

**Report of the Economic Development and Zoning Committee of ANC 6A  
(Special Meeting)  
October 23, 2012**

Present: Members: Missy Boyette, Jeff Fletcher, Laura Gentile, Charmaine Josiah, Dan Golden  
Commissioners: Drew Ronneberg, David Holmes

Drew Ronneberg chaired the meeting.

**Call to Order**

**Community Comments**

Neighbors of 901 D St. NE expressed concern about parking. They will support as few units as possible to minimize parking issues.

Community member expressed support of Wall Development project at 13th & H St. NE. He specifically appreciated its cultural aspect, something he felt that H St. lacks, and its proposal to provide a lot of units.

A resident of H St. who is an artist stated that she is concerned with losing an arts presence on H St.

**New Business**

**R. L. Christian Site Development (1300 H St. NE):** Commissioner Ronneberg thanked the Deputy Mayor's office for running the previous meeting on October 4, which allowed each group to present their proposal for the site. Commissioner Ronneberg stated that the ED&Z Committee will recommend two proposals to the Deputy Mayor for a best & final offer.

Committee members offered their feedback on the six proposals:

Charmaine Josiah:

- NDC - Ms. Josiah does not see a huge need for a Yes! Organic Market. She is looking for a project that brings something different to the Corridor. She saw their involvement in City Vista as a positive.
- NCD / Wall - Ms. Josiah likes the art deco design and the inclusion of public space. She has some issues with the design, however.
- Rise - Ms. Josiah found this proposal to be an interesting and innovative idea, similar to Union Market, and appreciated the opportunity for diversity. She also saw the opportunity for community involvement to be strong, as well as saw the design as strong.
- Valor - Ms. Josiah pointed out that the ANC has worked with PGN on a nearby project so has some concerns.
- Atlas - Ms. Josiah sees the incorporation of artist lofts as good, as well as sees potential for strong design.
- Argos - Ms. Josiah likes the turret / Victorian design aesthetic.

Missy Boyette:

- Valor - Mrs. Boyette does not see a unique design proposal in this scheme. She does feel that the police presence is a positive aspect, but 5 stories is a negative.

- Rise - Mrs. Boyette finds this proposal to have an interesting design aesthetic and likes the articulation and texture. She also likes the articulation of the retail presence at the street level as well as the process and idea of having local retail / market. She sees the incorporation of 20% affordable housing as positive.
- NDC - Mrs. Boyette stated that she is not terribly excited about Yes! Organic Market. She feels that the design is uninteresting and flat, and that the building looks more like an office building. She expressed concern about being able to see the mechanical units on the roof.
- NCD / Wall: Mrs. Boyette stated that the design of the building needs work, particularly in the massing which provides an awkward plaza space where the building peels back at the east. She sees this as an undesirable place, as it is in the shadow of the adjacent building, trash will collect here, etc. She also expressed concern about how the corner will be marked if the building does not hold the corner. She sees the 5-story proposal as negative (too tall).
- Atlas - Mrs. Boyette sees potential for some Art Deco aesthetic and likes the rhythm of the facade that is proposed along H Street. She likes the idea of an outdoor memorial and the open public space along 13th St but wonders how the outdoor market will be incorporated.
- Argos / 1300 - Mrs. Boyette dislikes the historic detailing, particularly the cupola at the corner. However, she feels that the base/middle/top treatment is successful and appreciates that the top portion of the building has a different material treatment. She sees the incorporation of a police substation as a positive, as well as appreciates the incorporation of the drycleaners, which helps with the massing and presence of the building on H St. She also sees the scholarship as a positive.

#### Jeff Fletcher:

- He sees Rise and Argos' proposals as interesting and creative.
- He expressed concern about height, stating that 4 floors is preferred.
- For Atlas' proposal, Mr. Fletcher likes the art deco look.

#### Laura Gentile:

- Ms. Gentile focused her comments on issues of mixed retail and height.
- Rise - Ms. Gentile likes the idea of providing opportunities for local vendors and affordable housing units.
- Argos - Ms. Gentile appreciates the incorporation of the drycleaners in the scheme and believed that larger residential units might encourage families to move in.
- Atlas - Ms. Gentile appreciated the incorporation of a memorial and the emphasis on public space.
- Valor / Wall - Ms. Gentile saw both of these proposals as negative in respect to the fact that each proposal suggests 5 stories.
- NDC - Ms. Gentile does not see Yes! Organic Market as a positive aspect for this proposal.

