

**Comments from institutional organizations regarding the rezoning of the UPMC Lancaster/St. Joseph's Hospital site submitted in writing to Lancaster City Council prior to the August 11, 2020 meeting of City Council.**

*Coalition for Sustainable Housing*

*Shelby Nauman, Interim Executive Director, Lancaster Housing Opportunity Partnership, and Coalition for Sustainable Housing Co-Chair; Kate Zimmerman, Coalition for Sustainable Housing Co-Chair*

*The Coalition for Sustainable Housing (C4SH) is a diverse group of organizations and individuals who collaborate, advocate and educate for housing solutions for everyone.*

*As a Coalition, we value collaboration across various sectors, bringing together diverse perspectives and experiences to achieve our shared purpose; advocacy for a range of housing choices for everyone; education through best practices and data-driven knowledge; and housing which sustains our families and households, economy and quality of life.*

*The Coalition has been raising awareness of Lancaster County's need for housing that is affordable across the spectrum of household incomes, in terms of both rental and for-sale housing, and has also been actively engaged in supporting planning initiatives and development projects that promote sustainable housing.*

*On July 24, members of the Coalition received a presentation of the College Avenue Redevelopment site, which is currently under review by the Lancaster City Council. Following this presentation, which was provided by the Steering Committee, the Coalition determined that it would 1) submit this letter and 2) attend upcoming meetings to express our support for the project.*

*Below are the Coalition's reasons for supporting the College Avenue Redevelopment:*

- The project is located within a Designated Growth Area which is consistent with "Places 2040," the update to the Comprehensive Plan of Lancaster County.*
- The proposed plan would add up to a total of 325 new residential apartments and townhomes, with a mix of rental and homeownership options, and a range of price points. This would be a vital addition to the tight housing market in Lancaster, representing almost 15% of the 2,500 new residential units called for by 2030 in the City's Building on Strength plan.*
- The proposed redevelopment goes further to guarantee a third of the new apartments and townhomes would be affordable for households earning less than \$40,000 per year. This would be a substantial step in addressing the critical need for more affordable housing in Lancaster.*
- The proposed plan would be a model for achieving mixed-income housing scaled to an existing residential neighborhood.*
- HDC MidAtlantic, the party responsible for the affordable housing units, is a trusted, local developer with extensive experience and expertise in the affordable housing sector, and is a committed local partner in advocating for solutions to Lancaster's housing needs.*
- Finally, the proposed \$90 million investment holds immense promise for strengthening the City of Lancaster's tax base, while maintaining housing affordability for working families. This mixed-income development approach will contribute to the city's economy for years to come.*

*We are eager for the addition of this housing stock to Lancaster County, and representatives from the Coalition will attend future meetings regarding this project. At that time, we can address the above points in further detail, to the extent that the Council may have questions or desire additional insight.*

*Marshall W. Snively, President, Lancaster City Alliance*

*Lancaster City Alliance is pleased to support the mixed-use residential/commercial redevelopment project planned for the former UPMC Lancaster (“St. Joseph”) Hospital campus in the City of Lancaster by your organizations, Washington Place Equities, LLC and HDC MidAtlantic, to include the properties at 250 College Avenue, 213 College Avenue, and 913 Wheatland Avenue in the City’s West End.*

*Your creative and collaborative redevelopment of the former St. Joseph Hospital campus as proposed is highly consistent with the goals and objectives of the City’s 15-year economic development strategic plan, Building On Strength, adopted by City Council in 2015. Lancaster City Alliance led the development of this plan in coordination with the public and the leadership of City of Lancaster government, and continues to manage the plan’s implementation, now in its sixth year, in regular coordination with the plan’s Community Implementation Partners. This group of more than 50 private and public stakeholders charged with advancing the plan’s aspirations and specific recommendations, enthusiastically endorsed your redevelopment proposal at its meeting today, August 3, 2020.*

*The Building On Strength plan calls for the development of 2,500 new residential units of all types and price points in the City of Lancaster by 2030. Recent studies have indeed shown that the market will support a significantly higher number of units more than this goal. In fact, much work remains to be done to reach this goal. As proposed, your proposed redevelopment will provide upwards of a total of 325 new residential units, including up to 295 new apartments and up to 30 new townhomes, available at a variety of price points, helping to increase the city’s currently low residential inventory and address the very strong demand for new housing and urban living in Lancaster City.*

*Recognizing the need for affordable housing throughout Lancaster County, the Building On Strength Plan Implementation Partners promote the creation of mixed-income communities, and the proposed redevelopment sets a great example of how this can be achieved in an existing neighborhood that respects the scale of the community.*

*The affordable housing component of the overall redevelopment, to be developed by HDC MidAtlantic, including up to 120 units spread across two sites, combined would be one the most significant housing projects constructed in the City of Lancaster in several decades, and will help to meet the community’s recent and critical need for affordable housing as residential prices continue to rise in Lancaster City and County.*

