

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Joya Banerjee <joya.banerjee@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 25, 2024 3:08 PM
To: DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)
Cc: Imtiaz, Huma (SMD 5E04); Francisco Matiella; dcexp1@gmail.com; Scott Roberts
Subject: Letter of support for BZA 21151; 2324 North Capitol St. NW

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Dear Board of Zoning Adjustment,

I am writing to express my unequivocal support for the opening of a new restaurant, Indigo 2, at 2324 North Capitol St, NW, down the street from my home on Crispus Attucks Park.

When I heard of the possibility of this renowned DC restaurant opening here in Bloomingdale, a veritable food desert when it comes to good restaurants, I was thrilled. It felt as though our neighborhood had finally "made it" enough that a reputable business was willing to invest hundreds of thousands of dollars to revitalize a desolate stretch of North Capitol filled with run-down homes and empty buildings.

As an Indian-American, I was also delighted that there would finally be a good Indian restaurant nearby, particularly after the closure of the only [mediocre] local South Asian options, Glassey and Red Toque Kebab. What we have now in our neighborhood are almost exclusively American food options. What's more, Indigo is one of **only 2** good Indian restaurants in the entirety of Washington DC, and we should be HONORED that they would consider opening a second location in Bloomingdale.

Imagine my dismay when I learned that Indigo 2's opening is being threatened by racist NIMBYs who "don't want their house to smell like curry." Is this really who we are, in a metropolitan and ostensibly diverse city, in the year 2024?

A good restaurant can have a long-lasting, powerful, transformational effect on an up-and-coming neighborhood. Just look at the Red Hen and Big Bear Cafe as shining examples. These two establishments almost single-handedly put Bloomingdale on the map, attracting customers, then residents, then investors, then tourists. I am one such investor and homeowner, and I can say definitively that without decent dining and nightlife options, I would never have purchased two homes in Bloomingdale- the first at 115 Rhode Island Ave NW, and my current home at 46 V St NW.

Most critically, the cancellation of the North Capitol Deckover Project, which could have transformed the ugly, polluting gash through our community that is North Capitol St, may condemn the area to decades more of grim desolation and stagnation. I predict the forthcoming new residents of McMillan/ Reservoir will primarily use the 1st St NW side of the development, as does my family, because North Capitol is so dangerous, unsightly and unpleasant.

We have a real chance to turn this neighborhood around. Without the city having to spend a dime. I haven't heard one good reason to prevent Indigo 2 from opening, have you?

Thank you for taking action to do the right thing by us: your residents and constituents. Grant Indigo 2's application today.

Joya Banerjee
212-945-8071