

MOUNT WASHINGTON

I M P R O V E M E N T A S S O C I A T I O N

June 18, 2017

Dear Mayor Pugh, President Young, and Councilman Schleifer,

On Tuesday, June 13, the Mount Washington Improvement Association (“MWIA”) voted overwhelmingly to oppose City Council Bill 17-0049, which would permit the construction of the “Overlook at Belvedere” as a “planned use development,” or “PUD.” Our opposition is not based upon the project itself, but because the MWIA was never given sufficient notification or time to evaluate the project and provide meaningful input, despite the project being immediately adjacent to Mount Washington.

The MWIA was not notified of the PUD until it was already introduced in the Council. Unfortunately, the City Planning Department designated the affected neighborhoods as North Roland Park, Poplar Hill, and Sabina-Mattfeldt. This designation is incomplete and should have included the neighborhoods of Mt. Washington and Roland Park. When it comes to zoning considerations, Mt. Washington is often asked to consider developments that are located in Sabina-Mattfeldt, such as the PUD for the Dye House reception space. We also were a part of the discussion for the Whole Foods development rezoning. Given Mt. Washington’s proximity to the development, we would have expected to be a part of the discussion.

In addition, we support the Roland Park Civic League and believe that they too should have been included, not only due to their close proximity but also because this development is zoned for Roland Park Elementary/Middle School, located within RPCL’s jurisdiction and which is already at capacity.

The MWIA has struggled on short notice to obtain basic information about the PUD — including a copy of the PUD exhibits themselves, which provide the substance of the agreement. We finally received those on Friday, June 16. We have not had the time to explore with the Planning Department what a development without the PUD would look like under Transform, given the height restrictions in R-6. The letter the Zoning Administrator issued on Friday, June 16 does not address that question.

To be clear, the MWIA does not oppose the PUD on the merits of the project. In fact, we have been unable to consider the full merits of the project given the lack of information to determine whether it is in the best interest of our 1500 residents. Notwithstanding the lack of information, we value the addition of housing that will support the City’s goals in adding residents, and are prepared to welcome new neighbors that would patronize the community’s businesses, bolster the mass-transit system, and contribute taxes. Especially given that six acres of this property is zoned high-density, we are not anti-development and are willing to consider this or any other PUD at



that location — if given sufficient notice of the proposal and an opportunity to contribute meaningful input. That has not happened here.

Sincerely,

/s/ Lindsey A. White

Lindsey A. White

MWIA President