

## **Adams Morgan Residents Announce Hotel Zoning Appeal Settlement; At Least 2 Million Dollars for a Community Protection Fund**

*Adams Morgan, Washington, DC* – Last spring, Adams Morgan residents, including a community group named the Champlain Street Neighbors, submitted petitions for review to the DC Court of Appeals (DCA) appealing the decision by the DC Zoning Commission that granted significant zoning entitlements for the proposed Adams Morgan hotel project.

On Thursday, March 6, 2014, Ward One City Councilmember Jim Graham announced on listserves throughout the ward, "Good News--Green Light for Adams Morgan Hotel," because, as he wrote "the [DC] Court of Appeals dismissed a challenge against the planned Adams Morgan Hotel at Champlain and Euclid Streets in Adams Morgan."

Councilmember Graham's announcement failed to mention that appellants voluntarily dropped the case after many hours and a great many meetings with hotel developers to come up with a significant settlement agreement – valued at two million dollars – to be used to mitigate displacement pressures brought on by a project of this magnitude and nature.

"This settlement fund is something we would not have otherwise received but for challenging the zoning decision. It will assist us in protecting the small businesses along Columbia Road as well as residential units close to the proposed hotel site where many diverse residents and working families call home and have done so for decades," stated Teresa Lopez, a forty-year Adams Morgan resident and appellant in the court case.

Jake Lamstein, Senior Vice President of New York-based hotel developers, the Sydell Group, and key settlement negotiator said, "Obviously many people want our hotel here and want good paying hotel jobs too. The neighborhood also wants to hold onto its affordable housing and small businesses. To make this project a success, it has to be feasible for everyone in Adams Morgan. This is why our agreement with the community is so important and why we put so much effort into the negotiations."

Daniel Hornal, Esq., founder of Talos Law was counsel for the Champlain Street Neighbors and also helped write the terms of the agreement.

"We could have continued the appeal and probably would have won based on the merits. However, the most likely result of us winning would have been the case would be sent back to the Zoning Commission to try again. While that would have delayed the building of the hotel, we probably would not have reached such a significant settlement, totaling at least two million dollars, for the hard-working people of Adams Morgan."

< Adams Morgan Hotel, Press Alert, page 2 >

Hornal continued, "The hotel's new development group, Sydell, acknowledged the very real displacement concerns and wanted to mitigate them. Our agreement will empower some residents and businesses, whom may otherwise be forced out, to stay and continue to grow their roots in this community. However, we have a long, long way to go to make sure the market-rate homes near the hotel remain affordable for residents and families who have lived in Adams Morgan for generations."

Since the hotel settlement, Lamstein and Sydell have begun the permitting processes conducted at the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) offices, located 1100 4th Street, SW.

The Champlain Street Neighbors and other appellants have begun the process of forming a new non-profit organization which will manage the settlement funds, as well to garner additional donations all with the intention to protect the community by forming housing cooperatives and providing support tools for Adams Morgan micro businesses that will be affected by rising commercial rents.

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[email from Jim Graham about the hotel]

> From: Jim Graham <Jim@grahamwone.com>  
> Subject: [Mintwood-place] Good News--Green Light for Adams Morgan Hotel  
> To: "mintwood-place@lists.mutualaid.org" <mintwood-place@lists.mutualaid.org>  
> Date: Thursday, March 6, 2014, 2:10 PM

> Dear Friends—I am pleased to inform you that the Court of Appeals has dismissed a challenge against  
> the planned Adams Morgan Hotel at Champlain and Euclid Streets in Adams Morgan.  
> This means that the project can now move forward unimpeded by this challenge.  
> Daytime commerce is certain to be substantially invigorated by this hotel  
> development. We have also preserved a historic church building, the  
> future of which was at best in doubt. It is a great victory for our  
> community. Best, Councilmember Jim Graham

> I typically answer emails  
> before 9 AM on weekdays. If you email me after that, it is likely that  
> you will hear from me the next weekday. If there is a need to  
> communicate prior to that, you may wish to call me. For most effective  
> communication, please use my direct email address: jim@grahamwone.com  
> Jim Graham, Councilmember, Ward One, 1350 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, #105, Washington, DC 20004.  
> 202-724-8181; 202-724-8109 (fax). Chairman, Committee on Human  
> Services. Main Committee Number: 202-724-8191. 1350 Pennsylvania Ave.,  
> NW, #116, Washington, DC 20004. Website: www.grahamwone.com