



WHEATON URBAN DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Ana L. van Balen
Director

February 20th, 2014

County Council President Craig Rice
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Council President Rice:

On October 8, 2013, representatives from AvalonBay Communities attended the Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee's (WUDAC) monthly meeting to share plans for a new residential community located at the corner of Georgia Avenue and Blueridge Avenue in Wheaton. The site is currently occupied by a mostly vacant 7-story office building and two smaller buildings on Blueridge Avenue.

The proposed project aims to construct units that attract Millennials to Wheaton. In the metro area, there is one other AVA building, located near the H Street Atlas District in Washington DC. The branding and marketing efforts of AVA fall in line with the Nighttime Economy Task Force's recommendation to encourage more housing options, especially to Millennials. As stated in the recommendations, "Young people want to live in communities where they are not dependent on automobiles. This lifestyle choice requires neighborhoods centered near abundant public transportation options and access to safe walking and biking corridors. Millennials also express strong desires to live near public amenities such as restaurants, bars, and parks and open spaces." We encourage the County to keep these recommendations in mind as the project moves forward.

WUDAC also heard from Mr. Harold Weinberg, who is a part property owner of the commercial office building at 2401 Blueridge Avenue. Mr. Weinberg expressed concern that construction-related vehicles will occupy an unacceptable percentage of Lot 14. Mr. Weinberg's office building holds 15 businesses. We appreciate Mr. Weinberg's comments, and urge the County officials responsible for this issue to be mindful and consider the fact that an adequate number of spaces may need to be reserved so that existing businesses are not disproportionately burdened.

This project should bring new vitality to the northeast quadrant of Wheaton which will compliment the County's investment on Lot 13 and the current RSC site. We look forward receiving timely updates from AvalonBay and the County on the progress of this development.

Sincerely,

Henriot St. Gerard
cc: Executive Leggett, Montgomery County Council