

## **Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)**

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**From:** Helen LaCroix <helenhoguet@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 27, 2017 8:44 PM  
**To:** DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)  
**Subject:** Re: BZA Application No. 19452, 1700 Rhode Island Avenue NE

Good evening Zoning Board,

I write you today as a proud resident of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 5B to urge you to please allow the District of Columbia to move forward with its plan to build a homeless shelter at 1700 Rhode Island Ave NE. Please grant the City the necessary exceptions and variances to allow this important project to go forward.

I understand that many objections have been raised by some vocal neighbors about the proposed location of the shelter, the design, the number of parking spaces, etc. I also understand that homelessness has spiked in recent years in our city and that DC General is no longer an adequate or safe place for our fellow citizens who happen to be homeless. The decision to construct a series of smaller, family-oriented shelters is well-informed by research and practice focused on improving living conditions and well-being for homeless people.

In these charged political times, NIMBY-ism is an ugly sentiment. If Rhode Island Avenue, with its ample public transportation, access to schools, beautiful parks, and a library isn't a perfect location for a homeless shelter, then what is? If this bustling commercial corridor is good enough for homebuyers willing to pay close to \$1m for a home, why isn't it good enough for homeless families too? Now more than ever, we must make an effort to embrace each other, especially those who are different from us. It is no longer acceptable to say, "I don't want a homeless person for a neighbor."

The argument in favor of building a shelter, but just not at this particular site, holds no water. Homeless men, women, and children are waiting *\*now\** for shelter. Why should they suffer while those of us who have homes argue over the best place for them to be housed? Rhode Island Avenue is, in my view, as good a place as any in Ward 5 for this important facility.

Please take into consideration the heartfelt wishes of many neighbors in ANC 5B and across 5B who want this shelter to be built. Whether you are a young dual-income couple earning \$150k a year or a young homeless mother raising young children on your own, Rhode Island Avenue is a great place to be.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,  
Helen LaCroix 2927 10th St. NE  
Washington DC 20017  
(202)635-6364