Testimony of
Kristin Taddei, Planning Advocate, Casey Trees
April 25, 2018

Before the Board of Zoning Adjustment
on
3015 4th Street NE Townhouse Development
BZA Case No. 19377: The Boundary Companies and The Missionary Society

Good morning board members,

My name is Kristin Taddei and I am the Planning Advocate with Casey Trees. As you may know, Casey Trees is a Washington, D.C.-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 decision makers, developers, and residents to encourage tree planting and protection. We are dedicated to helping the District reach its 40 percent tree canopy goal by 2032. As a city, we will achieve this goal with sustainable development projects that protect existing trees and achieve a net gain in tree canopy. We have been working with the development team to ensure that trees are prioritized in the development of the townhome community on St. Paul's College property at 3015 4th Street NE.

Preserving trees is integral to preserving the historic nature of St. Paul's College, as many of the 165 trees on the entire site (Figure 1) have likely been growing since the early years of the College. The grove of 73 trees located on the townhome site (Figure 2) include 33 Special Trees – those designated by the Urban Forest Preservation Act of 2002 as any tree greater than 55 inches in circumference – and in total, tree canopy covers 38% of this space. These trees also provide a valuable community amenity; add value and privacy to the homes of current residents; and help to manage pollution, flooding, erosion, and extreme temperatures

Boundary Companies has been receptive to the testimony Casey Trees originally submitted in December 2016. In November 2017 and again in February 2018, Casey Trees met with Mr. Wilkinson and Mr. Horne to review revised plans for the townhomes. The updated site and roadway configuration for the St. Paul's College project shows 60 rowhomes surrounding the majority of the existing grove of mature trees. This is a vast improvement from the original plan, which showed 78 rowhomes that would have necessitated the removal of all but 3 of the 73 trees, including 24 Special Trees. This would have reduced tree canopy within the townhome site from 38% to 8%. Our analysis shows that the updated plan would provide a 30% tree canopy and preserve 27 trees, including 17 Special Trees (Figures 3 and 4).

After further analysis, Casey Trees found that even after townhomes are constructed, 46% of the entire site will remain plantable space (Figure 5). This provides the necessary space to plant replacement trees. We recommend the development team adopt a canopy goal of 30% throughout the entire site, to be accomplished by planting new trees in the open space around St. Paul's College. In particular, we have asked the development team to provide a detailed tree protection and replacement plan showing:

- the 46 trees to be removed replaced at a 3:1 ratio throughout the entire site,
- the level of tree diversity currently exhibited on site maintained in the tree replacement plan,
- a variety of large canopy trees and small understory trees included in the replanting plan, and
- proper tree projection measures implemented to protect remaining trees near construction.

Boundary Cos. has agreed to implement these measures to create a development with a 30% tree canopy post-construction. This will ensure that tree canopy is gained, not lost, with the construction of this development. We look forward to receiving the detailed tree protection and replacement plan and analyzing this plan to ensure the 30% tree canopy is met. We are confident that if our suggestions are implemented, this development will be a shining example of environmentally and culturally conscious design.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Existing Trees - Entire Site

St. Paul's College Townhome Development Tree Canopy Analysis

April 25, 2018

Figure 1. The boundary of the entire property at 3015 4th Street NE.

Existing Trees - Townhomes Site

St. Paul's College Townhome Development Tree Canopy Analysis

April 25, 2018

Figure 2. The portion of the property at 3015 4th Street NE where townhomes will be constructed.

