

Letter in Support of Case 21-18 Dance Loft Project

Dear Zoning Commissioners,

I live in ANC 4C and hope you will vote to support Case 21-18, Dance Loft's application for a Consolidated PUD and map amendment.

You have already heard excellent arguments from my neighbors, from Dance Loft, and from ANC 4C about why we want this project in our community. There is no need for me to reiterate how much we need the 101 housing units this project will provide, or how impressive it is that a large majority of them will be affordable, or how wonderful it is that this project provides many family-sized units.

Instead, I want to talk about what this project means for the planning process in the District of Columbia. As you know better than most, DC just went through an expansive, drawn-out, and robust process to amend (really, rewrite) our Comprehensive Plan.

On March 20, 2018 (yes, it really was that long ago!), I testified at the Wilson Building in support of amending the plan and specifically focused on the PUD process, which by that time had become bogged down in legal challenges and obstructionism. I talked about the Hebrew Home redevelopment, which was originally filed as a PUD, but transitioned to solely a map amendment because the PUD process had become so unreliable.

We were lucky in Petworth that the Hebrew Home redevelopment enjoyed broad community support and that the nonprofit developer continued to engage the neighborhood. Now, the main building is open, and the townhome portion will be starting sales soon. But in other cases around the city, the failure of the PUD process meant that much-needed housing didn't get built.

The Dance Loft project presents an opportunity for the Commission to get PUDs back on track, in line with the revisions to the Comp Plan passed by the Council. On this site specifically, the amended FLUM envisioned redevelopment. Not only that, but the FLUM amendment came on the heels of an even earlier small area plan that also envisioned mixed-used apartments on this site.

I urge you to respect the spirit and letter of the revised Comp Plan by supporting this PUD and associated map amendment. Any other decision after such an extensive Comp Plan revision process would indicate that years of community engagement and legislative work were all for naught.

Thank you,

Michael Whelan

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