



Testimony before the Hon. Phil Mendelson, Chair
Committee of the Whole
Council of the District of Columbia

RE: Support for PR21-307, the “McMillan Townhomes Parcels, Commercial Parcels, and Multifamily Parcels Disposition Extension Approval Resolution of 2015” and Bill 21-336, the “Closing of Franklin Street, N.W., Evarts Street, N.W., and Douglas Street, N.W. in Square 3128, S.O. 13-09432, Act of 2015”

by Cheryl Cort, Policy Director
October 26, 2015

Please accept these comments on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth. The Coalition for Smarter Growth is the leading organization in the Washington, D.C. region dedicated to making the case for smart growth. Our mission is to promote walkable, inclusive, and transit-oriented communities, and the land use and transportation policies and investments needed to make those communities flourish.

We wish to express our support for the resolution to extend the Land Development Agreement given the scale and difficulty of this undertaking. It’s not uncommon for complex projects to take more time to walk through the process. Of course we wish that the whole process could be expedited, but we recognize that a significant project like this is large and complex.

We also want to express support for closing the paper streets. We know this is a perfunctory legal action required to proceed with the project. We are excited to see paper streets and aspirations for a park replaced by *real* streets, parks, plazas, and restored historic structures that we can touch and experience.

We are here to simply ask the Council to continue moving this exciting project forward so we can begin to enjoy all its public benefits, and maybe go grocery shopping at the Harris Teeter.

To highlight some of the benefits of this unique redevelopment, we note it includes:

- historic restoration, preservation, and adaptive reuse of structures and landscape features, including the re-creation of the Olmstead Walk;
- creation of an 8-acre community park and aquatic recreation center, along with several acres of smaller public spaces;
- reuse of more than an acre of distinct underground cells for future public use and stormwater management;
- addition of new medical office uses to strengthen the cluster of hospitals north of Michigan Avenue, helping ensure jobs and healthcare facilities stay in this central D.C. location;
- expanded housing supply of 677 units for our rapidly growing city, especially the 20% affordable homes, including 94 units affordable at or below 60% of Area Median Income (AMI), and the remaining 38 units at 80% AMI.

We continue to believe the proposed plan for McMillan Sand Filtration Site is a good approach to meeting historic preservation goals while delivering outstanding public benefits and addressing citywide housing, employment, and economic development needs. Thank you for your consideration.