



October 2, 2011

Ash Street Property Owners Group (APOG)
c/o Ms. Wendy J. Harring
1340 Ash Street
Denver, Colorado 80220

Re: Zoning Application – 4040 E 14th Avenue/ Gove Middle School and
1325 Colorado Boulevard

Dear Ash Street Neighbors:

Thank you for spending so much time with us over the last several months as we work through the rezoning process of the Gove School Property. We are responding to the comments that APOG shared with National Jewish Health (NJH) in your letter dated August 25, 2011 and your subsequent e-mails. In each case we have made every effort to respect and accommodate your wishes, or explained why we would not be able to do so and continue our mission at NJH in our current location.

For nearly 112 years at its present site, NJH has done its very best to be a responsive, thoughtful and cooperative neighbor. In that spirit NJH has conducted and attended more than 22 meetings of various neighborhood groups since April, 2011 including the Bellevue-Hale Neighborhood Association, Congress Park Neighbors, Capitol Hill United Neighbors, Colorado Boulevard Health Care District, and 5 meetings with APOG. During those meetings we reviewed in detail the characteristics and requirements of the current and proposed zoning code and listened and responded to concerns and comments from the attendees.

As mentioned in your letter, our long-term site development plans will require capital fundraising in addition to other support. Because of this need to raise capital and the fact the health facility's site design is a lengthy, complex, iterative and costly undertaking, we will not be able to provide final site planning detail before the scheduled November 14, 2011 City Council meeting. We stated this publically in a Colorado Boulevard District Healthcare Meeting earlier this year, as well as in subsequent meetings with APOG. That having been said, we have started to define conceptual interim site use plans for the Gove property. We shared these with APOG at our August 31, 2011 meeting.

Many of the concerns and requests that are stated in APOG's letters of June 12, 2011, August 25, 2011 and subsequent e-mails are concerns focused on specific site planning issues and not zoning

issues. To help clarify the process going forward we would like to identify some specific areas in which we are collaborating with APOG and being responsive to your ideas for the currently abandoned Gove building and declining site. As the answers below illustrate, our difficulty lies in the uncertainty of the ultimate regulatory and functionality requirements of the site and the reluctance to agree to variables we cannot control at this time. However, I hope our history and the sincerity and candor of our previous and ongoing communications and collaboration assuage some of your concerns.

Maintenance of current landscaping and extension of green areas and setbacks – Pending interim and final redevelopment of the property, NJH is committed to maintaining the grass, trees and shrubs on the property in their current condition. We will strive to maintain as many viable existing trees and shrubs as interim and final site plans permit. The interim parking concept design we shared with APOG incorporates a generous setback from Ash Street that is at least 30 percent greater than required by code. This generous buffer will incorporate trees, other landscaping features, and landscaped water quality and detention facilities along the Ash Street interface.

Building density along Colorado Boulevard and design compatibility with the adjacent neighborhood – We have given serious consideration to the comments we received from the Bellevue-Hale Neighborhood Association and the Ash Street neighbors regarding the location of building density away from the single family residential properties, and thus we agree with the site design concept of placing the core of our long-term site building development along the Colorado Boulevard side of the site. Building development on the East side of the Gove property will respect its neighborhood boundaries as required by the proposed code. While it is unrealistic to promise that we can provide building design “compatible” with adjacent single family homes and that will not interfere or alter the residential scale and ambience of Ash Street while designing medical facilities, we are committed to designing structures that utilize materials and design elements that compliment the surrounding neighborhood with regard to color, texture and type of materials.

APOG desires that the average height of any structures developed within the CMP- H2 Zone (fronting Ash Street) be limited to no more than the average height of the homes on the east side of Ash Street. We cannot agree to this development restriction. We have agreed that the core density of our development will be concentrated in the CMP-H zone area. We will honor the generous setbacks we have illustrated in our interim concept design for parking on the Gove property, the building development restrictions set forth in the CMP-H2 zone area, and the other height and bulk plane requirement of the CMP-H2 zone. Additionally, the conceptual interim land use plan described below reflects our commitment to begin the development in accordance with our planning and discussions with APOG. We are constructing surface parking in front of Ash Street directly in correlation with our numerous discussions with our neighbors.

