



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 1A

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SMD 1A09 – Bobby Holmes
SMD 1A12 – Margaret Hundley

July 12, 2017

(via email only)
Brian T. Kenner
Deputy Mayor for
Planning and Economic Development
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Ste. 317
Washington, D.C. 20004

Re: Hebrew Home for the Aged, 1125 Spring Rd, NW
Our RFP Request for Proposals

Dear Deputy Mayor Kenner,

We write to formally confirm the recommendation of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1A (ANC 1A) regarding proposals to redevelop the former Hebrew Home for the Aged building at 1125 Spring Rd, NW. On July 12, 2017, at a duly called and properly noticed public meeting with a quorum (at least seven Commissioners) present and acting throughout, ANC 1A voted in favor (7-1-0) to find that the proposal of Victory Housing and Brinshore Development was its first choice, as explained further below. ANC 1A voted in favor (6-2-0) to find that the proposal of Bozzuto Homes and The Menkiti Group was its second choice and Mission First, UrbanMatters Development and Lock7 Development was its third choice. As part of the OurRFP process, we request that you attempt to satisfy the criteria below to the fullest extent possible. We look forward to the 3.3 acre District-owned site, which includes the former Hebrew Home for the Aged, returned to productive use, serving the neighborhood, and the city as a whole, for decades to come.

The Commission considered seven redevelopment proposals for the historic Hebrew Home for the Aged building and the adjoining Robeson School property. The proposals were from the following development teams: 1) [Borger Management and Spectrum Management](#); 2) [Gilbane Development Company and NHT-Enterprise](#); 3) [Community Preservation and Development Corporation \(CPDC\) and NVR](#); 4) [Mission First, UrbanMatters Development and Lock7 Development](#); 5) [NHP Foundation, Fivesquares Development, and Warrenton Group](#); 6) [Victory Housing and Brinshore Development](#), and; 7) [Bozzuto Homes and The Menkiti Group](#). Representatives of each development team presented each proposal at a public OurRFP meeting which included members of the public as well as ANCs 4C and 1A on May 25, 2017.

The OurRFP public meetings held on April 9, 2016, and June 2, 2016, established several community preference criteria. Respondents to the RFP were required to address the following criteria at a minimum:

1. As much affordable housing above the 30% minimum requirement as viable, targeting the lowest income bands and including housing reserved for senior citizens, ADA-compliant units, and opportunities for homeownership;
2. Sustainable public space improvements that activate an upgraded 10th Street, NW, in keeping with the surrounding neighborhood feel; and,
3. Maximization of density through a Planned Unit Development, incorporation of historic elements into any designs, and development that exceeds green building requirements.

The Commission evaluated the merits of the proposals keeping in mind the criteria of the OurRFP as well as taking into account community input.

The Commission received feedback from ANC 1A residents during several meetings, online surveys provided to residents, through email and phone conversations, as well as one-on-one and group discussions with residents living within a 2-block area of the proposed development. Comments were also gathered via DMPED's OurRFP Website, through which 96 participants left thoughtful comments and showing preferences for the CPDC or Bozzuto proposals.

The Commission also received a petition signed by many nearby neighbors stating that they believed:

- High towers would loom over the surrounding homes and elementary school while snarling traffic at Raymond Recreation Center. Towering buildings are inappropriate for [the] site.
- New rowhouses best respect the 100-year old fabric of the surrounding neighborhood and historic Hebrew Home.
- Mixed-income, family-oriented, and multi-generational development is the fairest and most inclusive use of [the] public land. [The] project should restore the Hebrew Home for the Aged as housing for senior citizens.
- The plan should be sensitive to resident parking and surrounding narrow and one-way streets.

Additionally, the Commission received feedback from community organizations with an affordable housing focus including Jews United for Justice and the Washington Interfaith Network. Washington Interfaith Network and Jews United for Justice, which both have neighborhood stakeholders and members, urged the Commission to consider both the Mission First, Urban Matters Development and Lock7 Development and Victory Housing and Brinshore Development as their top choices to accomplish the criteria of the OurRFP.

Finally, given the location of the development in ANC 4C, the Commission engaged with ANC 4C representatives to consider shared goals.

The Commission notes that through several years of failed redevelopment attempts, which have each included extensive community engagement, residents of 1A are frustrated and exhausted. Several residents have also expressed frustration that the above advocacy groups have often overwhelmed local community meetings, including the OurRFP meetings, leaving nearby residents' voices left unheard when they will be most immediately impacted by the proposed development. Many nearby residents have stopped coming to meetings or submitting public comments years ago because they believe that nothing has resulted from their engagement up to this point.