#### Drew Ronneberg

- Argos - Commissioner Ronneberg likes that this proposal incorporates the drycleaner, and likes the design and safety elements.
- Atlas - Commissioner Ronneberg stated that the ANC has had a good relationship with Sarah Alexander in the past. He sees the Art Deco aesthetic as a positive. However, he expressed concern regarding the implementation of this project, as a previous project has not been successful.
- Valor - Commissioner Ronneberg stated that there has been a great relationship at 1350 Maryland Ave. However, he wanted to see more development of the retail concept.

- Rise - Commissioner Ronneberg has similar comments as the other committee members related to this proposal's design and retail concept.
- NCD - Commissioner Ronneberg expressed concern over the public space as being a "dead zone".
- NDC - Commissioner Ronneberg does not see this design as compelling. He also expressed concern as the ANC has no prior experience with any of these team members.

Commissioner Ronneberg inquired as to whether community members had any additional input. No one came forth with any input other than what was mentioned at the beginning of the meeting.

Committee members voted for their top three proposals. Dan Golden abstained. The vote tally was

Team	Votes
Rise	5
Argos	5
Atlas	2
Valor	1
NCD	1
NDC	0

Based on the outcome of this vote, Commissioner Ronneberg tallied the votes and stated that the ANC will recommend the proposals by Argos and Rise.

Commissioner Ronneberg asked the committee whether members had any comments for the Deputy Mayor's office as they request a best and final offer from the selected proposals. Charmaine Josiah asked for Argos to recognize RL Christian as part of their scheme in a visual / tactile way. She also asked for some additional definition on the diversity of retail. Missy Boyette asked for both of the recommended proposals to provide parking; Commissioner Ronneberg pointed out that this is not an issue, as Rise has proposed 17 spaces below-grade and Argos has proposed spaces at grade. Commissioner Ronneberg asked that balconies on H Street facade be reconsidered. Charmaine Josiah inquired as to whether Argos has incorporated affordable housing. A representative from this team confirmed that 8 units of affordable housing will be incorporated. Missy Boyette asked that Argos reconsider the cupola. Commissioner Ronneberg stated that Argos' facade reads too horizontal.

**Recommendation:** The Committee voted 7-0 to recommend that the Deputy Mayor's Office take a best and final offer and recommend Argos and Rise.

**HPA #12-XX (901 D St. NE):** Following up on the 10/17 presentation to the ANC ED&Z Committee, the vote on Historic Preservation issues was addressed first. There were two main issues that were raised by the committee at the previous presentation: the treatment of the roof level on the townhouse on D Street, and the increased height of windows at the ground floor of the 9th St. townhouses. The D St. townhouse issue has been addressed by suggesting that the brick carry up the entire facade in lieu of a mansard roof. The developers stated that they will be filing the project on Thursday for an HPRB hearing.

The discussion was opened up for community comments and questions.

The neighbor immediately to the east of the proposed townhouse on D St. asked a series of questions. She asked whether the townhouse would be the same height as her house. The developer responded yes. She asked whether there would be a porch on the proposed townhouse. The developer

responded yes, but that the porch will be slightly lower. She asked whether the face of the new townhouse facade would project past her house. The developer / architect responded that the facade will be even with the facade of the adjoining existing townhomes. She expressed concern that the proposed townhouse extends past her house at the rear and that this will affect her, as all of the light into the back of her home comes in at her dogleg. The developer stated that they are willing to consider a reduction of the 60% lot occupancy so that she does not lose this access to light.

A second neighbor, across the street from the proposed townhouse on D St., asked why the proposed townhouse on D St. does not replicate the two townhouses to the east. The developer responded that Amanda Molson at the HPO prefers not to exactly mimic what is there; however, the developer is open to alternate designs for the D St. facade.

A third neighbor asked about closing off the exit on to D St., specifically asking about how garbage trucks will get through the site. The developer stated that there will be ten communal trash bins and that they are willing to work with the trash company to have the trash times coordinated.

A question was asked concerning why there is a connection at the existing historic building to the townhomes on 9th St. The developer stated that this was a requirement from the zoning code as well as a recommendation by HPRB.

Committee members provided feedback. Missy Boyette stated that the revised design is better. She believes the townhouse on D St. should look different, which it does, from those to the east. She did suggest that the architect look again at the proportions of windows to make them more similar to the houses to the east.

