



**ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 6E**

PO Box 26182, LeDroit Park Station  
Washington, DC 20001

**ANC 6E Commissioners**

ANC 6E05: Alexander T. Marriott, *Chair*  
ANC 6E03: Frank S. Wiggins, *Vice Chair/Treasurer*  
ANC 6E04: David Jaffe, *Secretary*  
ANC 6E01: Alexander M. Padro  
ANC 6E02: Anthony Brown  
ANC 6E06: Alvin O. Judd, Sr.  
ANC 6E07: Kevin M. Rogers

May 2, 2018

Ms. Melinda M. Bolling  
Director  
DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs  
1100 4<sup>th</sup> St., SW  
Washington, DC 20024

Re: 401 K St., NW – Museum Square

Dear Director Bolling,

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6E conducted a public meeting on Tuesday, April 3, 2018 at the Watha T. Daniel/Shaw Library, 1630 7th Street, NW, to consider the complaints received by the residents of Museum Square at 401 K St., NW.

At the Commission's meeting, duly noticed, with a quorum present (four out of seven Commissioners required to be in attendance to achieve a quorum), ANC 6E voted (6 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstention) to request that the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs investigate the many allegations of housing code violations at Museum Square.

As you may be aware, Museum Square is a 302-unit apartment building located in the Mt. Vernon Triangle neighborhood, just a couple blocks north of Chinatown. For over 30 years, this building has served as affordable housing for a large Chinese and black community with long standing ties to the neighborhood. Indeed, this is one of the last remaining buildings supporting a large contingency of low-income and elderly Chinese residents.

In late 2013, the owner of the building, Bush Companies of Williamsburg, VA, announced that would allow its Section 8 contract to expire on October 1, 2014. Although Bush Companies had to reissue the one-year opt-out notice in 2014, the building-wide Section 8 contract covering all 302 units in the building ultimately expired in October of 2015, and remaining tenants were given individual Housing Choice vouchers instead.

Since the building was not fully occupied at this time, such transition resulted in a net loss of subsidized units. As required by the Tenants Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA), Bush Companies made the tenants an offer to sell the property – setting the price at \$250 million. The Museum Square Tenants Association filed suit arguing that the \$250 million price tag was not a fair or rational value of the property. A DC Superior Court Judge agreed with the Tenants Association finding that the offer was not bona fide under TOPA. The DC Court of Appeals upheld the lower court’s decision.

Since the DC Court of Appeals ruling Bush Companies has not reissued an offer of purchase to the Museum Square residents, and the building conditions have continued to deteriorate. The following is a list of issues expressed by the residents:

- Infestation of cockroaches and rats
- Routine loss of hot water
- Repeated breakdowns of the elevators, and long delays to repair them
- Carpeting worn out and in bad condition in many units
- Some water pipes broke and some units flooded during the winter; many tenants have concerns about lingering water damage in some units
- Unanswered maintenance requests
- Some units were without sufficient or consistent heat in the winter months
- Issuing certain building notices, such as specifics about rent increases and other pertinent information in only the English language, while understanding fully that most residents are limited English proficient.
- Selectively posting notice in Mandarin when the subject of the message is to encourage residents to move out, such as advertisements for available units in other buildings.

The Commission takes the treatment and complaints of low-income residents seriously, and we are highly concerned with these reports of mistreatment. We thank you for your time and consideration of this matter and ask that you keep the Commission updated regarding your Department’s findings.

Respectfully submitted,



Alexander T. Marriott  
*Chair*  
ANC 6E

CC:

Ms. Muriel Bowser, Mayor of the District of Columbia  
Council of the District of Columbia

Mr. David Do, Director of Mayor’s Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs