

BZA APPLICATION NO. 199823

Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church and Sunrise of Tenley Circle

Testimony by Ward 3 Vision, November 14, 2018

Good Evening. My name is Tad Baldwin and I am testifying for Ward 3 Vision, a group of grass-roots residents of Ward 3 dedicated to smart growth, transit oriented development and increased housing, including affordable housing.

We support the proposed development of this assisted living/memory care facility that incorporates the existing church in a new building, because we feel, on balance, the current plan provides significant benefits to the church(es), the neighborhood and the city. The most important consideration for us is that there will be development of something useful and more active on what is now an underutilized property on a major transit corridor, Wisconsin Avenue, and very near a Metro station, Tenleytown-AU. I will summarize six major points underpinning our view.

1. It preserves viable space for the longtime site occupant, the Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church and the additional congregation with which it shares space.
2. It will provide approximately 86 units of assisted living and memory care, many future residents of which will move from single family homes and apartments in this ward and quadrant of the city. While most elderly delay such a move as long as possible, when the time comes for a housing and service option near family and friends makes this a more positive experience.
3. The financial arrangement with the church will allow more ministries at this location as well as ample assistance to the churches' educational outreach to more needy area of the city via its non-profit, City Gate.
4. This is a good transitional use of the land between single family homes and a commercial corridor lined with stores, restaurants and institutional uses. It is less intense than other uses that are just as close to Metro Stations. The latest design alterations have improved the relationship with the closest single family homes by reducing the footprint and removing a rear section facing the alley and adjacent to others' back yards.
5. It is transit oriented development by its location near the Tenley Metro Station and Wisconsin Avenue bus lines. But unlike much new residential and office development, very few of the residents will drive and a majority of the modestly paid employees of Sunrise will utilize Metro and Metrobus. It will also be more convenient for visitors, especially the elderly.
6. On a more practical level, this currently tax-exempt property will generate both city real estate taxes and income/inheritance taxes from some of the Sunrise residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tad Baldwin for Ward 3 Vision