

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Jen Zhorne Renner <jenzhorne@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 11, 2018 9:49 PM
To: DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: Application for 3015 4th St. NE (BZA Case 19377: The Boundary Companies and The Missionary Society)

Good evening,

I am writing to you regarding the aforementioned case to express my opposition to this development. As a resident of Chancellor's Row and a parent of a Lee Montessori student, I have grave concerns that are shared by stakeholders in both communities.

That wonderful open green space with mature shade trees and great sledding hills has been a central point of the Brookland/Edgewood community for many years. The area is used constantly by families, dog walkers, sun bathers, children taking their first steps, and school children needing more space to run and play and conduct nature walks. It is not used only by CR residents and Lee/WLA schools, but by people from the larger Brookland/Edgewood community. To lose nearly all of this green space is not an improvement, but a detriment to how our community functions in our free time. This green space facilitates regular conversations with our neighbors and wonderful children interactions and play, deepening our sense of community and camaraderie.

Consideration must be given to ALL of the development that is occurring in Brookland/Edgewood, and ways that we can preserve the green space for our collective health and sanity. I ask that this application be considered along with the planned Madison Homes Inc. Development to the South of the Holy Redeemer College, the Monroe Street Market Developments, and the MacMillan development. Although the ANC representatives seem to think we should be "satisfied" with the CR green space, I ask that we all not be so complacent and narrow minded in our thinking. The most compelling reason I moved into my home was of the beautiful green space just behind my home, allowing for a gorgeous view of mature trees and immediate open space for my children to explore. If those houses are built as proposed, my view will be fully blocked by houses and green space for my kids and community interactions will be reduced to a tiny stamp of land with a steep grade, making it impossible to throw or kick a ball around. This viewshed loss will result in a marked decrease of my property value and that of my immediate neighbors. The increased density of houses will surely decreased property values in all CR homes.

As noted in the strategic **The Comprehensive Plan for the National Capitol**, (<https://www.ncpc.gov/complan/>) to accommodate SMART growth and development of DC, I ask that you consider the bigger picture. I have cited below some of the relevant passages (and bolded select phrases). **According to the District's own strategic plan, the Paulist and Holy Redeemer properties (institutional properties) should be prioritized for parkland.** There is no reason that this application has even gotten this far.

Planning and Development Priorities

*f. Although seminaries, cemeteries, and institutions provide much greenery, and the community is ringed by the National Arboretum, the Anacostia River, and the Fort Circle Parks, **much of Upper Northeast is starved for public parkland. More active recreational areas, playgrounds, athletic fields, and traditional neighborhood parks are needed.** Better connections to the Arboretum and Anacostia River are needed. **There are also concerns that the large institutional open spaces—particularly the great lawns and wooded glades of the area's religious orders—may someday be lost to development. These properties are important to the health of the community and should be considered as opportunities for new neighborhood and community parks (as well as housing) if they become available. They are the "lungs" of the neighborhood.***

Policy UNE-1.1.1: Neighborhood Conservation Protect and enhance the stable neighborhoods of Upper Northeast, such as Michigan Park, North Michigan Park, University Heights, Woodridge, Brookland, Queens Chapel, South Central, Lamond Riggs, and Arboretum. The residential character of these areas shall be conserved, and **places of historic significance, gateways, parks, and special places shall be enhanced.** 2408.2

Policy UNE-1.2.7: Institutional Open Space Recognize the particular importance of institutional open space to the character of Upper Northeast, particularly in and around Brookland and Woodridge. **In the event that large institutional uses are redeveloped in the future, pursue opportunities to dedicate substantial areas as new neighborhood parks and open spaces.** Connections between Upper Northeast open spaces and the network of open space between McMillan Reservoir and Fort Totten also should be pursued. 2409.7
Conserving and Enhancing Community Resources 2409

Policy UNE-1.2.8: Environmental Quality Improve environmental quality in Upper Northeast, with particular attention given to the reduction of emissions and particulates from trucks and industrial uses in the area. 2409.8

Action UNE-1.2.A: Parkland Acquisition Address the shortage of parkland in the Planning Area, placing a priority on the areas with the most severe deficiencies. According to the 2006 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, these areas include Edgewood, Ivy City, the Carver/Langston area, and the southwest part of Brookland. 2409.9

Although I acknowledge living in a sizable development, many presume that when EYA got approval for the density of CR, it was predicated on the assumption that the rest of the Paulist property would NOT be densely developed (or at all).

