

3211 Idaho Ave NW
Washington, DC 20016

2-7-2017

To: DC Zoning Board
Fm: William Wright 
Subj: Oppose DC Government's Request for Zoning Changes 3320 Idaho Ave

I would like to oppose the request for zoning changes so that a six-story building can be built at the Idaho Ave police station (3320 Idaho Ave NW). I am among those who support closing DC general and support having smaller temporary homeless shelters throughout the city. My wife and I would accept and support the housing of homeless mothers and young children in an existing apartment building (even closer to us than the police department lot is). But we oppose forcing an oversized, unsightly, costly new building and parking deck next to the 2D police station.

When I spoke to senior staff for Council Chairman Mendelson back in May 2016, I asked if the District's plan to build smaller shelters was based on best practices in other parts of the country. The answer was no. She said that DC was doing something new and innovative.

I'm all for trying something new and innovative that helps the underserved, but would like to see it in an existing building. The size of this project keeps growing, and the disruption will be enormous. We have already tolerated big changes with the Cathedral Commons project.

It is not proper for the District to move forward with another project of this size that makes such negative changes to the neighborhood.

The homeless problem in the District is complex; it is not wise for the District to rush into spending enormous amounts of money on an experiment that might not work. The project being discussed now is much larger than the one that was described in a public meeting just before the Council (hastily) voted on this legislation last May. There was little chance for community input then.

Also I would like to say this: I tried to attend the zoning board hearing recently held at the 2D police station (Tue, Jan 31, 2017). So many people from outside the neighborhood had flooded in that I could not get into the hearing room. At least the zoning board should postpone any decision so that there can be proper input from those who live in this area. The council rushed into this project without proper community input. It is improper to force a tall, out-of-place building and oversized parking lot onto the lot of a working police station and fueling station.

Thank you for opposing the zoning changes requests at 3320 Idaho Ave NW.