

October 15, 2015

Zoning Board of Adjustments
City Planning
200 Ross Street Fourth Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

RE: Zoning Case 218 of 2015 – 169 40th Street

Dear Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) Members:

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of both Lawrenceville United and Lawrenceville Corporation, we write this letter in regards to the proposed redevelopment of 169 40th Street. We support the redevelopment of the former school to hotel, but not without specific requests and conditions.

Lawrenceville United's mission is to improve and protect the quality of life for Lawrenceville residents through community engagement and advocacy, community restoration and beautification, and community planning and development. Lawrenceville Corporation's mission is to act as a catalyst and conduit for responsible growth and development in the Lawrenceville community. As part of our work, we have created a community process that provides a forum where development plans and projects can be discussed, vetted, and measured against community plans and priorities. As part of this process, the local community organizations are able to identify priority issues that will help guide conversations with the developer through the planning and entitlement processes. We thank Century Equities, Desmone Architects, and their entire team for participating in our process.

As part of our process, our organizations convened an open and public community meeting with interested stakeholders and impacted residents on October 8, 2015. Josh Aderholt of Century Equities and Chip Desmone of Desmone Architects attended with members of their development team and presented their proposed redevelopment of this parcel. The majority of residents in attendance supported the redevelopment of this parcel as a hotel, and the way that the development team is embracing the history of the former school building. Although we therefore support the reuse of the building and the hotel development, we do have concerns with specific variances that have been requested as part of this project:

Parking: We are opposed to the Special Exception (914.07.G.2(a)) that has been requested to utilize off-site parking. The valet parking program that has been outlined will create continuous traffic on already overburdened, narrow, and congested residential streets (43rd, 42nd, Almond Way, 41st, Eden Way). During peak traffic times, the traffic engineer stated that it could take up to 15 – 20 minutes for attendants to retrieve cars. Additionally, the off-site parking lot sits on the riverfront. Although it is currently a surface lot, we cannot support the use of a lot more than 1,000 ft. away that is located on our riverfront. All of our community plans, including the Allegheny Riverfront Vision and Green Boulevard Plans, call for reconnecting the community with the riverfront and reclaiming our riverfronts. We feel that the on-site mechanically stacked parking is a better option for this site, with appropriate sound attenuation and screening. We would support the developer providing all parking on-site. We also

request that the developer provide enough parking to accommodate the two restaurants and the hotel. We hope that the developers will continue to work with adjacent development projects and with the community organizations to create a district parking facility that can accommodate hotel and restaurant parking in the long-term.

Dumpster Placement: We are opposed to any dumpster or trash receptacle being located within 30 ft. from a residential property (Special Exception 916.09). We encourage the developer to work with the residents impacted by this location to find an alternative site.

Traffic: We request that the City of Pittsburgh closely review the traffic impact of this development project. 40th Street is a busy street that is congested at times throughout the day. We are concerned with the 40th Street entrance into the site and how that will interact with the 40th/ Foster intersection that is already dangerous, and how left turns might be made into the site from 40th. The utilization of Almond Way and Eden Way as exits from the site also cause concern. We also request that the Department of City Planning and Department of Public Works review the traffic analysis in light of other development projects within the corridor and how this plan will interact with those large development projects.

Noise: We appreciate the Developer's willingness to provide soundproofing throughout the site, and specifically ask that the rooftop restaurant and mechanical parking be treated specifically given the impact it may have on adjacent residents.

Lighting: We appreciate the Developer's willingness to treat the exterior lighting with sensitivity to the residents adjacent to the site.

Landscaping: We appreciate the Developer's willingness to provide street trees along 40th Street and the greening implemented as part of the courtyard and the rooftop garden. **Collective Impact of Nearby Developments:**

Construction: We do ask that the Development team work with those most impacted residents to create an agreement related to construction impact and logistics (including but not limited to, limited hours of work and noise in the early morning and late evening hours, staging of construction equipment, street closures, dumpster placement, noise, traffic patterns). The community organizations are happy to help facilitate these conversations.

We thank the development team for working to address community concerns and for participating in the community process. We support the redevelopment of the building as a hotel, and we look forward to working with the development team moving forward. We thank the Zoning Board for your consideration of our requests, and we respectfully request that you also consider those concerns brought forward by those residents and stakeholders most impacted by the project. Finally, we ask that the Zoning Board of Adjustments and the Department of City Planning continue to closely review the development projects in this corridor and the collective impact of these projects on the safety, health, and vitality of the community.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lauren Byrne Connelly
Executive Director
Lawrenceville United



Matthew Galluzzo
Executive Director
Lawrenceville Corporation