

## 20-06 1333 M Street. SE DC PUD Testimony

My name is Liza Zamd and I am a resident on the 1300 block of L Street SE. I've attended every meeting of the ANC6B Planning and Zoning 1333 M Street SE PUD subcommittee as a resident member representing ANC6B07. I submit this testimony to provide background as to our experience with the applicant and my concerns with the PUD.

To begin, I think all of the ANC members and residents engaged in this process in good faith. Most of our meetings lasted 3-4+ hours and although we may have disagreed on occasion about the best approach, it appeared that everyone wanted an outcome that would benefit both the applicant and our community.

Unfortunately, the applicant was not similarly invested. Although the applicant's attorney attended almost every meeting, from one meeting to the next we asked the same questions and the applicant's attorney merely apologized for not having any new answers. Will the large buildings amplify and reflect sound, such as the disruptive helicopter noise that residents can literally feel pulsating against our eardrums? How will trash pick-up functionally work in the building without a loading dock? What is the applicant offering to accommodate a community-requested adult daycare center (ADC) in a portion of the retail space? What size units will the affordable housing comprise of? How will residents without a car bring home groceries and conduct other common errands before the pedestrian walkway is built? These questions, along with others about environmental issues and architectural design, remained pending across several meetings. Most of them are still unanswered.

By the end of July I formed a hypothesis as to why the applicant was not more engaged: by not answering our questions, the applicant was trying to avoid us realizing that the PUD did not offer significant public benefits despite being 30+% larger than even the largest DC PUDs. Indeed, beyond a modest increase in affordable housing units, it was hard to identify any alleged public benefit that was not also an amenity. The great lawn looks lovely but that is also a selling point to the building's residents. It's good that the roads directly to the buildings will be paved but that too is mostly for the residents given their location. Thus, when the community became interested in pursuing a real public benefit, an ADC that Ward 6 currently lacks,<sup>1</sup> it was disappointing that the applicant never gave any concrete proposals despite our requests. Instead, the applicant eventually offered an unspecified sum of money to an organization that was advocating for an ADC. I am not sure anyone initially felt comfortable with the applicant giving money to any organization but after more than two months of the applicant refusing to engage, a cash payment—which the applicant promoted—was the only option for a true public benefit. However, even with a cash payment compromise, we were disappointed because the \$25,000 sum that the applicant proffered is not meaningful nor is it sufficient for any entity to realize an ADC.

<sup>1</sup> Indeed, in 2018-2019 I unsuccessfully looked for ADC options so my elderly father could come live with me. He passed away this summer, but I know that other Ward 6 residents of all income levels could still benefit from an ADC.

I am not a NIMBY. I understand that communities should accept change and that DC needs tax dollars now more than ever. However, this PUD seems like it will set a problematic precedent based on the paucity of public benefits relative to its size. I am also concerned about my future neighbors, the residents of 1333 M St. SE. What will senior citizens, families with small children, or people with physical disabilities do in the 10+ years until the city builds the pedestrian walkway to L street SE? In many other neighborhoods with similar public transportation scarcity, residents often use a car. Thus, what the applicant is proposing will amount to a car-centric development for at least the next decade, yet the applicant pretends that its application already satisfies its residents' public transportation needs.

For these reasons I am not comfortable with the current 1333 M St. SE PUD application. I respectfully ask that the Commission support Southeast DC residents so we can obtain true public benefits from the applicant as a condition of the PUD approval.