



City of Albany Planning Department
200 Henry John Blvd, Suite 3
Albany NY 12210-1550
February 7, 2018

Attn: Mr. Al DeSalvo, Chair, Planning Board
RE: Jankow Application – 363 Ontario Street

Dear Planning Board Members:

On behalf of the Pine Hills Neighborhood Association, we are writing to express unconditional support for the apartments to be built on 363 Ontario Street. This is an update to our conditional support in a letter dated November 6, 2017.

The Board of the Pine Hills Neighborhood Association believes that the proposed project for apartments and retail for 363 Ontario St is an improvement to the current site and is significantly more in line with Albany 2030 - our city's comprehensive plan, than the current land use. While several members of our Board and Neighborhood Association have fond memories of the Playdium, it has been made clear that a bowling alley is not a part of the long-term plan for the site, and we understand even if the site is not sold to current applicants, the bowling alley is slated to be shuttered. We certainly do not want the Playdium to become another vacant building in our city.

While our November 6 letter expressed concern about the height of the buildings, that is no longer an issue for your consideration since the BZA granted an area variance for the height. The current flat roof design of four stories is approximately 4 feet lower than the peak of the original mansard design. Current zoning calls for a maximum of 3 1/2 stories and the variance allows for 4 stories, a difference of approximately 4'. We find the difference of 4' to be negligible.

The second concern expressed in our November 6 letter was appearance. We believe that the latest design is a decided improvement over the last one. Balconies and landscaping help the buildings fit into this barren stretch of Ontario. It is our understanding that a final color scheme

has yet to be decided, and we urge the developer to pick a scheme that will work well with the neighborhood.

Additionally, we have learned that APD staff has looked at traffic and parking impacts and are satisfied with the developer's proposal.

Also, the existing site, as developed, has little or no storm water detention features, and runoff from impervious areas (e.g. buildings, parking, etc.) contributes to flooding and combined sewer overflows during major storm events. The proposed development with underground storage tanks would result in a significant reduction of storm water runoff entering combined sewers and contributing to flooding and CSO during storm events.

Commercial space that includes a laundromat and space for a cafe will benefit the neighborhood.

We gathered this information from attending some of the many meetings held by the Planning Board, Planning Department and BZA and from reading the coverage on *All Over Albany*.

Keeping in mind that ReZone is built on the desires expressed by residents in Albany 2030, and that ReZone is designed to encourage bringing residents back to Albany by emphasizing convenience and walkability, we believe that this project is a positive addition to Pine Hills and should be approved by the Planning Board.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Virginia Hammer". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

Virginia Hammer, President

Ric Chesser, Co-Chair Zoning and Code Enforcement
Leah Golby, Co-Chair Zoning and Code Enforcement

cc: PHNA Board of Directors and PHNA Members
Christopher Spencer, Director, Planning Department
Brad Glass, Asst. Director, Planning Department
Lauren Alpert, Planning Department
Owusu Anane, Common Council Member, 10th Ward
Judy Doesschate, Common Council Member 9th Ward
David Phaff