

Walker-Bey, James T.

From: Mark Graham <grahamark@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, February 16, 2024 11:10 AM
To: Clerk of the Council
Subject: REQUEST: Postpone Oral Arguments to March 11, 2024 Deny Detailed Site Plan – DSP 21001

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February 16, 2024

Donna Brown
Clerk of the County Council
Prince George’s County

Item: DSP 21001 – Suffrage Point South

Requested Actions: Postpone Oral Arguments to March 11, 2024

 Deny Detailed Site Plan – DSP 21001

Dear Ms. Brown.

Please confirm receipt of this letter, and please ensure that it is included in the official record for Detailed Site Plan 21001.

My name is Mark Graham. I am a Person of Record in this case. I live on 38th Avenue Hyattsville, near Driskell Park, Magruder Woods Park, and the former WSSC property. I respectfully request that the District Council postpone Oral Arguments to March 11, 2024.

I strongly oppose Werrlein’s plan to build 41 townhouses on the lower parcel, and for the following reasons and others, I respectfully urge the District Council to deny Werrlein’s application.

Werrlein still lacks the state-federal floodplain and wetland approval that it is required to have at the Detailed Site Plan stage. Most or all of the lower parcel lies in 100-floodplain of the Northwest Branch. Werrlein also lacks the required state-federal stormwater permit.

The Planning Board ignored the fact that none of Werrlein’s stormwater and floodplain plans, or county approvals of those plans, account for climate change. FEMA’s floodplain maps are badly obsolete. Global warming is bringing more severe storms, and the lower

parcel sits adjacent to Hyattsville's most heavily used park, a forested wetland and stream valley, a tributary to the Northwest Branch, and families' homes.

The Planning Board failed to give adequate weight to evidence documenting Werrlein's deplorable record of environmental violations, as well the County's general failure to enforce environmental laws. It is deeply disturbing that Werrlein apparently has operated on the site without required county, state and federal environmental permits, flooded repeatedly flooded Gallatin Street with polluted stormwater, and discharged sediment pollution into the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River on numerous occasions.

The townhouse density for this project radically exceeds the density allowed in this residential zone and any density in nearby neighborhoods in this zone.

This project will provide little or no useful public open space, as the Gateway Arts District Sector Plan contemplated. Our schools already are badly over capacity, and it appears Hyattsville Elementary School now must be rebuilt on the same small site, with little or no green space. Our local streets, including 40th Place, which is narrow, winding, and hilly, already are heavily burdened with cut-through traffic heading to and from Route 1.

The credibility of the planning process is at stake here and has been at stake throughout the Magruder Pointe-Suffrage Point proceedings. Again, I respectfully urge the District Council to deny DSP 21001.

In addition to all of the above, I would like to emphasize that as a 20 year resident of Hyattsville and native of Prince George's County (DuVal High School class of 1969) I have seen many changes during my years living in the area. I'm not one that believes that all changes are negative. In many respects, this area is a more open, tolerant, just and simply better place than it was. However, the continued dominance of County politics by development interests is very troubling. As many of my neighbors have pointed out, there is plenty of housing being built in the Hyattsville-Route1 area. If there is a shortage of housing, it is of affordable housing, which is not what Werrlein's proposal provides. To my neighbors and me, this Werrlein scheme is just another example of developers taking advantage of a community for the short term gain of the developer.

Lastly, I regret that this process is structured in a way that wears down the middle-class, working residents of the community, most of whom oppose this project but are simply too busy to marshal the kind of sustained effort that the wealthy developers can mount in opposition. As the unanimous vote of the City of Hyattsville Council opposing the Suffrage Point South project demonstrated, the people of this community do not want this development.

Thank you for taking time to consider my request and for your service to the community. Please let me know what actions you take or plan to take.

Sincerely,
Mark and Mary Graham
5600 38th Avenue
Hyattsville, MD 20782