



LAWRENCEVILLE UNITED

A Resident Driven Organization

February 28, 2017

RE: Bill No. 2016-1087 Zoning, 5515 Butler Street

Dear Pittsburgh City Council,

My name is Dave Breingan and I'm the Executive Director of Lawrenceville United. Lawrenceville United (LU) is an inclusive, resident-driven non-profit organization dedicated to improving and protecting the quality of life of all Lawrenceville residents. LU and Lawrenceville Corporation (LC) have created a community process that provides a forum where proposed development projects can be discussed, vetted, and measured against community plans and priorities. This process enables the local community organizations to identify priority issues that will help guide conversations with the developer through the planning and construction processes.

LU and LC convened an open and public community meeting on January 24th, after notifying residents and business owners within 500 feet of the parcel, concerning the proposed redevelopment of 5515 Butler Street. Notes from that community meeting are attached. We thank CRAFT Development for presenting their plans to the community and for showing a willingness to work with us on key issues for the neighborhood, including traffic and mobility, storm water management, and connections to a future multi-modal pathway.

However, at the end of the day, affordability remains our biggest priority for the neighborhood and our biggest concern for this project, which currently has no affordable housing as part of its 68-unit plan. We will continue to work with CRAFT Development towards solutions that can make affordable housing a viable component of this project, but more importantly, we need leadership from city council in requiring that development projects of scale meet Lawrenceville's need to preserve a mixed-income, diverse community with housing opportunities for all.

This need is demonstrated by the residents who attended CRAFT Development's presentation, and is a key recommendation of Upper Lawrenceville's community plan, which had robust involvement from residents throughout. But most importantly, this need is shown by the dozens of families we've seen through LU's doors who've been evicted for higher rents, and by the 300 Somali Bantu refugees who first found community in Lawrenceville as new Americans, only to be priced out of the neighborhood that they had established roots in, among many other examples we could cite.

We call on the City to immediately create a mandatory inclusionary zoning policy in Lawrenceville to ensure that Lawrenceville's revitalization benefits everyone—and not just some. With nearly 1,000 new units in private development in the works in Lawrenceville, and not a single one that is accessible to a family of low or moderate income, the status quo is unacceptable, and every day that the City fails to act, our neighborhood becomes less inclusive.

Sincerely,

Dave Breingan
Executive Director