



Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A

“Serving the Foggy Bottom and West End communities of Washington, D.C.”

March 28, 2015

Mr. Matthew Marcou, Chairperson
DDOT Public Space Committee
1100 4th Street, S.W. – 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20024
publicspace.committee@dc.gov

RE: Application by PRP Real Estate Management LLC for interior, exterior, and public space alterations at 2501 M Street NW

Dear Chairperson Marcou,

At its regular meeting on March 18, 2015, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A (“**ANC 2A**” or “**Commission**”) considered the above-referenced matter. With seven of eight commissioners present, a quorum at a duly-noticed public meeting, the Commission voted to support this application by a vote of (7-0-0):

WHEREAS, Westgate Condominium at 2501 M Street NW has been since 1980 divided between a five-floor commercial section and a three-floor residential section; and

WHEREAS, The commercial section has recently been purchased by PRP Real Estate Management LLC, (PRP) who are converting the five floors from commercial office use to luxury condominium units and making other changes to the interior, exterior, and adjacent public space; and

WHEREAS, PRP is seeking approval by the Public Space Committee of its proposed renovations to the building and surrounding public space; and

WHEREAS, The staff of the DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) has taken the position that the porte cochere (entrance drive-through), which has been a feature of the building since 1980, should be eliminated; and

WHEREAS, The position of DDOT staff is that the curb cuts related to the porte cochere, particularly the one on 25th Street, cause traffic congestion and would not be approved as a feature of a new building at the site; and

WHEREAS, Each of the thirty-five unit owners in the residential section of the building, constituting the Westgate Residential Owners’ Association, bought his or her unit in reliance upon the features and amenities of the building including the porte cochere; and

WHEREAS, Some of the residential owners have lived in the building since it was built; many are retired; some in their seventies and eighties have mobility problems; and many owners regularly rely upon the porte cochere as a safe way to get in and out of taxis or private vehicles, to load and unload baggage and goods, and to deal with deliveries, contractors and providers of services; and

WHEREAS, DDOT has recently added a bicycle lane to the north side of M Street, nearest the Westgate; the existence of this lane means that accessing vehicles on M Street requires negotiating the bicycle lane and a lane of parking before reaching the first lane of traffic; such use of M Street is more



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dangerous than using the porte cochere, particularly for those with limited mobility, and causes traffic congestion problems; and

WHEREAS, Use of 25th Street to accomplish the same functions also is less safe for residents and causes traffic congestion problems on the one south-bound lane of 25th Street without the porte cochere; and

WHEREAS, Observation of the use made of the porte cochere indicates that it is used primarily for resident pickup and drop-off, with other uses being delivery and pickup of luggage or other goods and visits by contractors and service providers; while there will be more use of the porte cochere when there are 95 units instead of the present 35, that use will still be less than when the five floors were commercial and the commercial owner ran shuttle buses for employees continuously during the morning and evening rush hours; and

WHEREAS, Traffic is heavy on the near (west, south-bound) lane of 25th Street approaching M Street only during the evening rush hour, a time when resident use of the porte cochere is minimal; and

WHEREAS, DDOT’s position, if upheld, would take from owners who bought in good faith reliance on the existence of the porte cochere, a valuable property right without compensation;

NOW THEREFORE, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A resolves as follows:

1. Elimination of the porte cochere at the Westgate Condominium, as advocated by DDOT staff, would create or exacerbate traffic congestion, safety issues, and inconvenience for residents of the Westgate and members of the public, rather than preventing such problems.
2. Use of the porte cochere and its related curb cuts has been an authorized use of the public space for thirty-five years, and has been a valuable property right of the owners of units in the Westgate. Its elimination without compensation or remedy would be improper.
3. The Public Space Committee should reject the position of DDOT staff, and authorize retention of the porte cochere at the Westgate.

Commissioners Rebecca Coder (rebeccacoder@mac.com) and Patrick Kennedy (Patrick.Kennedy@anc.dc.gov) are the Commission’s representatives in this matter.

ON BEHALF OF THE COMMISSION.

Sincerely,

Patrick Kennedy
Chairperson