



via email

November 11, 2016

SUZANNE R. LUDLOW  
CITY MANAGER  
CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND  
7500 MAPLE AVENUE  
TAKOMA PARK, MD 20910  
(301) 891-7230  
SUZANNEL@TAKOMAPARKMD.GOV

RE: WEEKLY UPDATE ON LETTER OF INTENT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN NDC AND THE TPSS CO-OP

**DEAR MS. LUDLOW,**

By this letter, Neighborhood Development Company (NDC) is providing an update on negotiations of a Letter of Intent (LOI) between NDC and the Takoma Park Silver Spring Co-op (TPSS) for the expansion of their existing operations.

NDC, TPSS and City officials met on October 27th. NDC's architect Streetsense presented four working concepts to the Co-op and the group discussed each. Subsequently, I and Marilyn Berger of TPSS met on November 1st. Based on these discussions and additional feedback from TPSS, NDC has worked with our architects to refine their work and produce two basic concepts that would allow for the expansion of TPSS onto the the City's land.

**Concept 1 would maximize the potential of the site and the benefits to the Co-op, the owners of the Turner site, the City and the community, and is far and away our preferred alternative.** Through a two phase development, **a brand new, contiguous, turn-key space would be erected for the Co-op on the City's site.** Once the Co-op transitions into its new space the existing Turner building would be demolished and new retail space constructed on the site, providing a total of up to 23,850 GSF of ground floor retail on the combined site; including the prime corner real estate at the intersection of Sycamore and Carroll Avenue. A subgrade garage would be accessed either via a ramp off Carroll Avenue or at the rear off Columbia Ave, with the potential of 101 or 112 spaces respectively. **A major benefit of this concept is that the Co-op would be able to transition to the new space with no or very limited business interruption.**

Unloading for the Co-op's large "18 wheeler" trucks would be made via a 'lay by' lane on Carroll Avenue. **This unloading process is exactly the same as employed by several comparable or larger grocers in the area, including Trader Joe's.** The distance from the proposed unloading point to the loading door of the new Co-op space would be approximately 85 feet, as opposed to the approximately 75 feet the current

unloading process requires now. **In other words, the proposed unloading procedure under this concept would be essentially the same as the Co-op's current procedure, only a few steps further.**

Alternatively, if this is not appealing to the owners of the Turner site or the Co-op, our **Concept 2** would expand the Co-op's space west onto the City's site, with adjacent retail built out along Carroll Avenue, maximizing potential street frontage. A 'lay by' lane along Carroll Avenue would allow large truck deliveries to be made during the off peak hours, with a service corridor wrapping around the building to provide fast access from the truck's tailgate to conditioned space. The distance from the proposed unloading point to the loading door of the expanded Co-op space would be approximately 85 feet -- again, **the unloading procedure under this concept would be essentially the same as the Co-op's current procedure, only a few steps further.** During typical business hours the 'lay by' lane could serve as a pick up/ drop off area, a bus lane or short term parking. A subgrade garage would provide longer term parking and could be accessed via Columbia Ave to maximize parking efficiency. This concept provides a total of 18,000 GSF of ground floor space including the existing Co-op. While this concept would not be as beneficial to all parties as Concept 1, we find this to be an acceptable alternative and would be willing to proceed in this direction. **A major drawback of Concept 2 (or any plan that expands the Co-op through an addition to the Turner building) is that the Co-op would be required to shut down for a number of months while the old building is integrated into the new addition.**

Each of the two concepts has the potential for a variety of 2nd level programs, including a green roof or rooftop farming.

In an earlier meeting TPSS presented a site plan which would allow the unloading of its large "18 wheeler" trucks on-site directly to a covered loading dock-- **a feature which the current Co-op does not have.** We have examined this site plan and find it to be technically feasible (although we have not vetted whether it would be financially feasible). However, providing this feature would eliminate approximately 4,500 square feet of valuable (both in terms of economics and urban placemaking) ground level, street facing commercial space. Additionally, supporting such a heavy truck over a large portion of the garage would significantly increase the cost of construction. We agree that this site plan would improve the operational efficiency of the Co-op (in our opinion marginally), but **we do not feel this plan would be in the best interest of the City and the community and therefore we do not support it.**

Should TPSS elect not to move forward with either of our two concepts, and the City direct us to proceed without the involvement of the Co-op, we are prepared to quickly develop and present to the City a **revised concept which would accommodate space for a new anchor tenant on the Junction site as well as smaller retail bays.** Unloading would be via a "lay by" as in the other two concepts. A small service corridor would be erected adjacent to the Turner building to provide access to the existing TPSS loading area - in essence, they would have the same unloading operation they have now. **TPSS could potentially be the anchor tenant under this concept, but this would require them to abandon the Turner site** (we assume, but do not know, that they could sublease it to another tenant).

We would also like to report on our efforts to secure an understanding with the owners of the Turner property. Despite numerous attempts they have not made contact with us. We will be asking TPSS, with whom they have a 20 + year relationship, to facilitate a meeting. **Without the cooperation of the owners of the Turner property neither Concept 1 or 2 will be possible.**

We want to emphasize that we still very much want TPSS to be the anchor tenant of the Takoma Junction project. We believe this to be in the best interest of the City, the community, TPSS, and us. We have had no discussions whatsoever with any other anchor tenant. Over the last few months we have worked hard, expended considerable staff time and third party expense, and been 100% transparent with the City and TPSS. We believe we have offered TPSS several exciting alternatives that would greatly enhance their operations and ensure their long-term success. **We now look to TPSS to let us know how they**

**would like to proceed.** In order to meet the City's timeline for development of the Takoma Junction site we will need to hear from them soon.

Please feel free to follow up with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'ADRIAN WASHINGTON', with a stylized, cursive flourish extending to the right.

ADRIAN WASHINGTON  
CEO & FOUNDER  
NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT COMPANY