

**Testimony of ANC 6D Before the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia**  
**Z.C. Case No. 21-20, Square 662**  
**January 24, 2022**

Good afternoon, Commissioners. My name is Fredrica Kramer. I am Commissioner for ANC 6D05 and Vice Chair of ANC 6D. I am testifying this afternoon on behalf of ANC 6D and our Commission's report submitted to the Zoning Commission on December 13, 2021.

As ANC 6D stated in its report to the Commission, we have voted to approve the design review of the Phase 1 redevelopment of Square 662, Lot 801 & Square 66E, Lot 800 at 1700 Half St. SW. This is the first phase of a three-phase development, which will provide two substantial benefits to the growing Buzzard Point community and the broader community of Southwest.

First, the Applicant is attempting to target a grocery for the large ground floor retail space that will be developed in Phase 2. While that facility will not be available until the second phase of construction, this neighborhood-serving grocery store will be the first of vitally needed local services for the new residents of Buzzard Point, as well as those nearby north of Potomac Avenue SW. The ANC has been so supportive of this potential tenant that it took the relatively unusual step of supporting the approval of curb cuts for Phase 2 at the DDOT Public Service Committee hearing, in order that the Applicant might be able to successfully solicit bids from potential vendors of the needed grocery.

Second, the construction of this project will eliminate one of the two concrete plants in Buzzard Point that have supplied concrete to the massive number of redevelopment projects in Southwest and Buzzard Point. In the process, these plants have also been the source of continual dust and air pollution inflicted on local residents, particularly those in the low-income African American community immediately north of the site who suffer with underlying health conditions that exacerbate their risk from this constant onslaught of dust and pollutants.

The project has other positive design features important to cite.

The proposed building has a multitude of balconies, a feature that ANC 6D has pressed many developers to provide, as we eliminate much outdoor space in redevelopment, and as more residents work from home as a result of COVID-19 and changes in the structure of the

workforce that may prevail. The balconies are both inset and outward hanging, which gives added texture to the building.

The brick ground level design gives the building warmth, and the brick bookend portions of the structure add texture and visual appeal. In addition, the white central portion adds lightness and visual interest to the building and complements the white of the new Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge, seen a block away and across the river—a bow to the neighborhood and context in which the building sits, and an oft-ignored attribute in other new buildings in Southwest.

Although built to a full height of 130', the upper two floors are set back on the east side and there are various setbacks on the other facades, which also adds to the lightness of the design, and picks up the gray panel color used in different portions of the façade, again adding visual interest to the design.

ANC 6D also wishes to call to the attention of the Zoning Commission other issues in order that they might be a part of your considerations and addressed in the Final Order.

First, while the project will be developed in two phases, the east/west alley between Half Street and what will become an extension of South Capitol Street will be used by both pedestrians and motor vehicles—in particular, trucks accessing the loading zones for retailers, cars accessing the short-term parking area, other traffic potentially circling around from S Street or Half Street as traffic essentially dead-ends at the southern extension of South Capitol Street, and vehicles that will access Square 708S, the yet to be developed parcel on the riverfront east of Squar662 and also owned by the Applicant.

This alley is 30' wide and designed to permit two-way traffic. While not intended as a main pedestrian thoroughfare, it is likely to attract pedestrians as Buzzard Point welcomes increasing numbers of visitors attending games at Audi Stadium or Nats Park, frequenting the many new eateries coming into the neighborhood, or just interested in the new river vistas and trailways.

ANC 6D was concerned that the alley would get frequent pedestrian use and those individuals needed to be protected from trucks coming in and out, backing up and potentially intruding in pedestrian space. The result of a concerted effort between the Applicant and ANC 6D, the Applicant has restricted pedestrian traffic to a designated 6 ft. lane using different surface material and strategically placed bollards to ensure that trucks will not be able to inadvertently back into the pedestrian lane.

ANC 6D asks that drawings and detailed specifications for the alleyway to ensure these protections are included in the Final Order.

Second, the roughly 17,000 sq. ft. of ground floor commercial space that is part of this Phase 1 application is expected to house non-food and beverage tenants, and ANC 6D applauds that consideration. Our Commissions expects to continue discussions with the Applicant so that the ultimate tenants may fill some of the void in neighborhood-serving amenities that continues to be a challenge in Buzzard Point.

Finally, S Street will have relatively light traffic, although it is currently handling truck traffic to the Vulcan concrete plant. Although the Applicant is hoping to have made repaving and other improvements to S Street as part of its current completion of the building at 1800 Half Street just south of this project, parking and curbside management for the development of Square 662 should take into account the anticipated traffic on the street until the second concrete plant is gone and that parcel is redeveloped. It should also take into account safe pedestrian passage, especially during construction, for children accessing the early childhood program at Eagle Academy Public Charter School on the next block.

It is also worth noting that the eastern end of the building to be completed in Phase 1 abuts a substantial public space. While not part of this Design Review, the Applicant anticipates proposing to improve the space as a landscaped public plaza as part of Phase 2. ANC 6D has discussed this opportunity with the Applicant, since it would provide much needed open and green space being lost as Buzzard Point is redeveloped, and also because it abuts the bioretention area and new traffic oval to the north, and would complement these green spaces with a pedestrian- and resident-friendly amenity. We look forward to the fully developed proposal for Phase 2.

Thank you and I look forward to your questions.

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