



SHEILA DIXON

MAYOR

*100 Holliday Street, Room 250
Baltimore, Maryland 21202*

November 24, 2008

Dr. Philip Spevak
President
Roland Park Civic League
300 Somerset Road
Baltimore, MD 21210

Dear Mr. Spevak:

As a pediatrician, you are aware, no doubt, of the misconception that the Hippocratic Oath contains the familiar dictum, "First do no harm." Although the well-known aphorism might not be contained in the oath of your noble profession, it is a principle to which I have subscribed throughout my twenty plus years of public service.

One does not need to travel far through the streets of Roland Park to discover that many of its residents believe that Keswick Multi-Care Center's proposal to build a continuing-care facility on a 17-acre parcel owned by the Baltimore Country Club (BCC) would, in fact, do harm to the neighborhood. You have asked whether I share the Civic League's point of view that Keswick's proposal would fundamentally and adversely affect the character of your community.

Roland Park is one of Baltimore's most historic and desirable neighborhoods, a great asset to the City and the region. Individually and collectively, the residents of Roland Park have made tremendous contributions to Baltimore City. The combined vigilance and generosity of your neighbors, ably guided by the Roland Park Civic League now and through the years, has preserved and enhanced a quality of life envied by communities across the city and region.

Although I do not support Keswick's project as currently conceived – for example, I believe that the project is too dense and would consume too much open space – I am not prepared to take a position that would prematurely end the discussions between Keswick and the community. To be clear, I am not willing to introduce, nor would I support, any

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legislation at this point, including a Planned Unit Development (PUD), that would allow the Keswick project in its current form to move forward; however, I do not believe that it is in the public's interest to take the position that a PUD is tantamount to rezoning a property. Indeed, it is my view that PUDs are one of the most effective tools that communities have, short of purchasing the development sites, to impose their vision and values (including preservation of green space) on real estate developments within their boundaries. In my experience, PUDs often can help achieve design and site plan solutions for sites with special environmental characteristics, such as the BCC site.

My opinion is that the Keswick proposal deserves more constructive discussion between the developers and the community to determine whether compromise is possible. I'd like to see what progress can be made by March 15, 2009. Ultimately, mine is just one voice in a process. I applaud you and the Roland Park Civic League leadership for making your voice known to Keswick, Baltimore Country Club and other elected officials. Thank you for your commitment to Roland Park and Baltimore City.

Sincerely,



Sheila Dixon
Mayor
Baltimore City

SD:ABF

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