

West Hillhurst Community Association Comments

March 4, 2019

Appropriate, successful, and vibrant redevelopment of the east side of 19th Street between Kensington Road and 5th Ave NW is critical to the community of West Hillhurst. The WHPC supports change and quality redevelopment in this location but objects to the 19+2 proposal in its current form.

While we may not have a formal plan for how this stretch of 19th Street will evolve, it is certainly not 14th Street NW or Kensington Road. 19th Street is special to residents and has so much potential to exemplify the heart of our dynamic community.

In the absence of a plan, proponents regularly suggest that their projects fit what such a plan would be, selectively stretching the intent of the Municipal Development Plan or other policy initiatives such as Main Streets. Not only does the committee object to this notion, we sincerely fear that this precedent would preclude the desired form for the remainder of this street. A small number of high density projects is likely to exhaust the market for condo and retail units in West Hillhurst, hindering the much needed redevelopment of the two-block stretch of 19th Street from Kensington Road to 2nd Avenue NW. Improved streetscape, increased density along 19th Street, more diverse housing options, and expanded services can better be achieved with multiple unique and smaller-scale developments rather than the submitted 19+2 mega-project. Attention should focus on the entire redevelopable stretch of 19th Street, not one isolated parcel. What may be rational for the developer of this parcel may well be counter-productive to the needed intensification of 19th Street as a whole.

The current proposal fails to meet our expectations in two major aspects:

- The height and density are simply not appropriate for this street and do not align with existing mixed-use development on the west side nor what would be desirable for the length of the east side.
- Unacceptable impact to adjacent residents in terms of height and shadow, privacy, and traffic in all forms.

As with recent applications that have been accepted on the west side of 19th St., the committee would support re-designation and increased density in forms that are intended to make a positive contribution to this scale of streetscape. We fear the current application would be a detriment to the future of 19th street for the community as a whole and unduly impact adjacent residents in the process.