

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Amy Kunert <akunert17@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 3, 2024 5:07 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 Amelia Kunert and I reside at 445 Ridge St NW. I am writing to you today to 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.

As a first-time home buyer, I purchased my home in June 2021 and was not privy to the knowledge that my home could be near the site of a jail because the city did not go through the proper approval process. They did not disclose it to the community and now my safety and biggest asset are at risk. I can't stress enough how much the cell block would negatively impact my life and financial circumstances. I feel led astray by city officials and would have not made the purchase had I known of their plans.

Additionally, 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 myself, my neighbors, 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.**

Additionally, the city has not been forthcoming in providing alternative sites, which should be their burden to provide since they did not go through the proper approval process. As a community member, I feel like we have been led astray by the city officials from the District of Columbia Department of General Services who are trying to drive this project forward by any means necessary.

Thank you for your consideration of this community matter.

Sincerely,
Amelia Kunert
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818.665.8445