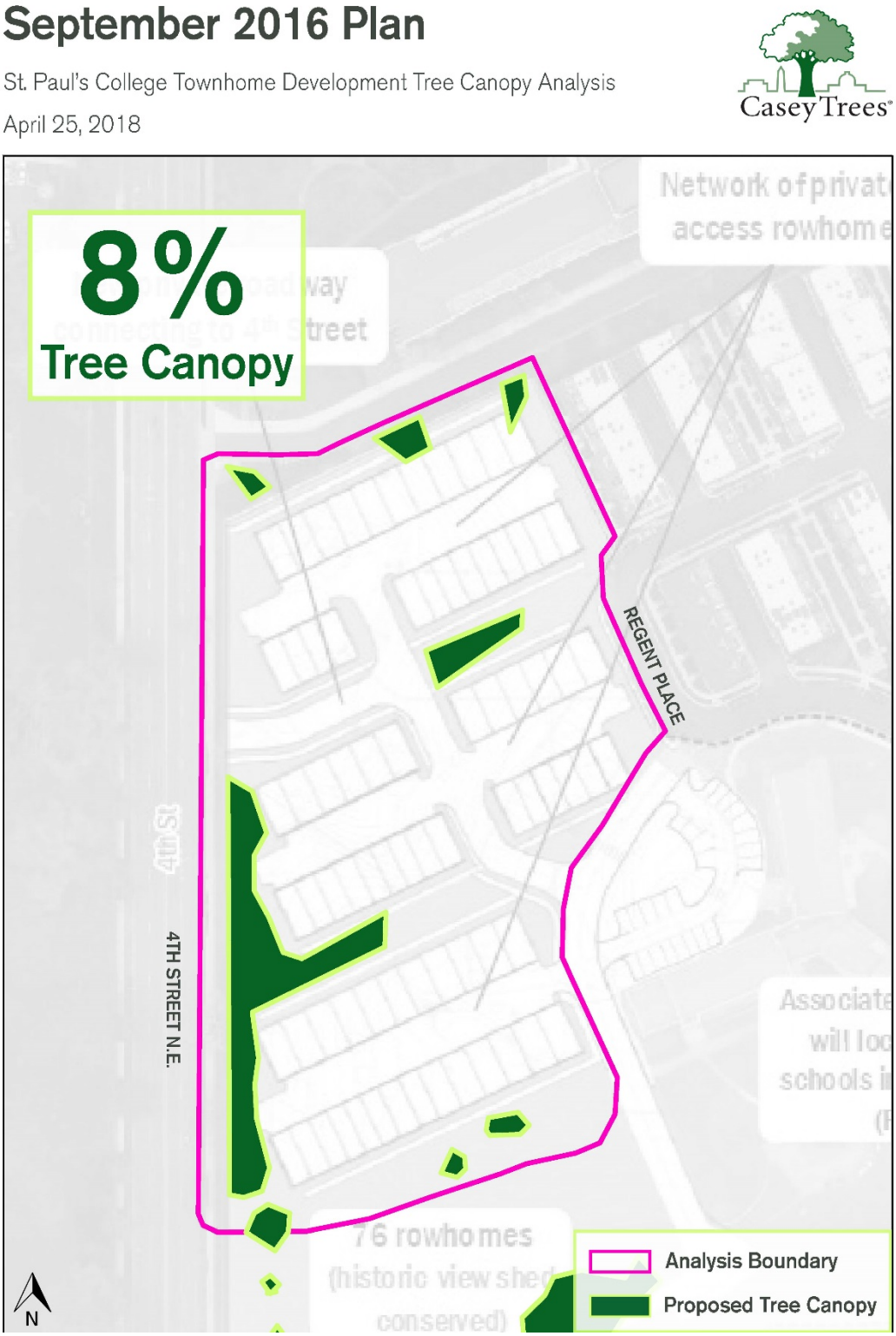

Figure 3. Boundary Cos. original plan showed 78 rowhomes that would have necessitated the removal of all but 3 of the 73 trees, including 24 Special Trees. This would have reduced tree canopy within the townhome site from 38% to 8%.

