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As a resident of Ward 4 that lives just a few blocks from the proposed project, I'm writing to express my support for the application that Rooney Properties has submitted (BZA case number 19099) as part of its redevelopment plans for 3701 New Hampshire Avenue NW. The corner of New Hampshire Ave and Rock Creek Church Road is a prominent corner located directly across the street from the Metro entrance and the proposed building is not only consistent with the site's current zoning, but is the kind of development that the neighborhood and the City should be encouraging around the Metro station and along Georgia Ave.

While many pockets of Petworth have seen vibrant redevelopment in recent years, this corner has remained severely underutilized in its current condition. The existing building is dilapidated and was largely vacant when Rooney Properties acquired it. The restaurant in the building directly on the corner has a patio that can't be used and the kitchen area (including cooking vents) fronts the sidewalk area adjacent to the building, ensuring that that large public area is used primarily for loitering. And with the restaurant's trash area located on the sidewalk on Rock Creek Church Rd, that section of the street essentially serves as an alley that attracts rats and graffiti.

The proposed project will not only bring much needed housing supply (including three Affordable Dwelling Units) to a neighborhood where housing costs have been rising rapidly, but it will finally deliver the kind of retail space that the corner desperately needs. While some in the community have expressed concerns about the project's lack of parking, the developer has proposed a comprehensive list of measures to help mitigate traffic and parking concerns. Many newer residents around the Metro are moving here precisely because they don't have cars and want to be in a location where they have access to ample public transportation options. In addition, the developer has shown that it's simply not physically possible to provide parking at this site given its small size and unique shape.

Everyone who lives in the City, not only in Petworth, has to deal with congestion and owning a car comes with a cost. But the point of having a Metro, extensive bus routes, Capital BikeShare, etc, is to provide DC residents with inexpensive, convenient alternatives to driving. Concerns about parking should not outweigh the City's need for smart growth, thoughtful development, and an increased housing supply, at a time when affordability is most residents' primary concern.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