As part of those past efforts, ANC 1A considered and unanimously passed a resolution on October 8, 2014, in support of 200 units of housing on the Hebrew Home site with 90% of those units being affordable at all income levels. While that effort never materialized, the Commission believes any new development of the site should result in a similar number of housing units.

The Commission has worked to identify community priorities for the proposed redevelopment and believes that this resolution represents a thoughtful attempt at finding consensus among community members who, while they may vary widely in their preferences and concerns, represent our community.

Therefore, ANC 1A recommends that the District select a development that:

1. Addresses the critical need for additional affordable housing units in the District *across generations*, including a significant number of affordable units for seniors as well as a meaningful number of family-sized, affordable units.
2. Provides dedicated, structured parking spaces at a ratio of at least 1.25 parking spaces to every 3 non-senior units being built in order to help meet the additional demand for on-street parking that will result from new residents.
3. Provides site and building design that ensures both site design, building heights, and the architectural style of newly constructed buildings:
 - Promote a meaningful connection with the adjacent properties and community through ensuring that any new constructed structure that faces Spring Road reflects the rowhome character of the surrounding neighborhood through thoughtful architectural style
 - Complement, rather than detract from, the historic prominence of the Hebrew Home and prevent any massive, block-like buildings, by ensuring the any floor exceeding the height of the existing Hebrew Home's fourth floor steps-back so as to not be seen from the street and has no floors exceeding the height of the penthouse portion of the Hebrew Home
 - Are sensitive to the existing set-back of the Hebrew Home on Spring Road
4. Focuses on environmental sustainability through both green building design and sustainable public space improvements (e.g. stormwater management, sustainable landscaping). Additionally, if alternative energy production solutions are not provided, that there are no restrictions on later installation by the future owners.
5. Is both financially and operationally viable and sustainable long-term.

ANC 1A believes the Victory Housing and Brinshore Development proposal most fully meets the criteria above. This proposal of 187 units of housing includes 150 affordable units, representing the highest proportion of affordable housing units among all the proposals, at 80 percent. It meets the shared community priority of providing 88 units of dedicated, affordable senior housing in the former Hebrew Home. It also provides the largest number of affordable, family-sized units of any of the proposals as well with 29 three-bedroom rental units. In addition, it proposes homeownership opportunities along Spring Road NW. It also provides 75 underground parking spaces, with approximately 1.8 parking spaces for each 3 units of non-senior housing. Additionally, it has a significant number of units (48 units) restricted to households at below 30 percent of Area Median Income (AMI), which would be approximately \$32,000 for a family of 4 people; however, it also addresses the need for additional workforce housing in the community and in the District with 102 units that would be reserved for households at 50, 60, and 80 percent of AMI. The proposal also includes a focus on environmental sustainability for both the building and the site. Moreover, its architectural renderings demonstrate an understanding around the architectural and site design of the new multifamily construction, demonstrating a balance between maintaining the historic prominence of the Hebrew Home while ensuring the new housing fits within the pedestrian-friendly fabric of the existing neighborhood. The development team also assured the Commission that it will conduct workshops with nearby residents related to the architectural design of the building to further ensure that residents' concerns and preferences are addressed. The development team also noted that it can potentially lower the overall unit count on site by increasing the number of family-sized units as well as look to increase the number of homeownership opportunities; however, the Commission is solely basing its recommendation on the proposal as officially submitted.

ANC 1A's second choice is the Bozzuto and the Menkiti Group proposal, though this choice is not without stipulations. Many nearby neighbors expressed support for either the CPDC and NVR or the Bozzuto and the Menkiti Group proposals due to concerns related to density (the number of new housing units), the increased demand for on-street parking, and a preference for rowhouse architecture consistent with nearby rowhomes. In support of this, they submitted a petition with 100 names of nearby residents. The Commission recognizes the importance and the validity of these concerns and the value of engaged neighbors. Should DMPED select Bozzuto and the Menkiti Group proposal, the Commission respectfully requests that DMPED negotiate with the developer to address the following concerns while resulting in a development with as much rowhouse architecture as possible.

