

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser



Office of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice

August 20, 2024

Frederick Hill, Chairperson
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210-S
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Chairperson Hill,

Please accept this letter of support for the application of the District of Columbia Department of General Services in case number 21177 regarding the purposed move of the Central Cell Block (CCB) to 501 New York Avenue, NW.

Mayor Muriel Bowser and the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) have taken significant steps to combat the rise in crime that occurred within the District post the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of these efforts have proven successful as overall violent crime is down 35% as compared to this time last year. Once an individual is arrested, there is a coordinated effort by law enforcement personnel to process those individuals in a quick, efficient manner. The District and law enforcement personnel are mindful that all arrestees, are presumed innocent at arrest and no matter their status, are entitled to safe, secure and humane treatment while in District custody and awaiting court processing.

The current CCB is located at 300 Indiana Avenue, NW (The Daly Building). The Daly Building is currently in need of extensive renovations. To that end, nearly all the occupants of the building have been moved, with the exception of the CCB. The Daly Building as it currently stands is not an ideal location to house any District service, whether they are employees of the District or arrestees waiting for their initial court hearing. Additionally, the CCB at Daly Building deals consistently with plumbing, electrical, mechanical, and significant maintenance issues. The District has an urgent need to close the current CCB and temporarily move it to 501 New York Avenue, NW. Without this move, the District cannot begin efforts to upgrade and update the aging Daly Building.

The CCB plays an integral role in the functioning and processing of arrestees as they move through the criminal justice system. The CCB allows for arrestees to be held in a central location pending their initial court hearing. There are several significant benefits to the District having a location like the CCB. Placement at the CCB, allows those in custody to be moved to court in a quick and seamless manner. The CCB must be located with easy access to the courthouse and additionally there must be holding cells. Placing arrestees at the CCB, allows the District to provide meals for those waiting to go to court and also for those individuals to receive medication under the care of

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nursing staff. Also, placing people initially arrested at the CCB, which is managed by the DC Department of Corrections (DOC), ultimately frees up MPD officers to return to the community, which is another integral part of the District's efforts to combat crime.

The right thing to do for those accused of a crime and DOC employees, and others those supporting law enforcement efforts, is to allow CCB to temporarily move to 501 New York Avenue, NW. to ensure the facility offers better environmental conditions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lindsey Appiah". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lindsey Appiah
Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice