

# ward3vision

smart growth • vibrant neighborhoods

Chairman Anthony Hood  
District of Columbia Zoning Commission  
441 4th St., NW  
Suite 210-S  
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Case No.19-10 –Valor Development, LLC- PUD

Dear Chairman Hood and Members of the Commission,

We write to express support for the Lady Bird project proposed for Spring Valley on the site of the former Superfresh grocery store. We think this mixed-use development will enhance the neighborhood by providing a grocery store -- scaled down in size, as opponents had urged -- and 219 apartments. More residential space is needed in the District, and especially in Ward 3 where housing is so costly because demand outstrips supply. A grocery store would make the area more walkable, bikeable and convenient for residents. It would cut down on residents having to use their cars to travel to other locations to shop for food.

Since the development was first proposed, the developer has worked hard to refine the project to respond to community concerns. The grocery store will be smaller, and there will be more set backs near existing residences. In addition, to address concerns over the project's height, the structure has been sunk below grade using the terraces as lightwells.

The fact is that this number of residential units could be built as a matter-of-right on this site (with the developer purchasing some building rights from an adjacent shopping center), but without the grocery store. The development proposed gives the community advantages over such a residences-only project. First and foremost, the grocery is an advantage. In addition, a matter-of-right project could be taller than the proposed development and built with fewer set-backs from the property line. And there are amenities that the developer is has agreed to as part of the MOU with ANC 3E.

Perhaps the greatest contribution to the neighborhood is the size and mix of unit types. Many newer buildings have very small apartments with more efficiencies, and junior one-bedrooms than any other type. The Ladybird project will have larger units with some 3-bedroom apartments including some designated for IZ.

We are pleased to note that the MOU includes provisions to assure shuttle service to the Tenley Metro station which promotes the mission of Ward3Vision to encourage more transit-oriented-development.

The one concern for Ward3Vision is the amount of parking provided. There are now a total of 370 spaces, 236 of which necessitated by the agreement with AU. However, Valor is constructing 59 spaces dedicated to the retail users when only 20 are required. We would urge continued negotiations for flexibility so that perhaps some of the AU spaces could be shared with the retail or put to other purposes such as below-grade retail. Although not ideal, this has worked very well for the Ace Hardware located in Tenleytown.

The architects, landscape designers, and developers should be applauded for having solved most of the community's complaints so artfully. Having a project of this scale with so many amenities, including a top-notch grocer, is really something to be celebrated. The scale, the massing, the architectural detail all make it an asset to the fabric of the neighborhood. In particular, the detailing of the grocery store with its red brick façade makes a complimentary backdrop to the historic Spring Valley Shopping Center.

Please approve the proposed Lady Bird PUD. We strongly believe that the addition of residential units to Ward 3 is a small but significant measure to address the city's housing shortage and that well-designed projects such as this are the leading edge of increasing urban density which has been highlighted as one tool to reduce climate change.

Sincerely,

/s/

Susan Kimmel  
Chair, Ward3Vision