1. Review and address the encroachment of rowhouses on the historic Hebrew Home site. The Commission believes that such encroachment will not be supported by the Historic Preservation Review Board and these structures should be located east of the property.
2. Increase overall density of the project by a minimum of 40 housing units. Any resulting multi-family building needed to accommodate the additional units should be thoughtfully sited to compliment the surrounding rowhouse architecture, with a preference of rowhouse structures on Spring Road and 10th Street.

3. Increase both the number of units affordable to families and the number of deeply affordable units.
4. Increase the availability of off-street parking options.

Bozzuto's proposal to create 90 senior-only units is commendable, and the highest number of senior units from the seven proposals. However, out of the 50 rowhomes or duplexes currently proposed, only 6 units, representing only 12 percent, would be sold at affordable levels. Three of these units would be available to households with incomes of up to 80% AMI, which for a family of 4 would be \$70,000 according to current HUD income limits.

ANC 1A's third choice is the Mission First, UrbanMatters, and Lock 7 proposal. Many residents within ANC1A and surrounding neighborhoods expressed support for this proposal due to the number of units it proposed, the affordability of those units, and the reputation of the development team. Should DMPED select the Mission First, UrbanMatters, and Lock 7 proposal, the Commission respectfully requests that DMPED negotiate with the developer to address the following concerns in addition to the criteria listed above.

1. Increase off-street parking options. 50 off-street surface parking spaces is inadequate to the scale of the development proposed. Furthermore, surface parking is a poor use of land in the District of Columbia and should be avoided.
2. Reduce the number of overall units by increasing the number of family sized units.

The ANC commends this team for its proposal, which provides the highest number of affordable units of all proposals (117 units), including 86 designated, affordable units for seniors in the Hebrew Home. However, in consideration of the community's concerns related to increased density and the subsequent, increased demand for parking, this proposal fails to adequately address the need for additional parking spaces for new residents. It proposes the most units of any of the proposals, 224 units overall, with only 50 surface/'tuck-under' parking spaces on site with a ratio of approximately 0.9 parking spaces per 3 non-senior units. Additionally, it does not address the community's preference for family-sized units, with only 14 three-bedroom rental units proposed and no homeownership units with more than two-bedrooms. The renderings of this proposal, while recognized as early-stage designs by the ANC, also do not appear to provide as thoughtful consideration related to the architectural context of the Hebrew Home or nearby rowhomes or pedestrian-scale of the neighborhood as the proposals identified in the ANC's criteria above. In discussions with members of the development team, it was raised that either with additional subsidy from the District or by increasing the proportion of market rates units, that this proposal could construct additional parking facilities to meet the increased demand.

The Commission notes that the proposal teams, which are led by non-profit housing developers, have extensive experience in development of mixed-income housing as well as long-term management and operations. The ANC also notes that at least two of the proposals recommended will require an extensive Planned Unit Development (PUD) community engagement process, which will involve greater discussion around transportation, parking concerns, architectural aspects of the development, and community amenities. The Commission

is committed to a process where 1A residents' concerns are heard and addressed to the fullest extent possible.

Information on the proposals that were not recommended:

ANC 1A considered the NHP Foundation, FiveSquares Development, and Warrenton Group proposal of 206 housing units, which also addresses many of the community's priorities for the redevelopment of the site. While this proposal does not meet the community's goals of a significant number of units set-aside for seniors (only proposing 26), it does include a large percentage of homeownership opportunities through its proposed 75 condominiums as well as a high proportion of affordable units, with more than 50% of the total being affordable. This proposal also includes 85 underground parking spaces, with a ratio of 1.35 new parking spaces per 3 additional new units of non-senior housing to help to address the community's concern related to additional demand for limited on-street parking. The proposal's architectural design demonstrated a thoughtfulness around the 'massing' of buildings considering site conditions and the surrounding neighborhood; however, it does not include proposed rowhomes along the frontage of the new multifamily buildings on either Spring Road or 10th Street NW.

The Commission also considered the Gilbane Development and NHT-Enterprise proposal. The Commission believes that while this proposal of 212 housing units meets some of the community's priorities for the redevelopment of the site, it does not meet the first and second of the community criteria outlined above. It does provide a significant number of units, 72 units total, at the 30% and 50% AMI levels. If the District were to select this development, the Commission would be extremely concerned regarding the low proportion of parking spaces, 55 spaces of underground parking, when compared with the number of new housing units proposed. This would entail a ration of only 0.8 spaces proposed for every 3 non-senior housing units. The ANC does believe its approach to the redevelopment of the Hebrew Home, which focuses on creating an integrated, intergenerational approach to senior housing by combining 55 units of dedicated affordable senior housing along with family-sized units, is an excellent model. Its architectural renderings and site design also demonstrate a thoughtful consideration of how best to scale the new multifamily housing considering the historic Hebrew Home and surrounding neighborhood. In discussions with the development team, it was noted that through additional District subsidy, it could also increase the proportion of affordable housing units, including family-sized units, as well as the number of parking spaces, which would assist in addressing the Commission's concerns with this development.

