

Written Testimony in Opposition For Board of Zoning Adjustment Comments. Case 21177

September 27, 2024

Dear Chairman Hill and Board Members,

My name is Claudia Kakareka and my husband and I reside at 475 K Street NW. I urge the Board of Zoning Adjustment to deny the special exception relief sought by the District of Columbia Department of General Services for the proposed temporary relocation of the Central Cell Block to 501 New York Ave NW. The construction of the Central Cell Block, necessitating special exception relief, will detrimentally, adversely, and significantly impact the neighboring properties in direct violation of the Zoning Regulations and Maps. The substantial increase in cells and detainees will lead to heightened traffic, noise, and security concerns, including, but not limited to:

- Disruptions from the facility's 24/7 operations due to six police forces transporting detainees to the facility.
- Noise pollution from potentially over eighty detainees and from increased activity at the building.
- Increased traffic from police, employees, vendors, etc., leading to congestion.
- Safety risks associated with the potential release of detainees into the community -most notably to the community organizations and business that cater to children. The facility's proximity to Bambini Child Care Center is causing great distress among parents and staff. The proposed cellblock is also just feet from residential property.

The proposed temporary relocation of the Central Cell Block to 501 New York Avenue, N.W., will have a direct, significant, and adverse effect on the residents, business owners, and community organizations nearby. This neighborhood has undergone transformation over decades from a state of neglect, characterized by parking lots and dilapidated houses, to a vibrant area with mixed-use residential developments.

It is for this reason we decided to invest in the neighborhood's future and purchase a condo here in 2018. I can say with certainty we would not have done so if a jail was present at the core of the community.

We are asking that this Project not be allowed to undo our progress and that DGS be directed to find a more appropriate and less impactful location.

Thank you for your consideration.

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