

## Skyland Surplus Meeting

### *Summary of Public Hearing on Surplus*

#### **Hearing Date and Location:**

Date: Wednesday, June, 26 2013

Time: 6:30pm

Location: Francis A. Gregory Neighborhood Library

FGR Meeting Room

3660 Alabama Avenue SE

Washington D.C. 20020

#### **Approximate Number of Attendees:**

19 community members were in attendance. There were 4 employees from the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (“DMPED”) in attendance, including Nimita Shah, the Project Manager for the Property.

#### **Summary of Public Comments:**

The meeting began around 6:45pm. Nimita Shah (DMPED) provided the audience with an introduction and the purpose and guidelines of the meeting. After the comments about the proposed surplus designation were submitted, questions about the redevelopment plan were asked by the audience and answered by Nimita Shah and representatives from the development team – Gary Rappaport (The Rappaport Companies) and Matt Ritz (WC Smith).

#### **Public Comments on the Proposed Designation of the Property as Surplus:**

**Resident (Veronica Davis)** – “My name is Veronica Davis. I am a resident of Fairfax Village and I will be very short; I don’t need the entire five minutes. I support the surplus of the property so that we can move forward with the Skyland development. I think this community is well overdue for this development to happen. We look forward to the economic development; we look forward to having a place to shop; to have drinks and dinner with our residents and our neighbors. So I definitely support the surplus of this property and I would like to see this process continue to move forward.”

**Resident (Earl Williams)** – “My name is Earl Williams. I am chair of the 7B02 Skyland Town Center Task Force. I live in Hillcrest. And again, I support the surplus of the property for the development of the Town Center. I am really pleased with the job that The Rappaport Companies and William C Smith have done so far in moving this along. And anything we can do to support you in this effort, we will.”

**Resident (Jonathan Capozzi)** – “Hi, I am John Capozzi. I live over on Austin Street and am very supportive of the surplus; a little concerned about the historic preservation on the corner and getting rid of some of those buildings. I definitely want to mention that. My biggest concern is actually bringing Walmart to Skyland. And that’s for a number of reasons. First of all, you know, Walmart’s business model is actually to overtake every small business that’s in a particular area. That’s what they do. That’s what they’re good at. You know, my mom is a stockholder, so I can attest to the value of the shares and how the company’s doing really well.

But the fact is that they haven't signed a community benefits agreement with DC, with our community. And to me, that's something that should be required, because the fact is that there's a number of things that they could be doing in our community to help us. There's actually like this whole list that I've seen from the people who have been pushing this. And the fact is that they won't sign anything, and so that bothers me. And if we're going to give a subsidy to this kind of development, which... I didn't really actually get a number from you as to what the subsidy is...okay, well the idea is that it is a fairly substantial subsidy. And so with that, why not sign a community benefits agreement? That, to me, would just make sense, in terms of us requiring that from them. And so, as a development team, I can't hold you responsible for that, but I can certainly urge that you get your key tenant to move in that direction.

And then finally, there's a whole lot of woods that seem to be disappearing, you know, from seeing the map here. And I didn't know if that's something that's going to be replaced somewhere else or just the consideration that's going to be made in the plan, you know, if we're going to lose this amount of trees in the community, if you've looked at some possible remediation in terms of that.

And then finally, I am a solar advocate. From what I understand, this project doesn't include any solar even though they're looking at, you know, Gold or LEED Certified buildings. So that's something that I would like to see. Because, even as a demonstration, I don't expect it to be a solar project that's gonna pay for half the utilities or be self-sufficient, but, at least put some panels up there. Show the community that it's something that's important. It really costs almost nothing if you look at the federal subsidy that you're gonna get, the ESRA credits you're gonna get, and frankly you could probably get a grant from the City government, as well. Then I don't see a reason not to do that, so I would urge you to at least consider that as a demonstration part of the plan. Thank you."