



November 20, 2020

Mayor Tarter and Members of City Council  
Chair Rankin and Planning Commissioners  
City Hall  
300 Park Avenue  
City of Falls Church, Va. 22046

**Subject: Broad and Washington Development Project**

Dear Mayor Tarter and Members of City Council, Chair Rankin and Planning Commissioners;

The Board of the Village Preservation and Improvement Society (VPIS) has reviewed the current plans for the Downtown Development Project at Broad and Washington Streets. We urge the City to consider the following comments and recommendations prior to voting on the project.

1. **Traffic.** We are concerned about the effect on traffic of the entrance to, and exit from, the project onto East Broad Street. The plans allow for left turns into the lot from traffic on East Broad going toward Seven Corners. The plan also allows cars exiting the lot to make a left turn onto East Broad street.

This entrance and exit is close to the intersection of Broad and Washington Streets. Making a left turn into the parking lot requires crossing two lanes of busy traffic on East Broad. Waiting for an opportunity to make that turn will often tie traffic up behind the car waiting to make the turn. Making a left turn out of the lot requires crossing the two lanes of busy traffic going toward the intersection of Broad and Washington which will also be very difficult, either tying up traffic going out of the lot, or blocking traffic on East Broad. The exits from the Flower Building and Harris Teeter allow only right turns when exiting the parking lot because making a left turn would be very difficult.

The City should seriously consider limiting traffic exiting the lot onto East Broad Street to right turns only. The City should also consider creating a left turn lane on East Broad to enter the parking lot or permit entering the lot only by making a right turn into the entrance. One other step to consider is to create a line across west bound East Broad, like the line on West Broad in front of the entrance into the parking lot for the Byron. The stripe may remind drivers to stop to permit traffic into and out of the parking garage. This problem needs to be addressed.

2. **Library and Parks.** We understand that the developer will give the City a substantial donation to be divided between the Recreation and Parks Department and the Library. We

recommend the money be divided equally, and the money to the Library be given directly to the nonprofit Mary Riley Styles Library Foundation.

3. **Environmental Proffer.** The developer has offered to give the City \$20,000 for environmental purposes, and the City plans to put that money into the City's Stormwater Fund. We urge the City instead to put the money into the Neighborhood Tree Program, allowing for much-needed enhancement of the City's tree canopy.

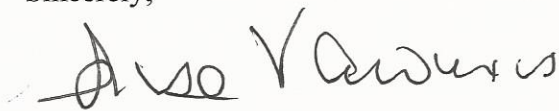
4. **Residential Parking.** We have concerns about the current plan for residential parking. We were told that the plan is to provide one parking space for each residential unit. Five of those spaces will have electrical charging stations, and probably should not be counted as actual residential parking spaces.

The developer and City staff told us that the decision on one space per unit was determined based primarily on new developments in Arlington and the District. We question whether that is the right comparison. Both the District and Arlington have many metro stations, and many people who live in the District, as in many large cities, likely do not have cars. As the majority of the apartments here will be one or two bedroom units, it is likely that two adults (and perhaps some teen-age children) will live in most of them. Many of the units with two adults likely will have two cars. A more apt comparison should have been new apartment buildings in Fairfax County, rather than the District. Using a more appropriate comparison, one parking space per unit seems low.

5. **Charging Stations.** The developer plans to put five electrical charging stations into the residential parking lot with the potential to add five more. In future years, more and more people will be driving electric cars. We are concerned that having a such a limited number of five charging stations for over 300 apartments will quickly become insufficient for the residents.

We look forward to working with the City on future developments.

Sincerely,



Lisa Varouxis  
On behalf of the Village Preservation and Improvement Society  
Board of Directors