



Uptown Economic Development Corporation
Small Business Development Center

January 19, 2006

The Honorable Dick Shellenberger
Chairman
Lancaster County Commissioners
County of Lancaster
50 N. Duke St.
Lancaster, PA 17608-3480

Re: Lancaster Convention Center & Marriott Hotel Project

Dear Commissioner Shellenberger:

As you know, we have been closely following the subject project's developments. We remain extremely alarmed with its legally flawed M/WBE plan and lack of developmental services. Furthermore, we have also expressed our concern with the planners' lack of a request, in the Act 23 application, to the Commonwealth's Department of Community and Economic Development, for community development funds.

Recent revelations surrounding the absence of an actual feasibility study have only added to our anxiety. We applaud the efforts Mayor Rick Gray and you are making to address this glaring due diligence omission. However, total reliance on Price Waterhouse Coopers to review its earlier reports will not instill the project with the public confidence it needs. What is required immediately is an independent peer assessment.

Enclosed is a proposal we recently received from ZHA Executive Vice President Andrew J. Murray II, P.E. As we understand it, ZHA's \$39,500 quote should be within your budget perimeters. We recommend its acceptance.

Having spoken with, among others, both Mayor Gray and you, as well as with members of our task force, we believe Mr. Murray has an adequate understanding of the project's challenges. He has assembled a team with superior credentials to provide advice on the subject project's many facets. More importantly, ZHA, the owner's representative for the Orlando Convention Center, has no vested interest in this deal.

Cobbie Burns, President

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Finally, as the enclosed Forbes article might suggest, we have no tolerance for the threaten erosion of vital human service due to a failure to substantiate financial projections. Nor are we pleased with the public's apparent disproportionate risk in this venture. Its presumed Mayor Gray and you appreciate our position that, absent clear proof that the benefits truly warrant the risk, the necessary environment for a successful project will not exist. May we hear from you shortly relative to the disposition of this recommendation?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Forbes', written over the word 'Sincerely'.

Rev. Roland P. Forbes
Chairman
M/WBE Task Force
Uptown Economic Development Corporation

cc: M/WBE Task Force
Lancaster County Commissioners
Hon. Rick Gray
Lancaster City Council
Redevelopment Authority – City of Lancaster
David Hixson
PSP
LCCCA Board
LCCCA M/WBE Advisory Commission

Cobbie Burns, President

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