



LAWRENCEVILLE UNITED

A Resident Driven Organization

June 4, 2015

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

RE: Zoning Case 138 of 2015 – Willow Street (parcel 49-A-320)

Dear Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) Members:

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of Lawrenceville United, I write this letter in regards to the proposed redevelopment of Willow St, parcel 49-A-320 by Fort Willow Developers LP.

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. As part of our work, and in partnership with the Lawrenceville Corporation, 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.

As part of our process, Lawrenceville United and Lawrenceville Corporation, convened two community meetings with interested stakeholders and impacted residents – in October, 2014 and in April, 2015. Alex Simakis, Dan Rothschild, and their team, presented their proposed redevelopment of this parcel. Lawrenceville United supports the redevelopment, of this parcel, and specifically the use, scale, and design as it aligns with aspects of current community plans, including the Green Boulevard Plan and the Allegheny Riverfront Vision. We appreciate Mr. Simakis' willingness to work with the community and to provide additional information as requested in order for LU and LC to more efficiently and articulately address concerns and answer questions.

Although we support the project, we do support with the following conditions/ qualifications:

- *Traffic Issues:* This project will have an impact on the narrow and already overused residential streets that sit adjacent to the project, as well as the failing intersections that will serve this project: 40th/ Foster specifically. We hope that the City carefully reviews the traffic analysis and works with the development team and appropriate agencies to address current and anticipated traffic issues.
- *Parking and Transportation:* Acknowledging and appreciating that the developer is providing more parking than is required, we encourage the ZBA, City Planning, and development team to work with the community to find comprehensive solutions to existing and anticipated parking issues given the number of residential units proposed for this part of the neighborhood. We also ask that should the existing adjacent residential area apply for residential permit parking, that these residential units not be eligible for the program. The ZBA has added this as a condition in other RPP areas in the past.
- *Affordability:* Mr. Simakis does not plan to develop housing for individuals with low-moderate income levels as part of this phase of the project. We encourage Mr. Simakis to include mixed income housing in any future



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phases of this development project, and request that City Planning and ZBA acknowledge that the creation of affordable housing is the community's top priority.

- *Construction:* Mr. Simakis and his team will work with those most impacted to create a formal 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, noise, traffic patterns). LU will help to facilitate those conversations.
- *Landscape Design:* Lawrenceville is working to address low tree canopy and issues related to stormwater management. Mr. Simakis will work with the City's Urban Forester and the community organizations to provide adequate greening, trees, and screening around the perimeter of the building, within any parking lots, and will also implement stormwater management practices.
- *Public Space:* In the community meetings, Mr. Simakis described a parklet along Willow Street, and a connection to the Riverfront through the original Bay 4, which would be open for public use. If possible, would like to formalize the commitment to keeping these amenities accessible to the public and greater community.

We thank Mr. Simakis and his team for his investment in the community, and for working with the community organizations and local residents to address concerns and questions, and expect the communication to continue as the project progresses. Thank you to the ZBA for your consideration, and we hope that you consider all of the requests and concerns raised by any other Lawrenceville residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lauren Byrne".

Lauren Byrne
Executive Director