The ANC also reviewed the Borger Management and Spectrum proposal. However, this proposal provides the minimum percentage (30%) of affordable units required under the District's Disposition of District Land for Affordable Housing Amendment Act of 2013 and does not include any proposed units set-aside as affordable units for seniors. It also only provides 49 surface parking spaces for 212 units of new housing at a ratio of approximately 0.7 parking spaces per 3 new dwelling units. Therefore, the Commission determined this proposal does not adequately address the community criteria enumerated above.

As stated above, several nearby neighbors expressed support for either the CPDC and NVR or the Bozzuto and the Menkiti Group proposals due to concerns related to density (the number of new housing units), the increased demand for on-street parking, and architecture consistent with nearby rowhomes of the other proposals. The CPDC and NVR proposal included 77 units of affordable senior units located in the Hebrew Home, which the community overwhelmingly supports, especially considering the building's history as a nursing home. The Commission notes, however, that the proposal has an extremely limited number of units that will be made available to families unable to afford new market rate rowhomes. Moreover, the proposal does not include a single non-market rate, rental unit available to any individual, such as teachers, police officers, or early-career federal employees, or families who want to rent, in a city which has a population that is comprised of a majority of households who rent.

Out of the 32 new rowhomes proposed by CPDC and NVR, only 4 units, representing only 12.5 percent, would be sold at affordable levels. Two of these four would be available to households with incomes of up to 80% Area Median Income (AMI), which for a family of 4 would be \$70,000 according to current HUD income limits. In the public meeting on May 25, the development team noted the market-rate homes would be priced starting at \$900,000 each.

Therefore, the ANC has to consider whether the highest and best use of a 3.3 acre parcel of District-owned land within close proximity to a metro station and several bus lines in a city currently facing a severe shortage of affordable units for residents of all ages and household sizes should require more than just 4 or 6 units of affordable housing for non-seniors and families.

Moreover, if our belief as a community, as is stated in the petition that was circulated and signed by 100 residents, as mentioned earlier in this resolution, is to promote "a mixed-income, family-oriented, and multi-generational development that is the fairest and most inclusive use of this public land" then the ANC must reach a conclusion that it cannot recommend any development that only builds 4-6 new homes for non-senior residents or families unable to afford to buy market rate homes in a city where the sheer number of people and the [number of families is projected to continue to grow over the next ten years.](#)

ANC 1A does not have access to the proprietary financial information presented by the different proposals. On balance, however, the other proposals were found to not meet the overall interests of the community as well as the two proposals outlined above.

The Commission recognizes that, as in any large-scale development effort, no single proposal is likely to sufficiently address every stakeholder's needs and desires. Through careful consideration and ongoing engagement with the residents, interest groups, commissioners, and the Respondents mentioned above, the Commission is recommending those proposals which it believes to best meet the concerns and goals of the community holistically, as based on current understanding. It encourages DMPED to select the proposal that best meets the above-mentioned criteria to the greatest extent possible.

The Commission also strongly encourages DMPED to provide a greater level of District subsidy to increase the number of affordable family-sized, rental units, affordable homeownership

opportunities, and ensure adequate on-site parking, as negotiations with the selected development team continues. The ANC also requests that DMPED consider leasing rather than selling any portion of the site to be used to construct rental housing.

The Commission recognizes that prior, failed efforts to move forward with redeveloping this parcel have resulted in community frustration. It puts forth this recommendation in an effort to find consensus and enable the community and the District to move forward. Furthermore, the Commission will work to ensure that the various voices in the community will continue to be heard throughout the finalization of the proposal, construction, and operational phases. We look forward to continuing to be a part of the process of seeing the Hebrew Home property restored to its former glory while increasing housing options for households of all sizes and incomes.

After careful scrutiny and consideration, the ANC urges DMPED, pursuant to District of Columbia Code § 1-309.10, to accord great weight to the ANC's advice and accept the above recommendations.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K C Boese". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Kent C. Boese
Chairman, ANC 1A