

March 30, 2016

Evan Goldman
EYA
4800 Hampden Lane
Suite 300
Bethesda, MD 20817

RE: 12th and Allison Development

Dear Mr. Goldman,

Casey Trees is a Washington DC-based nonprofit, with a mission “to restore, enhance, and protect the tree canopy of the Nation’s capital.” To fulfill this mission, we plant trees; monitor the city’s tree canopy; and work with elected officials, developers, and residents to prioritize the District’s trees and to encourage tree planting on both public and private property.

We are dedicated to helping the District reach its 40 percent tree canopy goal by 2032. As a city, we will achieve this goal when development projects protect existing trees and plant new trees, and when the District adopts policies that grow the city’s urban forest. Therefore, we are excited to provide you with comments on the 12th and Allison development project on the property surrounding the St. Joseph’s Seminary building.

Throughout the community engagement process for the 12th and Allison project, the EYA development team openly engaged in discussions with Michigan Park neighborhood residents and organizations. After presenting the initial concept plan, EYA sought community feedback, and ultimately incorporated this feedback into a new design with fewer proposed townhome units, additional public green spaces, and a plan to protect a majority of the mature trees on site.

The current plans for the 12th and Allison project show existing trees protected and new trees planted along internal streets. To ensure these trees are able to live long lives and grow large canopies, we recommend the following best practices:

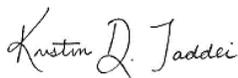
1. **Work with Casey Trees to preserve green space in a conservation easement:** Setting aside the green space around St. Joseph’s Seminary in a conservation easement would allow neighbors access to these parks in perpetuity, and would give trees a permanent space to grow. Casey Trees is available to serve as a conservation easement holder for this property.
2. **Prioritize shade trees:** When selecting the new street trees for this project, choose appropriate species based on available sunlight and rooting space to grow a healthy tree canopy. Where possible, prioritize large canopy shade trees to maximize benefits. Consider working with Casey Tees to establish a planting plan. Casey Trees’ [Urban Tree Selection Guide](#) is available for guidance.



3. **Use advanced tree growth systems to maximize soil volume:** Project renderings show trees lining the development's interior streets. To allow these trees to thrive and provide maximum canopy benefits, install soil cells or structural soils under new sidewalks. These systems provide adequate soil volume for roots, allow soil to remain un-compacted, and facilitate tree root growth.
4. **Include trees in any bioretention areas:** Based on current plans, about half of the 12th and Allison property will transition from green space to homes and streets. Any bioretention areas designed to manage the additional stormwater runoff from these impervious surfaces should include trees. Trees in bioretention areas further slow stormwater runoff and reduce pollution through interception, evapotranspiration, and nutrient removal. Casey Trees' [Urban Tree Selection Guide](#) may be consulted to select trees that perform best in bioretention areas.
5. **Require a maintenance plan:** Newly planted trees are vulnerable as their root systems have not yet expanded far enough to gather water from a large area. It is crucial that trees less than 3 years old receive 25 gallons of water or 1.5 inches of rainfall per week to survive. Employing regularly scheduled maintenance and tree health monitoring will ensure establishment and survival of young trees, reducing the need for costly maintenance in the future. Therefore, we recommend working with the homeowners association to develop a long-term maintenance plan for the 94 new trees.
6. **Protect existing trees during construction:** Adding tree protection fencing around any existing trees on or near the construction site will prevent damage from equipment and debris. We recommend installing metal fencing beyond the critical root zone of these trees, as well as clear signage, as specified in the District Department of Transportation's tree protection requirements ([DWG NO. 608.10](#)).

EYA's responsiveness and inclusion of sustainable design elements in the 12th and Allison project demonstrates the many advantages of collaborating with the surrounding community early in the development process. We look forward to seeing this tree-filled site provide numerous benefits to the Michigan Park neighborhood for years to come.

Sincerely,



Kristin D. Taddei
Planning Advocate
Casey Trees

