



Braddock Metro Citizens' Coalition

Working for a Greater Northwest Old Town | www.braddockmetro.org

1122 Madison Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 | bmcc@braddockmetro.org

March 31, 2016

Chairwoman Mary Lyman
Planning Commissioners
Alexandria, Virginia

Re: Coordinated Development District Concept Plan #2015-0005

Dear Chairwoman Lyman and Planning Commissioners:

I am writing on behalf of the Braddock Metro Citizens' Coalition (BMCC) in support of the request by Jaguar for an amendment of their previously approved CDD Concept Design Plan on North Fayette Street. You will be considering this request at your meeting April 5, 2016. The BMCC has followed these proposed changes over the last year, offering comments and suggestions as the project changed. This project site lies fully within in the boundary of the BMCC.

It is our understanding that the requested changes include lowering the building heights and configuration, an extension of North Fayette Street, and changes to roadway configurations and site programming. With the reconfiguration of the original framework of the project, we believe this large empty parcel in our neighborhood will finally move toward implementation in the near future. The BMCC is very anxious to see this occur.

We are pleased with the changes the developer is proposing. The reduction in height to 85' on the four buildings will fit well with the scale of other planned development nearby while still allowing for the density that supports retail and community amenities. The design and materials are of the high quality we expect and demand in the Braddock area. The proposed ground floor retail along Fayette and the central drive is being increased to 18,000 sq ft, enough that it can supply a full suite of services to the folks living in this development as well as several anchors to draw residents from nearby neighborhoods. This additional retail will reinforce the retail already in place in the Braddock neighborhood.

The extension of North Fayette Street under the Monroe Street Bridge will accommodate vehicular traffic going south, but more importantly it will allow for pedestrian and bicycle traffic both ways. This link will knit together the growing Braddock neighborhood with Slaters Lane, helping to fulfill the goal of making our community walkable and bikeable.

The central focal point of this development features a large open park area inside a central drive. We have encouraged Jaguar to design this central open space to both be beautiful but to also offer small scale recreation to activate it and provide to activities for the residents. The small half acre Interim Braddock Park has provided some critical lessons in this regard. The inclusion of a ping pong table and a bocce ball court are the best



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community-making investments that can be made. These sorts of low cost, low maintenance facilities can become the center of community. We cannot continue allow ground-level open space to be designed primarily to set off the buildings and look picturesque while we drive by. We need to activate these areas with providing opportunities for people to enter them and participate.

Following on that, as dogs will be welcomed to this development along with their owners, we have encouraged Jaguar to accommodate these smaller residents as well. With the density in the Braddock area we have seen the arrival of many dogs, as all these multi-family buildings allow pets. We applaud this, as dogs and their walkers make our neighborhood friendlier and safer, with many more eyes on the street early and late in the day. But we need to plan to accommodate the large number of dogs that will be added with this development. We believe that will occur on this site.

The Braddock neighborhood is coming into its own as more residents move here and begin to fulfill the promise of the plan for a transit-oriented dense and diverse community. We believe that the requested changes to this project are an improvement and will better contribute to the goals of the plan. We hope that you agree and we ask that you approve this request. We are very anxious for this project to proceed.

With warm regard,

Judy Guse-Noritake, President

Braddock Metro Citizens' Coalition

Cc: BMCC Membership
Karl Moritz, Director, Planning & Zoning