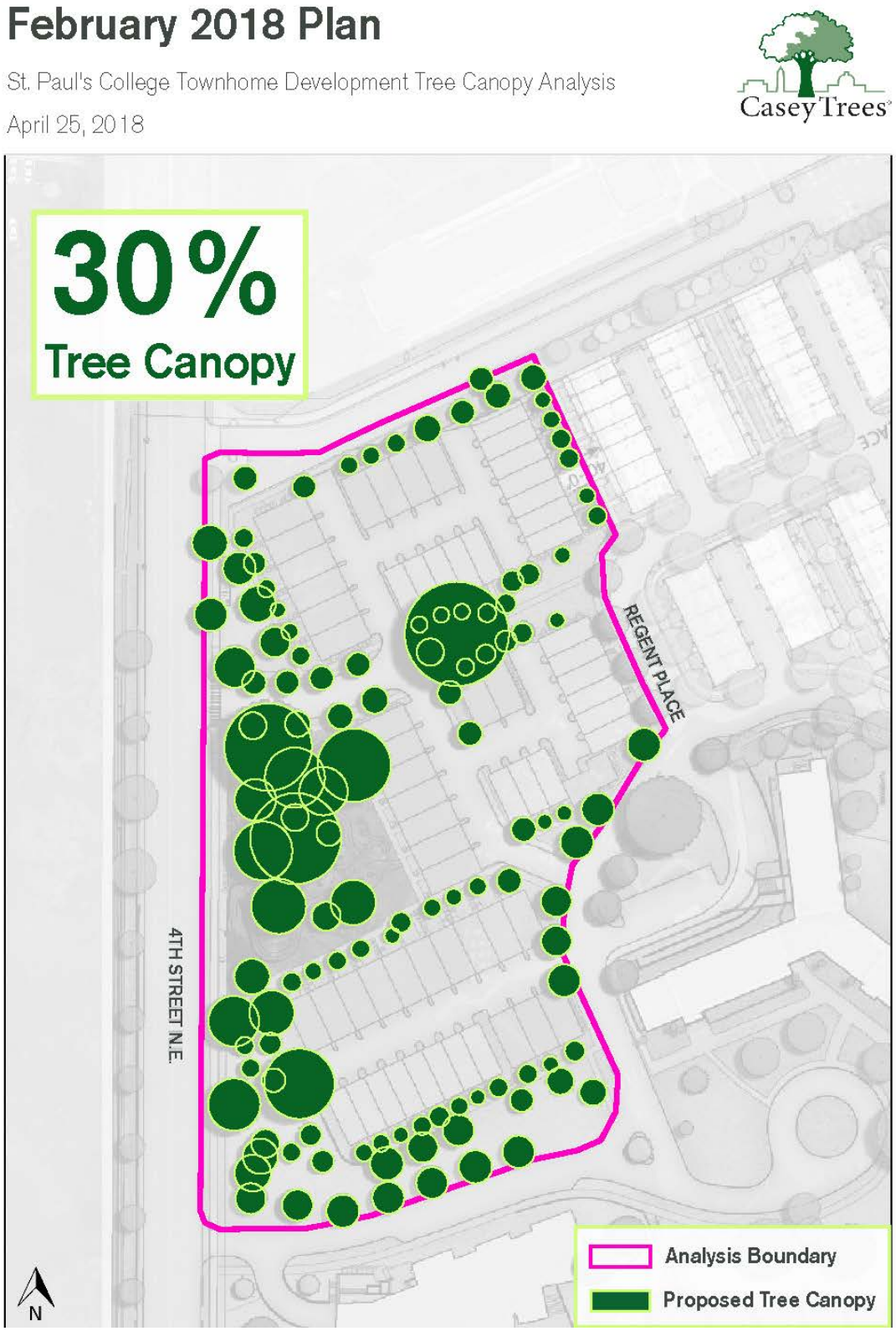

Figure 4. The updated site and roadway configuration shows 60 rowhomes surrounding the majority of the existing grove of mature trees. Our analysis shows that the updated plan would provide a 30% tree canopy and preserve 27 trees, including 17 Special Trees.

Plantable Space - Entire Site

St. Paul's College Townhome Development Tree Canopy Analysis

April 25, 2018

Figure 5. After townhomes are constructed, 46% of the entire site will remain plantable space. This provides the necessary space to plant replacement trees and achieve a 30% tree canopy goal.