

D.C. WARD 3 DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF WARD 3 HOUSING JUSTICE PROPOSAL FOR THE CITY TO BUY
THE WARDMAN HOTEL PROPERTY TO CONVERT IT FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Passed on 6/17/21

WHEREAS,

Mayor Bowser's long-term plan to increase affordable housing calls for the addition of 1,990 units of affordable housing west of Rock Creek Park in Ward 3 by 2025;

The recent amendments to the Comprehensive Plan emphasize the need for more affordable housing including more deeply affordable housing and family-sized housing units throughout the District;

The model of producing market-rate housing with Inclusionary Zoning set asides has not resulted in a significant number of units of affordable housing and very little of this housing has included deeply affordable housing or family-sized units;

Relying only on Inclusionary Zoning, it would take 250 new buildings with 100 units each to reach the Mayor's goal of 1,990 affordable units in Rock Creek West by 2025 and there would be no assurance of deeply affordable or family-sized units;

Inclusionary Zoning must therefore be supplemented by additional approaches to achieve the current goal for affordable housing west of Rock Creek Park;

The 16-acre Wardman Hotel property, currently with over 1,100 hotel rooms and nearly 300,000 square feet of combined event and exhibit space, is vacant, in bankruptcy and is for sale;

Ward 3 Housing Justice (W3HJ) is advocating for the District to buy the Wardman property and convert it into mixed income affordable housing (including deeply affordable housing) while using the vast event spaces for a variety of amenities to benefit the new residents and the existing neighborhood;

The proposal envisions retaining the hotel structure but modifying it to double the net housing area, which would allow a majority of the estimated 500 apartments to include three and four bedrooms;

The consultant team of architects with significant experience in producing award-winning mixed-use projects in DC calculates that the Wardman's event spaces could support uses such as teaching kitchens, a business incubator, a job training center, a basketball and two tennis courts, a dance studio, a black-box theatre, and classrooms for the overcrowded and adjacent Oyster Bi-lingual Elementary School;

The consultant architects note that the infrastructure stacking is well designed for apartment living and thus the building can be efficiently and economically converted, avoiding the significant expense and environmental disadvantages of demolition and rebuilding;

The District is receiving approximately \$2.4B from the U.S. government to assist with the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and District leadership has vowed to use the funds to create a more equitable future for all DC residents, which could include investing in the Wardman property to provide roughly a quarter of the Mayor's affordable housing goal for Rock Creek West;

The Wardman site is close to a metro station and major bus lines which means accessible to amenities, jobs, schools, retail, and other resources;

THEREFORE, it is hereby resolved by the Ward Three Democratic Committee (Committee) that:

1. The Committee urges the District to buy the Wardman Hotel property and convert it into mixed income affordable housing in accordance with the W3HJ proposal.
2. The Chair of the Ward 3 Democratic Committee or the Chair's designees be authorized to transmit, testify to, publicize, and otherwise carry out this resolution.

Passed by:

THE WARD THREE DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE