

## Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

---

**From:** Rebecca Harris <reb.c.harris@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 27, 2017 9:36 PM  
**To:** DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)  
**Subject:** Letter Regarding 19452, 1700 Rhode Island Avenue NE

To Whom it May Concern,

As a resident of Ward 5, I strongly support the establishment of a family shelter at 1700 Rhode Island Ave NE. I could write a response to each and every potential criticism of the plan--the building is too high, it's too close to other service providers, etc.--but I choose not to. I will not respond directly to these criticisms because I believe that it is fundamentally wrong to weigh concerns about neighborhood aesthetics and "[the quiet enjoyment of our domiciles](#)" against the concerns of chronically homeless families, as though they were in any way comparable. We have a moral imperative to help our neighbors in need.

Show me a neighborhood where the creation of a shelter would involve *no* construction or architectural changes, cause *no* disruption to any local institutions, and require *no* flexibility among neighborhood residents. Show me a neighborhood like that, and I will agree that the shelter should go there instead. But I contend that these neighborhoods don't exist. And if they do, they certainly don't have room for every homeless person in the metro DC area. Opponents of the shelter at 1700 Rhode Island Ave. NE suggest that homeless families be sent to a distant fantasy land with infinite capacity and resources because they don't want to address these families' very real, immediate needs.

Someone has to welcome these families, which have already suffered enough. I would be proud to live in a ward that welcomes everyone, no matter the color of their skin, their annual income, or what trauma they have experienced in the past. Please approve the proposal for a shelter at 1700 Rhode Island Ave NE.

Best,

Rebecca Harris

Ward 5 Resident

3126 10th St. NE  
Washington, DC 20017