Interim land use plan – It is our intent to use the Gove property on an interim basis for surface parking to accommodate our employees, visitors and guests. We shared the concept design of this interim plan with APOG and will be submitting that concept design to the City for review this week. The plan incorporates all zoning required aesthetically-pleasing buffers and landscaping along the entire length of Ash Street and will provide screening for vehicles as required by code. In addition to the city requirements, and in support of the discourse with APOG, a landscaped setback that

parallels the Ash Street frontage and contains more than 30 percent more area than required has been incorporated into the interim parking plan concept. This plan, which also shows a spacious storm water quality and detention pond surrounded by landscaping, was previously shared with APOG.

Future Site Development - NJH will conduct both sun/shade and traffic studies related to the development of the Gove property. APOG has requested “that NJH commits to the City and us (APOG) to continue working in good faith with APOG and the Bellevue-Hale Neighborhood Association to satisfactorily address APOG concerns and meet our mutual objectives, in particular that redevelopment will not interfere with or alter the residential scale and ambience of Ash Street.” NJH has consistently stated, and demonstrated in its interactions with its neighbors through this rezoning process, our willingness to act in good faith to inform and seek input from the surrounding neighbors in the development of the Gove property. Since any development on the Gove site from its current condition is likely to alter character of the interface with the Ash Street and other neighbors, we cannot guarantee there will be no impact. We also cannot guarantee that we can “satisfactorily address” APOG’s concerns since, in the end, NJH must make its best informed decisions regarding ultimate development of the property and there will inevitably be issues upon which we will not reach consensus.

Ash Street access to property – During interim use of the Gove property for surface parking, it is our intent, City engineering, life-safety and other zoning requirement permitting, to request parking traffic access to and from 13th and 14th Avenues and not utilize the existing Ash Street access point. Pending the completion of the full site development design plan, we feel that the option to potentially utilize an access point along Ash Street must be kept open. Prematurely agreeing to forfeit an Ash Street access point at this time may be incompatible with final life-safety and other permitting requirements and may have unintended traffic consequences for the Ash Street owners and surrounding neighborhoods.

Retaining the Denver Urban Gardens (DUG) access - on our Harrison Street lot. We have discussed with DUG’s leadership the possibility of relocating the existing garden to another location on the Harrison Street property if needed in the course of future site development changes. It is not our intention to move the DUG garden to the Gove property.

Emergency Vehicles Without attempting to speculate on future site design and planning details which will not be developed for some time, it is our intent to construct facilities on our properties in support of our patient care, research and teaching mission in compliance with City and County of Denver Code requirements which may include a hospital. Hospitals are required by State regulations to have an emergency room and would accommodate emergency vehicle (ambulance) transport of patients to and from the hospital. Therefore, per State regulations, we cannot agree to your request that we refrain from incorporating access for ambulance traffic on the Gove property.

As we have demonstrated over our long history on our current 17.5 acre site, we pay attention to, and respect, our stewardship obligations to the surrounding neighborhoods and look forward to continuing to work with the Colorado Boulevard Healthcare District and Bellevue-Hale Neighborhood Association and APOG through both interim and final site plan design. Thank you for your continued collaboration on this important project.

Sincerely,

Ron Berge
EVP and COO
National Jewish Health
berger@njhealth.org
(303) 398-1023

C: Jeanne Robb, Councilwoman, District 10
Mary Beth Susman, Councilwoman, District 5
Robin Kniech, Councilwoman, Member At Large
Deborah Ortega, Councilwoman, Member At Large
Mary Nell Wolff – Chair, Colorado Boulevard Healthcare District
David Youngstrom, President, Bellevue-Hale Neighborhood Association
Chris Gleissner, Senior City Planner, City and County of Denver