



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3E

TENLEYTOWN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY PARK FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS
WAKEFIELD CHEVY CHASE FORT GAINES
c/o Lisner-Louise-Dickson-Hurt Home 5425 Western Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20015
www.anc3e.org

ANC 3E Testimony regarding ZC case 21-11

Good afternoon members of the Zoning Commission.

My name is Tom Quinn and I am an Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner representing single member district 3E04 which runs along the east side of Wisconsin Avenue from Tenleytown to Western Avenue.

I am here today to testify on behalf of ANC 3E in support of the request from the Lisner-Louise-Dickson-Hurt home for a map amendment to re-zone 1.1 acres of their property on the northeastern corner of their 5.4 acre lot from R-2 to RA-2 to enable them to construct a residential property on that portion of their lot.

ANC 3E has previously submitted to the record in this case a copy of our resolution and I will also be submitting this testimony to the record.

At its properly noticed public meeting on February 13, 2020, ANC 3E passed a resolution¹ unanimously supporting changing the FLUM for the Lisner property to moderate density residential and low density commercial. This proposed change to the FLUM was supported by the DC Office of Planning (OP) and subsequently incorporated into legislation passed by the DC Council updating DC's Comprehensive Plan which was passed by the DC Council on May 18, 2021.

Our ANC first became aware of the applicants desire for a map amendment to construct a residential building on their property in August of 2021. The Lisner leadership team, along with their design team from Wiencek Associates, appeared at ANC 3E meetings on November 16, 2021², December 9, 2021³ and February 9, 2022⁴.

At these meetings ANC 3E heard questions and concerns about the proposal from both the community and the ANC including:

- The map amendment covering the entire property

¹ <https://anc3e.org/lisner-flum-change-resolution-february-2020/>

² <https://anc3e.org/wp-content/uploads/ANC3E-Nov-16-2021-Meeting-Minutes-Final.pdf>

³ <https://anc3e.org/wp-content/uploads/ANC3E-Dec-9-2021-Meeting-Minutes-Final.pdf>

⁴ <https://anc3e.org/wp-content/uploads/ANC3E-Feb-9-2022-Meeting-Minutes-Final.pdf>

- The plan to increase the size of the surface parking lot in front of the main building
- How was the project in part being funded by DC public funds
- How would the applicant guarantee to the community that they would actually construct a building with deeply affordable units
- The lack of consultation with the immediate neighbors about the proposed map amendment
- The siting and orientation of the proposed building
- Plans for the remainder of the property
- Why was there a skinny strip of RA-2 running along the frontage of the property

As a result of feedback from the ANC, the immediate neighbors and the State Historic Preservation Office the applicant made significant modifications to the design of the proposed building, most significantly by re-orienting the layout of the proposed buildings two wings which broke up the massing of the project along 42nd Street where it is most adjacent to single family homes; stepping down the height of the proposed building at the two corners of it closest to 42nd Street; creating an open space for resident and community use facing 42nd Street; and eliminating the current curb cut on Livingston Street.

The updated design is consistent with and respectful to the existing 1941 building and additions and in no way detracts from the 1941 building and once in place will protect the mission of the Home and of the 1941 building of serving low income District seniors thereby enhancing any historic dimension to the campus.

Also, as a result of feedback from the ANC and interested neighbors of the project the applicant modified their initial request for a map amendment for their entire 5.4 acre lot to one just covering the 1.1 acres in the northeast corner of the lot that are necessary for the proposed senior affordable housing development.

Over the course of many years ANC 3E has consistently sought two components in all residential development projects before it – affordable housing and green buildings.

In 2019 DC Mayor Muriel Bowser set a goal for DC to build 36,000 additional housing units by 2025 with 12,000 of those units designated as affordable units. Although some workforce housing (IZ) units have been built in Ward 3 and others are in the pipeline ANC 3E is not aware of any deeply affordable housing units that have been built in Ward 3 since the Mayor's announcement and is not aware of any deeply affordable units built in Ward 3 in the last twenty years.

The applicant has applied for and received a commitment from the D.C Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to move forward with a project utilizing DC Housing Production Trust Fund dollars. The project will be completely deeply

affordable; all future tenants at the project will have incomes at 50% AMI or less; and it is currently anticipated that approximately half of the total tenant population will have incomes at 30% AMI and below.

The applicant, as part of its application, has committed to making all of the housing units in this project permanently affordable. Per the language in the RFP permanent affordability is defined as:

Perpetual Affordability: The period during which units designated as affordable housing are required to remain as affordable housing units in perpetuity, secured by a covenant running with the land that may be extinguished at the sole discretion of the District.

The applicant has also committed as part of its application to construct the project to meet the [Enterprise Green Community](#) standards. The applicant has committed to:

New construction projects with buildings with at least 50,000 square feet of Gross Floor Area must be certified by Enterprise Community Partners using the 2020 Enterprise Green Communities (EGC) Criteria, at the new, more stringent EGC Plus level.

The Applicant has long been a valued member of the community, hosting community events while providing critically needed housing and health services to low-income seniors. The applicant has stated that damages to its original building have severely impacted its financing and in order to get back to a sound financial standing the applicant must make costly repairs to its facilities.

In reliance on the binding agreement the applicant has made with the Department of Housing and Community Development to build a project comprised entirely of deeply affordable housing units in a building meeting the Enterprise Green Community Standards, ANC 3E on March 9, 2022 at its properly noticed public meeting voted unanimously to support the proposed map amendment to re-zone 1.1 acres of the Lisner Home to RA-2 and we respectfully urge the Zoning Commission to approve this proposed amendment.

ANC 3E also believes the funds generated by this agreement are critical to supporting the applicants on-going operations in our community as well as its long-term stability.

ANC 3E further believes the current proposed design is appropriately deferential to the original main 1941 building in its size and massing and setbacks and has submitted its resolution to the Historic Preservation Review Board urging them to find that even if the campus were to someday be designated, that the proposed new building would pass muster under its review standards.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.