**Recommendation:** Regarding the preservation issues, the committee voted 5-0 to approve the general concept.

The developer team then brought up, for the same site, the zoning issues which will go before BZA. They explained that the variance application has changed from last week, such that they are asking for approval on the lot area and unit count only (they created a separate lot for the D St. townhouse so that it now conforms to zoning requirements). They explained that the Credit Union is moving out of the building by January and that they are currently reaching out to the neighborhood. The current scheme asks for 7 additional units than are allowed by zoning. The biggest concern related to this appears to be parking (R-4 has a 1:3 ratio). The developer is looking to work with DDOT and others to study options, such as bike share, car rental, etc.

Committee comments were identified. The committee asked that the developer and their team consider detriment to light and air to the neighbor on D St.

Regarding the unit count, the developer explained that they are challenged by the requirement to keep existing interior walls. There are two parking spaces required by the D St. townhouse, and the three townhouses on 9th St. will provide a number of parking spaces that are market-driven.

Commissioner Holmes stated that, while the neighborhood is delighted about the redevelopment of this site, there needs to be some agreement to limit the number of units, perhaps with RPP limitations. Commissioner Holmes asked that the committee give authority to himself and to Commissioner Ronneberg to negotiate the number of units with the developer.

Community members asked questions. One member asked for clarification on zoning for the covered parking. The developer stated that the covered parking does not affect rear yard setback because it is an accessory structure. A second member inquired as to the number of units in the 9th St. townhomes. The developer responded that this will be four 2 bedroom flats.

Charmaine Josiah asked what the ultimate total number of units would be. Commissioner Holmes stated that there is an overall density concern and that it does not matter where the density goes. Commissioner Holmes stated that there is a consensus to cap the number of units to 26 and RPP. Laura Gentile stated that this plan cannot be supported, particularly because of the detriment to public good. Commissioner Ronneberg stated that this would be a vote of opposition unless the developer can negotiate an agreement.

**Recommendation:** The Committee voted 7-0 to recommend that the ANC:

- Not agree to greater density than is allowed by-right;
- Authorize the chairs of the EDZ and the ANC to continue further negotiations to provide limits on the street parking to be permitted to residents of 901 D St. NE; and,
- That the future 913 D, to be located to the west of 915 D, incorporate a dogleg to provide adequate light and air to the eastern next door residence.

**BZA #18451 (409 15th St NE):** Alex Cho, the owner of the fusion taco restaurant, is currently leasing space at this address. DCRA has previously erred when it issued a C of O for a deli in a residential R-5-B zone. When Mr. Cho applied for a C of O for a deli, DCRA flagged it for needing a variance.

The neighbor who lives across the street was present. He expressed that his only issue with the deli is that it is "a place to hide", and he questions the operating hours.

Mr. Cho stated that he was not aware of the use issue when he leased the space. He explained that the space is intended as a carry-out, to operate until 9pm and to provide lunch and dinner. Missy Boyette inquired as to whether any measures can be taken to alleviate safety concerns, i.e. lighting, etc. Cho stated he can provide this. Commissioner Ronneberg explained that there is no variance currently with the property. Cho stated that he has signed a 5 year lease. Commissioner Ronneberg stated that if the C of O mistake had not occurred, he would not support the use variance. Dan Golden stated that the criteria for the variance has been met and put to best use. Cho stated that the BZA hearing is scheduled for the beginning of December.

The neighbor stated that the current lighting around the property is sufficient. He would like for the owner to provide exterior cameras, no breakfast service, additional lighting at the front of the building, no selling of groceries, no singles, and no sit-in service. These criteria should be held for 5 years, the term of the lease.

**Recommendation:** The Committee voted 7-0 to recommend that the ANC support a variance limited to 5 years with the conditions that the facility be open from 11am until 9pm for service and that the owner provide lighting and surveillance cameras at the front and at the alley.

**B1207040 (607 14th Place NE):** Laura Gentile explained that a building permit has been issued improperly at this address and suggested that an appeal be made to BZA that DCRA made an error, as the project requires a variance.

**Recommendation:** The Committee voted 7-0 to recommend that the ANC write a letter of appeal to the BZA stating that the project requires a variance.

**Additional Community Comment**

None.

**Next Scheduled ED&Z Committee Meeting:  
Wednesday, November 21, 2012  
7-9 PM**