

# The Washington Times

## Satellite dish falls; housing will rise

By Tom Ramstack

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Published March 22, 2007

---

Developers and D.C. Mayor Adrian M. Fenty applauded as a backhoe ripped down a large satellite dish at 14th Street and Florida Avenue Northwest yesterday, marking the end of the Comcast satellite-dish farm that has occupied the northeast corner of the intersection for 20 years.

A new apartment building will rise on the site, which is at the north end of the U Street corridor.

"I think this is the District of Columbia moving forward," Mr. Fenty said in a ceremony before demolition started.

Real estate developer Level 2 Development plans to build a 190,000-square-foot apartment building at the site of the satellite-dish farm called View 14 with slanted bay windows that look toward the U.S. Capitol and the Washington Monument. The \$80 million project is scheduled for completion in early 2009.

It is designed with 185 apartments. Studios would rent for as little as \$1,200 per month. One-bedroom apartments are planned to rent for an estimated \$2,200 per month. Level 2 said it would open 34,000 square feet of retail space on the first floor of the nine-story building.

The developer reached an agreement with Comcast to put a satellite dish on the building out of view from street level.

"That make a lot more sense," said Mr. Fenty, who called the satellite dishes "ugly."

The satellite-dish farm had six dishes on it and one large tower antenna that were used to receive signals for satellite-television transmissions. They are just scrap metal now.

Before demolition could begin, the developers were forced to wrangle a deal with Comcast, the District's planning office and Ward 1 Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1B that took two years.

It included a "community benefits package" with environmentally friendly features for the apartment building, such as a "green" roof with vegetation growing on it, said David Franco, Level 2 principal.

Level 2 also agreed to make a \$1 million contribution to the Sankofa Tenants Association, a Ward 1 neighborhood tenants association. The money will help 48 low-income households renovate their building at 1430 Belmont St. NW as an affordable housing cooperative one block from View 14.

Only two blocks away, another housing complex, called Union Row, is being built. While up and down nearby U Street new restaurants, entertainment spots and stores are opening. Until about four years ago, the corridor was known more commonly for auto-repair shops and vacant lots.

"A lot of our vacant land is being reclaimed," said Philip C. Spalding, an Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1B commissioner. The new apartments would contribute to the "enlivened streetscape," he said.