Can you clarify if the Zoning Commission approved the original Chancellor's Row PUD based on the current green space remaining vacant?

Further, can you enlighten me as to why the developer is using Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) process instead of Planned Unit Development (PUD) process?

Other specific issues that have yet to be resolved by the developer include:

1. Problems with storm water runoff, localized flooding, and liability to Chancellor's Row owners -- the houses are planned on the CR drainage ditch which floods every time it rains. It is not desirable property, which is why it was not considered with the initial EYA purchase for the CR development. As the developer is proposing to use underground infiltration chambers and install them under their primary roadway leading down to 4th, this road will obviously need to be built and repaired, and the new development's primary point of egress for both the residences and schools will be closed off and they will likely direct traffic through CR's private roads
2. Clear traffic pattern for pedestrian and vehicular access to Lee Montessori and Washington Leadership Academy, particularly during years of construction, that does not include CR's privately maintained streets or smaller neighboring streets
3. Provide clear traffic study that accommodates the schools at full capacity (approximately 800 students and 100+ staff), the new residents, and existing traffic challenges (i.e., the city still hasn't allowed for a curb cut to accommodate school traffic, the high volume of traffic on 4th St)
4. Hours of construction, like early mornings, late nights, and weekends, impacting the quality of life for years
5. "Pre-loading" of construction sites where vehicles arrive very early in the morning
6. Preservation of existing mature trees that are planned to keep (e.g., their survival when their root beds are disturbed by construction)
7. Managing dust, dirt, and debris from construction in our streets and on our homes -- particularly for those children such as mine who are allergic to dust and won't be able to play outside for years during the construction

• If the developer should come to amenable conclusions on these areas, what assurances will we have from the city that they have the resources to monitor their adherence to the agreements?

The most problematic issues I have are from the perspective of a Lee Montessori parent. I'm deeply troubled that the developer is not asking the schools what they need to in order to function effectively, let alone support the growth and development of our children. I have watched the developer's plans change over the years to accommodate CR and other requests, resulting in fewer and fewer parking spaces for the schools and less space to accommodate drop off and pickup. The schools are only at approximately half of their planned capacity, and traffic during these peak times is challenging in the currently allotted space. If the proposed changes go into affect, they will have far reaching effects on the schools and every parent and child coming and going every day.

From a school perspective, the developer has yet to:

- Establish clear construction management plan the does not impact school traffic
- Establish a plan to managing dust, dirt, and debris from construction in the school and surrounds -- particularly for those children such as mine who are allergic to dust and won't be able to play outside at recess for years
- Designate adequate playing space for school children (beyond the meagre playgrounds)--families regularly gather in the current green space after school for impromptu play dates, the school hosts social events in that space, and the children conduct "nature hikes" during school hours in this space
- Plan to lessen the environmental and noise pollution on the young school children trying to play outside during the development process.
- Provide adequate parking for the schools at their full planned capacity (there are approximately 45 cars parking at St. Paul's each day, so at least 90 spots should be available)
- Provide adequate curb space to accommodate drop-off and pickup of young children during peak periods (i.e., no reduction in the current lane and curb space)
- Conduct a traffic study and recommendations to ensure no detriment to the approximately 90% of Lee families that use cars for pickup and drop-off, at their planned capacity.
 - Nearly all families drop off from 8:30-8:45am and 50% picking up at 3:45pm.
 - Lee currently has 175 students and will grow to 300
 - Washington Leadership Academy is at only half of its capacity
 - Current traffic and lights on 4th causes delays during peak times

I ask that you review the application from a holistic point of view, considering the DC strategic plan, the surrounding developments, the impacts to the broader Brookland/Edgewood community, and Lee and WLA students and families. More green space needs to be available for community use, and this development should be shut-down or at least markedly reduced in scale.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Jennifer Renner

511 Regent PL NE, Washington, DC 20017

jenzhorne@gmail.com

202-669-1749