



Mr. Anthony Hood, Chair  
District of Columbia Zoning Commission  
Washington, DC  
Via Email

April 22, 2022

RE: Letter of Support for Zoning Case No. 21-18 Dance Loft Ventures, LLC PUD

Dear Members of the DC Zoning Commission,

Uptown Community Initiative is a community-driven nonprofit organization that supports historic preservation and small, independently owned businesses along upper 14th and Kennedy Streets, NW through its Uptown Main Street program. Recently, we were also awarded an additional grant for the Petworth Main Street program. UCI helps make our unique corner of the city a thriving place to live, work and invest.

We have followed all the public meetings and information sources on Case No. 21-18, a mixed-use project at 4618 14th Street, NW, through local listservs, blogs, the project website by the owners of the property, Dance Loft Ventures. We have also attended several community meetings, presentations, and walk-thrus organized by the development team and the ANC in the past year.

Board members voted on the project during its April 21 meeting and unanimously supported it for the following reasons:

First, the commercial stretch along the 4600 and 4700 blocks of 14<sup>th</sup> Street has been slated for revitalization for more than 10 years. As we understand the Small Area Plan of 2012, there is already a rendering of a multi-story building on the block. The site can support increased residential density and generate much needed foot traffic for current neighborhood serving businesses and attract new commercial investment.

Second, the project provides mixed-income housing and family-size units at a time when DC is experiencing an affordable housing crisis. The presence of families and individuals of all incomes in the area is part of creating a safe community and a workforce that lives close to places of employment. We also applaud the sustainability features of the project and its net-zero energy target.

Third, we support the mixed-use aspects and its plan to preserve the arts, especially performing arts, in Ward 4. Attracting and keeping the arts is vital for a thriving commercial corridor. A state-of-the-art theater would offer dance education for young people, studio space for artists, and a community gathering place to enjoy the visual and performing arts.

Fourth, we understand that reasonable density near a major transportation hub is necessary for the provision of this level of community benefits. It is essential for the provision of affordable housing and for the vitality of the corridor.

While we understand there may be changes, temporary disruptions, and that our organization, as well as other small businesses, will have to relocate, we look forward to working with the community to bring this project to fruition. It will serve all who live, work, and visit the corridor.

Kristen L. Barden  
Chair of the Board of Directors