

Walker-Bey, James T.

From: Tim Davis <thatimdavis@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 19, 2024 4:53 PM
To: Clerk of the Council
Subject: Person of Record Opposition to DSP 21001
Attachments: Werrlein opposition Feb 2024.docx

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February 15, 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.

I strongly oppose Werrlein's plan to build 41 townhouses on the lower parcel and respectfully urge the District Council to deny Werrlein's application. As you know, the proposed development has been repeatedly opposed by the elected representatives of the City of Hyattsville and the majority of engaged constituents.

I am a Person of Record in this case. I live in Hyattsville, near Driskell Park, Magruder Woods Park, and the former WSSC parking lot. I respectfully request that the District Council postpone Oral Arguments to March 11, 2024. (Or better yet, put a stake in the heart of this recurring Freddy Kruegeresque nightmare and expeditiously deny DSP 21001).

Various levels of County "oversight" have allowed Werrlein and Douglas to proceed without the proper permits and repeatedly violate multiple ordinances, yet they never seem to suffer repercussions. These violations and the flagrant disregard for environmental concerns date back to the demolition of the WSSC building – or further, given the previous owner's well-known policy of demolition-by-neglect.

Werrlein still lacks the state-federal floodplain and wetland approval that it is required to have secured at the Detailed Site Plan stage. Werrlein also lacks the required state-federal stormwater permit. The proposed remediation measures are superficial stopgaps that do not take into the account well-established climate change factors and the associated revision of compliance requirements that are already underway.

It is deeply disturbing that Werrlein has operated on the site without required county, state and federal environmental permits, repeatedly flooded Gallatin Street with polluted stormwater (causing significant safety hazards and costing taxpayers for repeated police interventions), and discharged sediment pollution into the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River during every significant rainfall. They operated for years without any silt control fences whatsoever.

It has also been repeatedly demonstrated that –despite the developer’s creative accounting --the townhouse density for this project radically exceeds the density allowed in this residential zone and nearby neighborhoods. Some may recall that the developer initially insisted that there would be no townhouses – just “single family attached homes” (another creative invention).

Those of us who have been involved in this from the beginning will recall that one of the original loop holes for qualifying for a zoning change/variance – over the expressed wishes of the City of Hyattsville municipal government, which had gone to great lengths to get the area zoned as OS--- was that the purported increase in park land would conform to the Arts District/Sector Plan call for expanding open space and providing associated recreational/environmental benefits. As currently configured with its tightly packed 41 units, the project will provide little or no useful public open space. That fiction was based on the developer’s supposed generosity in agreeing to sell the portion of the site containing the required storm water retention pond/mud pit to the City of Hyattsville, thus off-loading that responsibility to the city’s staff and taxpayers. The City wisely declined this burden.

The proposed development is not just in the wrong plus but also at the wrong time. The City of Hyattsville and this portion of Prince George’s County in general are experiencing a tremendous boom in residential construction, with hundreds of units scheduled to come on line over the coming year. We need parks, improved schools, and other public amenities, not additional high-priced housing. Our schools are already badly over capacity, and will be even more crowded if this development is approved. Our local streets, including 40th Place, which is narrow, winding, and hilly, are already heavily burdened with cut-through traffic heading to and from Route 1. Both Gallatin Street and 40th Place contain dangerous curves that routinely cause accidents and near-accidents. The intersections of Hamilton & 38th Street and 40th Place and Rhode Island Avenue are frequently backed up for blocks – and not just during prime commuting times. Will people who pay \$600k for their new townhouses really be swayed by Capital Bikeshare memberships?

Once again, I respectfully urge the District Council to take whatever means are necessary to deny DSP 21001 as expeditiously as possible. I apologize for the tone of this letter – my previous protests have been duly dry and deferential – but this nonsense has gone on too long.

Thank you for taking time to consider my request and for your service to the community.

Sincerely,

Timothy Davis

4700 Banner St

Hyattsville, MD 20781

February 15, 2024

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