

Charles Village Civic Association, Inc.  
Greater Remington Improvement Association, Inc.  
Old Goucher Community Association, Inc.

August 5, 2010

Wilbur Cunningham, Chairman  
Planning Commission  
417 East Fayette Street  
8th Floor  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Re: 25<sup>th</sup> Street Station, Planned Unit Development

Dear Mr. Cunningham:

The Greater Remington Improvement Association, Inc. (“GRIA”), the Charles Village Civic Association, Inc. (“CVCA”) and the Old Goucher Community Association, Inc. (“Old Goucher”) have been working in partnership throughout the 25<sup>th</sup> Street Station development process to review and respond to this proposal that will greatly impact all of our communities. Continuing this cooperative relationship, the three associations would like to issue the following joint statement in reference to the Planning Commission’s review of the proposed 25<sup>th</sup> Street Station Planned Unit Development.

First, we would like to take this opportunity to commend the development team for convening a task force of the immediately impacted community associations. This direct interaction between community representatives and the development team provided a productive forum where many community concerns were addressed. However, while we feel that significant progress has been made throughout the evolution of this proposal, our support for the development’s enabling legislation, the proposed 25<sup>th</sup> Street Station Planned Unit Development, is conditional upon the resolution of the following outstanding issues:

**A. PUD DESIGN ISSUES:**

1. The development’s Maryland Avenue frontage should engage the street with active uses along the ground floor. A dedicated pedestrian “sally port” providing access to the western elevation of the proposed structure for neighborhood residents from the east should be included (as was previously proposed).
2. Parallel parking, with two drive aisles in each direction, should be retained on 25th Street. Although we do support angled parking in front of residences on Huntingdon Street north of 26<sup>th</sup> Street, we do not want angled parking in front of the small strip of retail businesses on Huntingdon Avenue. We prefer parallel

parking for safety reasons. Bike lanes should be relocated to 26th Street to prevent any conflicts with traffic turning into/out of the proposed development.

3. Streetscaping, including landscaping and street lights, should be installed on both sides of all streets bordering the project to ensure a unified appearance with the surrounding neighborhoods.
4. The building proposed for the southwest corner of 25th Street and to Howard Street should come to the property line consistent with the traditional urban fabric and reinforcing the pedestrian environment as encouraged by UDARP.
5. Construction permits should not be issued for any portion of the Project until financing is obtained for the entire project.

**B. TRAFFIC CALMING AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY ISSUES:**

Representatives of the CVCA, GRIA, and OGCA, have worked with the Department of Transportation on the issue of the Project's impact on Traffic in the surrounding communities since February 2010. The three community associations delivered two separate letters requesting the DOT to implement several traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures around the Project, and at nearby intersections to be affected by the Project. Representatives have met with the Department of Transportation on five separate occasions to discuss those requests, to review the Traffic Impact Study, and to review the DOT's responses to our requests. At the most recent meeting on July 26, 2010, and as subsequently revised, DOT presented a Matrix of responses to the Community Association's requests, a copy of which is attached hereto with the communities responses added.

The residents of the three communities have stated that Traffic Impacts of the Project are a major concern to them. As a result, we explained to the DOT and to the Development Team that the Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Safety concerns of the three Communities must be resolved before we could give our full support to the Project. Although we were very pleased to read the high number of positive responses received from DOT as shown on the Matrix, we remain concerned about the following:

1. We have asked the DOT to tell us the amount of money it has negotiated with the Development Team under the Traffic Mitigation Agreement and whether that amount will be sufficient to cover the costs of the items it agreed. If not, how will these items be funded?
2. We have asked for assurances from the DOT in the form of a written agreement that the Matrix items will be done and a timetable for when they will be done.
3. We are concerned about item #41 on the Matrix which does not commit to a dedicated Left Hand turn going North on Howard at North Avenue to direct

Rt. 83 traffic in that direction. This change is critical to divert commuter traffic away from the Project site and away from the affected neighborhoods.

4. We are concerned about item #32 on the Matrix which does not commit to maintaining parallel parking and two lanes in each direction on 25<sup>th</sup> Street between Howard and Calvert Street; and, which does not commit to removing the bike lanes from 25<sup>th</sup> Street to 26<sup>th</sup> Street. The DOT proposes to change 25<sup>th</sup> Street to one lane in each direction, installing bike lanes, and parallel parking. This proposal, which predates the Project, no longer has validity in light of the increased traffic that the Project will bring to 25<sup>th</sup> Street. With the Project, the three communities believe that it is critical for 25<sup>th</sup> Street to remain two lanes with parallel parking and without bike lanes. 26<sup>th</sup> Street is better suited for bike lanes.

### **C. COMMUNITY BENEFIT ISSUES:**

CVCA, GRIA, and OGCA have had multiple discussions with WV Urban Development, LLC (“WV”) on the terms of written commitments from WV to our three associations. These commitments are intended to address certain community concerns relating to such matters as local hiring, local business, traffic, construction mitigation, security and sanitation. These concerns were voiced by residents of the Charles Village, Remington, and Old Goucher communities and CVCA, GRIA, and OGCA were directed by their respective Boards to seek such commitments from WV to address as many of these concerns as possible. Accordingly, the three associations and WV have had extensive and productive discussions regarding the terms of WV’s commitments to the communities which adjoin this Project. As a result, WV has issued a written commitment letter dated August 4, 2010 addressed to our associations. We understand that this commitment letter will be submitted as part of the public record for today’s hearing and that WV has agreed to honor the commitments in this letter. It is our expectation that any support for this Project by our associations is based, in part, on our good faith reliance on the ability and willingness of WV to honor the commitments made by WV in this letter.

With the adoption of the amendments requested in Section A above, the implementation of the traffic mitigation items listed in the Matrix prepared by the Department of Transportation, requested in Section B above, and the introduction into the record of the letter of commitments signed by the developer regarding employment opportunities and other community benefits, requested in Section C above, CVCA, GRIA, and OGCA would support the proposed 25<sup>th</sup> Street Station Planned Unit Development.

Respectfully Submitted,

**CHARLES VILLAGE CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.**

By: Jennifer Erickson, President

**GREATER REMINGTON IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION, INC.**

By: Judith A. Kunst, President

**OLD GOUCHER COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC.**

By: Peter Duvall, President

cc: Tom Stosur, Director of The Department of Planning  
Belinda Conaway, City Councilwoman  
Mary Pat Clarke, City Councilwoman  
Carl Stokes, City Councilman  
Jon Laria, Esquire