

Lee Goldstein
Project Manager
Office of Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 317
Washington, DC 20004

RE: Bruce Monroe Park Master Plan

March 22, 2016

Dear Mr. Goldstein,

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. This goal is achievable only if existing trees are protected and the District adopts policies that grow the city’s urban forest.

Between 2012 and 2015, Casey Trees worked with the city to plant 27 trees at Bruce Monroe Park. These trees currently cover 5% of the park area. Left undisturbed, these trees would grow to cover two thirds of the park area.

While the master plan to build housing at Bruce Monroe Park does increase the site’s current tree canopy, it removes several young shade trees that could provide significant benefits at maturity. The proposed master plan shows a number of replacement trees that will bring the tree canopy to 13% of the park. Our analysis shows room for an additional 36 trees, which would bring the site’s canopy coverage to 25%.

We applaud the project renderings, which add more trees to the site. A healthy tree canopy is essential for managing stormwater and maintaining community health. To achieve these benefits, we urge the city to take the following actions if Bruce Monroe Park is selected as the development site for this project:

1. Set a canopy goal of 25%

Plant an additional 36 trees with consideration of space needed for the garden and sports field amenities. Select appropriate species based on available rooting space, prioritizing large shade trees in open areas.

2. Incorporate advanced tree growth systems

Project renderings show trees lining the internal street parallel to Georgia Avenue NW. To allow these trees to thrive and provide maximum canopy benefits, install soil cells or structural soils.

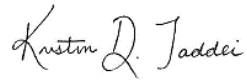


These systems provide adequate soil volume for roots, allow soil to remain un-compacted, and facilitate tree root growth.

3. Develop a tree maintenance plan.

Newly planted trees are vulnerable as their root systems have not yet expanded 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 developing a long-term maintenance plan for all new trees on the Bruce Monroe site.

Sincerely,



Kristin D. Taddei