

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Frank Hurst <frankphurst@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2017 7:38 AM
To: DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ); all@anc3c.org; Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ); jenn.cevasco@dc.gov; ATD DCOZ
Subject: BZA Application No. 19450.

Dear Members of the Board of Zoning Adjustment:

I am writing to express my opposition to exception and variances which are pursued in the DC Government's current plan to build a homeless shelter inside the perimeter of the 2nd District Police Station on Idaho Avenue, NW (Ward 3C).

One of the proposed variances is to allow two primary buildings on a single lot. The original building is the 2nd district police station. I don't think it sends a positive and welcoming message to people who have fallen on hard times to be housed within the perimeter of the police station. I am appalled that this is even a consideration, much less the preferred option. Placing 50 families in the parking lot of a police station is hardly a "dignified" solution as described in the Design Guidelines for DC General Replacement Units. I hope that you really think about this before making a determination as this issue is much greater than just placing 2 structures within a single lot.

Another variance is to nearly double the maximum allowed height of 40 feet (3 stories). The proposed structure is planned to be 72 feet tall and 6 stories. I cant imagine any circumstances where a near doubling of building height would be appropriate, and I don't think that this is "compatible with the surrounding community" as described in the Design Guidelines. I very much appreciate the low-rise nature of the community, and I believe that a 6 story concrete building in this location would compromise the neighborhood aesthetics.

Additionally, the plan appears rushed, which I believe is a disservice to both the transitional families which are to be housed there as well as members of the surrounding community. I would note that the parking plan has not been finalized mere weeks before the BZA meeting. I am not sure how there can be a productive meeting if major aspects of the plan are still a "moving target." Further evidence of inadequate planning is the traffic study, which can be found in Exhibit 118. The traffic study notes that the "site is located on an improved lot bounded by Delaware Avenue to the west, H street to the north, a vacant commercial building to the east, and I street to the south." This document appears to be describing a different site, and it is unclear what other information in the traffic study may not be accurate.

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.19450
EXHIBIT NO.143

This project is a major undertaking that will have a lasting impact on the lives of the 50 families as well as the members of the surrounding community. Both of these stakeholder groups deserve due diligence in terms of the thought and planning that goes into this project. As stated in the Design Plan, I believe that the solution should be "dignified" and "compatible with the surrounding community." As currently proposed, I do not believe that either of these criteria are met.

Of note, many of the letters of support for the variances are from individuals who live several miles away. While their support of solutions for homelessness is admirable, I would encourage the board to place greater emphasis on letters generated from members of the immediate surrounding community, as they are the ones most directly affected by the zoning variances.

Our transitional families deserve better. Again, I strongly oppose the proposed special exception and variances to current zoning laws.

Sincerely,

Frank Hurst
McLean Gardens Condo Owner