

February 26, 2017

Dear Members of the Board of Zoning Adjustments,

As a resident who lives within 200 feet, I oppose the poor design plans that have been proposed for 1700 Rhode Island Avenue NE by the DC Department of General Services. While I support the city's goal of ending homelessness in DC and the creation of a temporary family homeless shelter, I believe the city can do better with its design plans to both house the homeless and support the local neighborhood.

I urge you to uphold the zoning regulations for 1700 Rhode Island Avenue NE and deny the zoning special exceptions and variances requested by the DC Department of General Services in case 19452.

The current shelter plan for this site will meet shelter recommendations by sacrificing adequate play space for about 75 kids, sacrificing adequate parking for shelter residents and staff, sacrificing sunlight for neighboring residents, and sacrificing traffic flow by providing inadequate off-street delivery space.

I would personally lose my morning sunlight because this building would be so tall and out of proportion to the neighborhood. There is no building this size anywhere nearby. It doesn't fit in our neighborhood and will have a direct negative impact on me.

The city has denied local residents the opportunity to present superior alternatives. These other options which would work better for both the homeless families and the surrounding community have been denied consideration including: purchasing the adjacent lot to allow more adequate space without violating height requirements, creating a smaller shelter at the current site and choosing another site in close proximity to house the remaining families, or choosing a more appropriate site from the long list of alternate sites in Ward 5 that could better house such extensive program requirements.

The city's current plans are a disservice to the homeless families and the residents of this community. Please uphold the zoning regulations for this site, reject the city's requests, and promote more thoughtful planning by the city.

Sincerely,

Atim Aka
2920 17th St NE
Washington, DC 20018

