



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

## Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2E

Representing the communities of Burleith, Georgetown, and Hillandale

3265 S Street, NW • Washington, DC 20007

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January 14, 2021

Mr. Ernest Chrappah  
Director  
Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs  
1100 4th Street SW  
Washington, DC 20024  
[Ernest.Chrappah@dc.gov](mailto:Ernest.Chrappah@dc.gov)

### RE: Classifying 3000 M Street NW as a Blighted Property

Dear Director Chrappah,

On January 4, 2021 ANC 2E held its regularly scheduled public meeting, which was properly noticed and attended by seven commissioners, constituting a quorum. At this meeting the Commission adopted the following resolution by a vote of (7-0-0) with regard to the above-referenced matter:

ANC 2E would like to formally recognize its significant concern over the lack of activity at the now, essentially, abandoned lot at 3000 M Street NW. More importantly, the ANC strongly requests that the city formally treats this property as the blight on our community it is. The ANC is, quite simply, tired of waiting for something to happen here; it has been too many years of zero progress.

In May of 2015, the Old Georgetown Board (OGB) approved a demolition permit for this building, formerly known as the Latham Hotel. Thor Equities, the owner of the property, has been filing for permits from the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) since approximately May of 2016 and a permit for a tower crane was issued on or around August 16, 2017. Since that time, the ANC has reviewed a number of concept proposals by the owner. The crane was erected, demolition occurred, and then nothing. There has been no sustained active work on the site for years and yet the spectacularly large crane still stands and looms ominously over our neighborhood, swinging and spinning in the wind yet serving zero purpose relative to the redevelopment of this vacant site. A partial structure exists and some temporary fencing exists. However in over three years the owner has not moved forward with any concept put forth to DCRA and OGB.

ANC 2E constantly fields feedback from constituents about the future of development on this very large site, located in a central and prominent location in our neighborhood, over

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multiple lots, measuring close to 10,000 square feet per the Office of Zoning's (OZ) website:

“What is going on there? When will work begin? Why has nothing been done to this site in our neighborhood? If no work is happening, why has a crane been looming over our neighborhood for three years?”

As the duly elected representatives for our community, ANC 2E hereby shares that our neighborhood is simply fed up. The site is stuck. It has blighted our community and the developer has made zero progress in stabilizing or even, simply, activating the site, despite multiple conversations around how this could be done. It is, quite simply, time for the city to declare this property the blight that it is in an effort to mitigate this issue. Designating this property as vacant has not moved the needle, or any needle, at all. Once again, the ANC would like to be clear that our community has had enough. With this in mind, the ANC resolves the following:

1. ANC 2E strongly urges DCRA to declare 3000 M Street NW a blighted property until such time that the property is stabilized and activated in a community friendly and ANC approved manner.
2. While ANC 2E understands that DC regulations allow for tower cranes to remain in place “as long as they are needed”, the ANC requests that the relevant agencies review the case for “as needed,” noting that the crane has performed zero work in recent memory and that there are no concepts currently in front of any DC agency for work to move forward in the future. With these facts in place, the ANC requests that DCRA evaluates the necessity of this tower crane on the site; develops a plan, alongside the ANC, for what needs to be true in order to remove the crane; and communicates this plan to the property owner so that the crane can either be put to use or removed. Finally, the ANC notes that our primary objective is to see this property be redeveloped. With this in mind, the ANC hopes that a crane will be necessary to facilitate development in the near future and requests that requirements be put in place going forward such that the crane is appropriately sized for any proposed work and that the crane be used, and removed, in a timely manner.

Commissioners Lisa Palmer ([2E05@anc.dc.gov](mailto:2E05@anc.dc.gov)) and Rick Murphy ([2E03@anc.dc.gov](mailto:2E03@anc.dc.gov)) are the Commission's representatives in this matter.

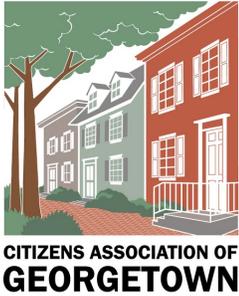
Respectfully submitted,



Rick Murphy  
Chair, ANC 2E

# **Attachment A**

**Citizens Association of Georgetown  
(CAG) Resolution Regarding 3000 M  
Street NW**



January 3, 2021

VIA EMAIL

ANC Commissioner Lisa Palmer 2E05  
3265 S Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20007

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Dear Commissioner Palmer:

The Citizens Association of Georgetown (“CAG”) represents the residential community interests of Georgetown - with areas as diverse as public safety, historic preservation and tree planting. We collaborate closely with the Georgetown Business Improvement District (“BID”) and the Old Georgetown Board (“OGB”) on areas of mutual and overlapping interest, one of which is the triple benefit of a vibrant business community embedded in our residential areas while maintaining the appearance and style of historical and new construction.

To this end, CAG has routinely reviewed, and supported, reasonable and consistent development along M Street, notably at 3000 M Street NW (the “Property”). The Property was formerly the site of the Latham Hotel and has been vacant since 2013. According to our sources, the OGB and Committee on Fine Arts recommended approval of a permit in June 2017 to re-clad the seven-story hotel structure and construct a new two-story wing fronting M Street NW. Permit approval by the OGB/CFA will be valid until June 2021, when the OGB permit approval for the 2017 design expires.

Thor Equities (the “Applicant”) recently decided to explore a new design for the Property that would require the demolition of the rear seven-story hotel tower and submitted the required concept application for this design. It has not yet been recommended for approval by the OGB/CFA. The last review of this concept design was at the July 2020 OGB meeting and the concept review has been on hold since July at the request of the Applicant.

The visual appearance of the Property- in the heart of Georgetown, visible from every direction - is dilapidated and appears abandoned, with construction materials and fencing, broken bricks and a lonely crane. In the absence of any work by the Applicant, this site will continue to be a blight on the visual appearance of M Street, as well as a negative indicator on the value of Georgetown business properties. We should also note that the new CAG headquarters along the C&O Canal is only a few steps away from the moribund site.

We call upon the ANC to take the following actions:

- 1) Pass a Resolution requesting that the City amend the designation of the Property from “vacant” to “blighted” and mandate removal of the crane at the expiration of the current building permit (“the Resolution”).
- 2) Communicate to the DC Council and DCRA that upon expiration of the permit in June 2021, the developer will be required to obtain a new permit to reactivate and stabilize the site; this needs to include a visual presentation on M Street and 30th Street that is appropriate and consistent with the aesthetic of that location.
- 3) Communicate to the DC Council and DCRA that the issuance of any new crane permit should: a) comply with the terms of the ANC’s Resolution; b) be of a height appropriate for the size, scope, and vertical dimensions of the Applicant’s concept review, and c) contain a permit expiration date.

We appreciate your careful consideration of this important matter.

Respectfully,

Tara Sakraida Parker  
President