*Creating mixed-use communities is also key, especially with limited land within the city. Building On Strength also calls for 100,000 square feet of new retail/restaurant space and 300,000 square feet of new office/flex space by 2030. The proposed 40-50,000 square feet of new office space and the proposed 10,000 square feet of ground-floor retail/restaurant space on College Avenue would help to meet these goals while providing jobs and much-needed walkable access to goods and services to residents of the surrounding neighborhood. What’s more, a goal to intentionally make the new retail and office space on College Avenue available to existing Lancaster City small businesses in growth mode, and City startups, to lease will help to achieve some of the Plan’s key aspirations including “cultivate existing Lancaster businesses to grow with continued success” and “provide an environment where small businesses and entrepreneurs can thrive.”*

*Finally, the proposed redevelopment of the former St. Joseph Hospital campus, projected to cost upwards of \$90 million or more, would also help to meet Building On Strength’s goal of \$1 billion in privately led investment in the city by 2030. Since mid-2015, the city has already seen more than \$607 million in such investment in development projects recently completed or currently under construction, and your proposed project would push us closer to the community’s goal.*

*Lancaster City Alliance strongly supports and thanks Washington Place Equities, LLC and HDC MidAtlantic for your proposal to make this significant investment in the City of Lancaster to create new housing and commercial opportunities, especially in the current economic climate.*

*We are confident your proposal will help to bring enhanced vibrancy to the City’s West End and will continue to elevate Lancaster City as a national model for successful—and inclusive—urban economic*

development, while “provid[ing] equitable opportunities for all Lancasterians”—a primary aspiration of the *Building On Strength* plan.

*Mike McKenna, president of Lancaster Equity CDC*

*On behalf of Lancaster Equity Community Development Corporation (LECDC), please accept this letter of support for HDC MidAtlantic and Washington Place Equities’ proposal to develop the former UPMC hospital complex.*

*As a coalition of organizations from the housing and community development spheres, we are passionate about projects that expand housing choices, especially for those who have been historically disenfranchised and presently cost-burdened in housing opportunity. The proposed plan would add up to a total of 325 new residential apartments and townhomes, with a mix of rental and homeownership options, and a range of price points.*

*Congruent with LECDC’s vision, the proposed redevelopment guarantees a third of the new apartments and townhomes would be affordable for households earning less than \$40,000 per year. This would be a vital addition to the tight housing market in Lancaster, with the City’s *Building on Strength* plan calling for at least 2,500 new residential units added to the market by 2030. Moreover, some of the units will offer a lease-to-own model after the 15-year compliance period ends, creating a pathway to wealth-building. Currently, HDC, Tabor and LHOP are partnering with a similar approach in an affordable housing community in Lititz.*

*The mixed-use, mixed-income design allows for the type of shared and inclusive economic growth and neighborhood development that is needed in our community. Washington Place Equities has already committed to working with one of our partner organizations, ASSETS, to attract local, and hopefully women and minority-owned entrepreneurs to the retail and office space in the plan.*

*HDC MidAtlantic is a trusted partner in LECDC, and we value its extensive experience in the affordable housing sector. We are confident that they will deliver faithfully on the development plan. They have demonstrated their commitment to equity and to the well-being of their residents many times. Already they have undertaken a comprehensive community engagement process, and have pledged to incorporate the voices of so many neighbors as they navigate the design of this complex site.*

*In conclusion, we strongly endorse this project and look forward to its contributions to the City’s vitality – and affordable housing base – for many years to come.*

*P. Michael Sturla, State Representative 96<sup>th</sup> Legislative District*

*I am writing to express my strong support to Washington Place Equities’ and HDC MidAtlantic’s proposed redevelopment of the former hospital campus on College Avenue.*

*Their approach is thorough and comprehensive in ensuring a variety of benefits to our community. This project makes a significant investment that will create jobs, utilize environmental building practices, provide affordable housing, and help boost our local economy. I believe WPE and HDC will produce a redevelopment that all of us can be proud to have in our community.*

*Tom Baldrige, President Lancaster Chamber of Commerce & Industry*

*I am writing to express the Lancaster Chamber’s support for the College Avenue Redevelopment plan. The Chamber supports housing availability and affordability to ensure there is access to safe, quality housing near job centers. We recognize the increasing need for housing that is available to our County’s workforce that also meets planning goals to develop underutilized sites and ensure transportation access for the residents.*

*This project meets that standard on several fronts. It is consistent with “Places 2040” and is located within a*

*designated growth area. This is critical as our community looks at projects and ensures they are meeting the targets laid out for growth and development. In addition, the plan includes housing at a variety of price points, with a specific amount designated as affordable. This affordability guarantee is a key component to ensuring that people across the housing spectrum have access to housing options. And finally, the mixed-income housing plan is one that will fit within the existing neighborhood and will contribute to the City's economy.*

*We appreciate your thoughtful review of this important project and ask that you recognize the positive impacts this project will have in working toward the goals of "Places 2040" and for the residents and business community of Lancaster.*