Ladybird development planned for American University Park, ZC 19-10. This development would be a tremendous asset for our community.

The development team has been extremely patient with and most gracious in response to an extended wave of ungrounded, hostile to the point of hysteria, criticism from members our community. The development team has repeatedly evolved the project design to accommodate community input. The current design of the development is sensitive to its surrounding neighborhood and incorporates multiple features that modulate the scale and mass of the building to be thoughtfully appropriate for its site and adjacent properties.

Opponents to the development depict it as being “massive” and out of proportion for the neighborhood. In actuality, it is far from massive. It is a well articulated, mid-rise residential structure that will serve as a welcome buffer to the adjacent higher building that fronts onto Massachusetts Avenue and hovers over the proposed development site. Further mitigating the development’s very moderate height, the topography of adjacent residential streets—Windom, Yuma, etc.—rise rapidly in elevation East of the site. Therefore, sight lines from these streets will further mitigate the scale of the development.

The planned articulation of the massing of the development along with residential-scaled fenestration will offer adjacent neighbors a far more attractive neighbor than the current vacant grocery store ever did. Furthermore, the residential use of the development will generate less traffic than the previous grocery store.

If the current abandoned retail facility is allowed to continue to deteriorate, it will only become increasingly unsightly, a breeding ground for rodents, and continue to lower adjacent property values.

AU Park and Spring Valley are filled with young families and longer-term residents like myself who look forward to and will welcome the amenities that the development will bring to the neighborhood—beautifully landscaped public spaces, a mostly organic, small market, and the demolition of the currently vacant, decaying and unsightly building and parking deck. For those of us to look forward to aging in place in the neighborhood, the Ladybird development will offer us alternative housing with easy pedestrian access to local restaurants and services.

Our neighborhood needs, eagerly anticipates and will welcome this development. I urge you to approve the development plan without further delay so that the current decaying eyesore of the Super Fresh site can be removed from our otherwise beautiful neighborhood environment.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and what I do hope will be your balanced objectivity in helping increase the vitality, appeal and safety of our neighborhood by allowing the Ladybird development to move toward construction with dispatch!

With respect,

Sandy Nelson

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