

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: M. McLaughlin <margieindc@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 2:29 PM
To: DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: Concerns Regarding the 01 March Vote on Variances for Proposed Ward 3 Homeless Shelter

To Whom It May Concern:

On 01 March the Board of Zoning and Adjustments (BZA) will be voting on the city's request for zoning exceptions for the construction of a 50-apartment homeless shelter and separate three-story parking garage in a heavily congested area of Ward 3. This shelter will be located in the parking lot of the 2nd District Police Station at Idaho and Newark Streets. With the recent addition of Cathedral Commons, the area now has more than its share of traffic, pedestrians and noise. While I support the proposed shelter, I strongly disagree with its size. I ask that the BZA not approve the variances requested by the City Council, in order that they comply with the long-standing zoning ordinances now in place.

A homeless shelter in Ward 3 will positively add to the diversity of the neighborhood. The shelter that the city is proposing, however, is too large in scale for the three-story six-unit condo buildings and single family homes now in place. A smaller structure would provide more green space for the shelter's residents while maintaining balance with the current surroundings.

In fact in April of 2016, then-Department of General Services Director Christopher Weaver also believed the site was not suitable for a shelter due to a lack of green space. The City Council nonetheless voted for this site only a month later while increasing the number of apartments they had originally proposed. The current plan now calls for a six-story 50-unit building and separate three-story parking garage to be built on a negligible plot land that will make it incompatible with the local community due to the overreaching size of both structures.

While I believe the city has made the right choice to close DC General and provide smaller, more intimate shelters for its residents, the size and scope of the Ward 3 shelter conflicts with current zoning laws and needs to be downsized. I respectfully ask that BZA consider these points when voting on the proposed variances on 01 March. Thank you.

Margaret M. McLaughlin
Ward 3