

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Stacy Meteer <stacymeteer@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 7, 2024 10:16 PM
To: DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)
Cc: Nigro, Rachelle (SMD 2G06)
Subject: Case 21177 District of Columbia Department of General Services

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Dear Chairman Hill and Board Members,

My name is Stacy Meteer. I am a D.C. resident living on Ridge Street in the Mount Vernon Triangle neighborhood--I've lived in this neighborhood since 2014. I am writing to adamantly oppose the conversion of 501 New York Avenue NW into a temporary home for the Department of Corrections Central Cell Block.

The most concerning issue to me is that my son goes to daycare at Bambini, which is located directly across the street. I do not feel comfortable having the city's Central Cell Block less than 50 feet away from the front door of a daycare center, especially since it seems more than likely that detainees will be released from the 501 New York Avenue location rather than from whichever court they appear at or their originating facility since that's been the case with the previous central cell block. Even if detainees are not released from the Central Cell Block, the additional traffic to and from the center will create more congestion for the already busy area. When the weather is nice, our son goes on two walks a day around the area, and this will just increase the traffic that he and his teachers encounter.

Additionally, I found the presenters requesting a special exception at the Thursday, July 11 ANC meeting to be woefully unprepared for the valid questions and concerns from the community. Even more worrying was the timeline they provided for the swing space, which, in my opinion, should not be considered temporary, especially considering the budget for the Daly Building renovations have not been approved.

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

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Stacy Meteer