

**Grimke Redevelopment Request for Proposals**  
**Respondent Community Presentations**  
**October 14<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014**  
**Questions and Answers for Roadside Development / Sorg Architects**

**QUESTIONS FOR ALL RESPONDENTS:**

- 1. How many parking spaces is your team providing off-street? How many spaces will be provided for each tenant in the school building, for the African-American Civil War Museum, for the development on 9 ½ Street and for the development at 912 U Street? Does the proposed parking meet zoning requirements?**

*The project is designed to have 47 spaces.*

- 2. With the team's proposed uses and parking strategy, will this create a negative impact on current residents in terms of parking?**

*The proposal includes 47 parking spaces, which would be shared between the different uses. Since the site is metro accessible, we anticipate that many users will use the metro rather than drive. This is one reason why the dance partners are so passionate about the location is for its accessibility to public transit.*

- 3. How will the closing of the alley entrance on T Street proposed by some residents affect the proposed project?**

*We would like to re-route the alley and make it pedestrian-friendly. The alley does not affect our plans and we would encourage it, but this is something that we could work with DDOT on to accommodate concerns of the community.*

**QUESTIONS FOR ROADSIDE DEVELOPMENT / SORG ARCHITECTS:**

- 1. Please explain why your team is proposing to build on top of the current open space on 9 ½ Street?**

*We are proposing to building row houses to enhance on the existing row houses on 9 ½ Street as well as the new ones on the current museum site. By doing this we will create a more uniform feeling down 9 ½ Street. The parallel parking on 9 ½ Street will stay and lighting will make it more inviting. The new homes would not create a canyon effect. We will also program the existing alley entrance to the museum as open space for the community, museum and Grimke Tenants to share.*

- 2. The RFP states that proposals should “complement existing townhouses on 9 ½ Street.” Please explain your vision to build up four stories of modern architecture on 9 ½ Street across from two-story historic homes. How is the team’s proposal responsive to this directive in the RFP?**

*We have done a lot of modern buildings with historic buildings. We believe it is better not to always mimic historic buildings, as this would dilute the true historic buildings, however they will fit the context of the street and neighborhood. The scale is in relation to the existing museum building; we are not seeking greater height than exists in the museum (school gymnasium) today. The first floor is actually suppressed below street level.*

- 3. For the alley between 9 ½ Street and Vermont Avenue, would you consider restoring the alley to give full access to the rear of the houses in that part of the block?**

*Yes, we would work with the homeowners and DDOT. We definitely support the community’s vision.*

- 4. How are dance groups in the proposal primarily a daytime use?**

*The dance groups will be using the building all day long, starting in the morning at about 9 am. Step Afrika! has 30 dancers who would be rehearsing in the building during the day. There will be Mommy & Me activities during the day, plus there will be office and administrative space for the dance groups to use during the day. Then in the evenings, there would be classes and performances. Aside from the dance classroom and rehearsal space they will also have approximately 3,000 sf of corporate office space for Step Afrika! and City Dance; Roadside Development will have approximately 10,000sf of office space; Dance USA and Imagination stage will have approximately 4,000sf.*

- 5. There is a concern that the two large-scale modern buildings proposed on U Street would be out of the neighborhood scale and would create a big office feel instead of a neighborhood feel. How does the team consider this concern?**

*These buildings would be five stories, which is appropriate for U Street. The façade and glass for residential uses fits with the industrial character of the neighborhood. The building over Sorg’s existing building will be set back because the existing building is historic, but the windows will echo the industrial feel of the surrounding building. The ground floor will create a true retail façade.*

- 6. There is a concern that with the two new buildings being constructed on the corner of 9<sup>th</sup> Street and U Street that this will make this section of U Street become crowded. How does the team consider this?**

*These new buildings are being developed by JBG. We would coordinate with the surrounding developers and the community to time marketing. We are taking advantage of the allowable density, or floor area ratio (FAR), that the current zoning allows. None of the new buildings increase density beyond what is allowed. We believe that the amount of activity is appropriate for the U Street corridor.*

- 7. Could the townhomes proposed on 9 ½ Street be built as-of-right when they would not be meeting the minimum lot requirements under R-4 zoning?**

*It could be done as-of-right, but we may need some minor adjustments. The lot width of 18 feet would be preserved. Rear yards would angle back so we may need a zoning variance.*

- 8. The team's presentation emphasized their engagement with the community on other projects. Given the importance of community input in this redevelopment, how has the proposal, which includes nighttime uses and higher density, listened to community members' opposition to nighttime uses and higher density?**

*Our proposal includes dance and office uses which are daytime uses. The townhomes proposed on 9 ½ Street would not be taller than the existing gym building. Our proposal has the same density as the other two proposals. We are not proposing any offensive late night bars/clubs and we are keeping all of the retail activity along U Street where it is appropriate. All of our density falls in line with existing zoning.*

- 9. Why does Sorg Architects propose to double the height of the historic Murray Casino building when that site is not part of the Grimke Redevelopment RFP?**

*Sorg has been the owner of this property since 2001 with the long-term vision of redevelopment. We feel strongly that if these two buildings can be designed by the same team in a way to complement each other it will be more successful to the entire project.*

- 10. In the presentation it was stated that 500 kids would come to City Dance. This sounds like a school use. How is City Dance different?**

*City Dance serves 500 kids total, however they never have that many kids at one time. Classes are normally 20-25 students. There would also be professional artists and dancers who would use the space to rehearse.*

**11. How many affordable units are in your proposal?**

*Four units would be designated as affordable under the city classifications. One would be a townhouse unit affordable at 50% of the Area Median Income.*

**12. The team's presentation emphasized their engagement with the community on other projects by creating a community task force. Who would make the community task force for this project?**

*In the Tenley project every community group was represented and made part of the group. Similarly, we will include all of the neighborhood groups for this project and we would meet with them throughout the project.*

**13. Will Sorg Architects stay in its current building or will they move to the Grimke school building?**

*Sorg will move to the Grimke building and use it as swing space while their building is being remodeled. Then they would move back to their building on the second floor. The first floor will become retail space. Affinity will make the permanent move to Grimke.*