



July 9, 2009

BY FACSIMILE - 215-686-1934
The Honorable Curtis Jones, Jr.
City Councilman, District 4
City Council, Room 404
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Re: Delaware Valley High School

Dear Councilman Jones,

The East Falls Development Corporation has been working, through its entire history since 1996, to redevelop the Riverfront Business District as an attractive location for businesses, residents, and visitors. We have done extensive planning, including a Riverfront Master Plan and a streetscape plan, East Falls Reconnects to the River, that propose \$10M in improvements.

Recently, in response to information that the Delaware Valley High School might locate in the Riverfront Business District on the 4300 block of Ridge Avenue, the Board of Directors undertook an examination of the planned project and its impact on the District. They examined the proposed use in the context of future development.

It is the opinion of the EFDC that the proposed school in this location is not appropriate and should be located elsewhere. This is for several reasons:

1. School children in the business district are detrimental. In business districts, experience has shown that high schoolers leaving school tend to disrupt business operations, interfere with passage of customers, and negatively affect the experience of shoppers and visitors.
2. A school is not the right use. The Riverfront Master Plan calls for the area to be developed to its highest and best use - this critical link needs to be an active retail area, such as a food market.
3. A school may cause the Rivage Development to fail. The developer of the Rivage, David Stubbs, has consulted experts to understand how this project (East Village) will be impacted by a school directly adjacent to it. He leads a team selected by the neighborhood and RDA to buy the City-owned property and develop the site into a \$52M mixed use project. Both the retail and

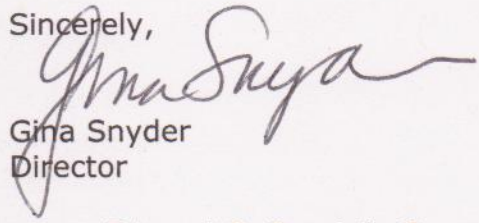
residential consultants have the opinion that the development will lose marketability. As a result, this project is threatened and years of planning may be wasted.

4. This parcel will be inactive during business hours. A school that is open only during a limited number of daytime hours creates an inactive zone in the afternoon and evening.

This decision was taken by the Board because of its serious concern about the impact of such a substantial change in the Riverfront District and the resulting effect. Future plans for the District will be scuttled for years if a school is located in this prime location.

We thank you for the attention you are giving this matter, the numerous meetings, and the responsiveness to the issues being raised. We will actively work with you, the property owner Mark Sherman, and DVHS to find a suitable location for the school and an appropriate reuse of this property compatible with the years of planning and investment.

Sincerely,



Gina Snyder
Director

cc: Edward G. Rendell, Governor
Michael A. Nutter, Mayor
Arlen Specter, U.S. Senator
Chaka Fattah, U.S. Representative
Vincent Hughes, State Senator
Kathy Manderino, State Representative
Jewel Williams, State Representative
School Reform Commission Chairman Robert Archie
School District Superintendent Arlene Ackerman
Teresa Gillen, Esquire, RDA
Alan Greenberger, Planning Commission
Mark Sherman, Sherman Properties
David Shulick, Esq., DVHS
David Stubbs, East Village