



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 6E
P.O. Box 2236, Washington, DC 20013

September 23, 2024

Frederick L. Hill
Chair
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 200S
Washington, DC 20001

Re: BZA Case 21177 – Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6E’s Statement in Opposition to Special Exception Relief for the Relocation of the Central Cell Block to 501 New York Avenue, NW

Dear Chairman Hill and Board Members,

On Tuesday, July 23, 2024, Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 6E conducted a virtual public meeting to consider the application for special exception relief requested by the Department of General Services for the temporary relocation of the Central Cell Block to 501 New York Avenue, NW. At this duly noticed meeting, with a quorum present (five out of nine commissioners required), ANC 6E voted to oppose the Special Exception Relief requested by the District of Columbia Department of General Services. The motion passed with six (6) yeas, two (2) nays, and zero (0) abstentions.

The Application Does Not Satisfy the Standard Set Forth in 11-X DCMR Section 901.2

11-X DCMR Section 901.2 states:

The [Board of Zoning Adjustment](#) is authorized under § 8 of the [Zoning Act](#), D.C. Official Code § 6-6 41.07(g)(2), to grant special exceptions, as provided in this title, where, in the judgment of the Board of Zoning Adjustment, the special exceptions:

- (a) Will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps;
- (b) Will not tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps; and
- (c) Will meet such special conditions as may be specified in this title.

The Application does not meet subsection (b). 501 New York Avenue, NW is located directly adjacent to the boundary of ANC 6E, making ANC 6E an “affected ANC.” Therefore, the Commission and its constituents have a significant vested interest in ensuring the full consideration of the negative impacts of the relocation of the Central Cell Block to the Mount Vernon Triangle neighborhood. The proposed relocation of the Central Cell Block to 501 New York Avenue, NW will directly, significantly and negatively impact the residents, business owners and community organizations in the surrounding vicinity.



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As set forth more fully below, there will be a significant increase in detainees on site, which will bring increased traffic and noise that will adversely affect adjacent residents and businesses.

Traffic Concerns:

- The introduction of the Central Cell Block will very likely significantly increase traffic at adjacent intersections, including 6th Street and New York Avenue, NW, where a pedestrian was recently killed.
- While the previous Traffic Management Station had a negligible effect on traffic, the Central Cell Block's impact is expected to be substantial. The projection of ninety-six (96) maximum trips seems conservative when only considering the 10-15 MPD vehicles transporting arrestees. This estimate does not account for the additional traffic from other law enforcement agencies such as Park Police, WMATA Police, Capitol Police and the Secret Service.
- The coordination of a multi-car operation for transporting detainees across the city raises practical concerns. With limited space available for vehicle staging—only one (1) car in the sallyport and four (4) in the parking lot—the question arises as to where additional vehicles will wait during detainee processing. This bottleneck could lead to further traffic complications.

Noise Concerns:

- Noise pollution poses a significant challenge, as the incessant hum of idling vehicles and the sounds associated with detainee processing threaten to disrupt the community. The residents who have lived here for decades are acutely conscious of the likelihood of heightened noise levels, which may include audible disturbances emanating from the holding cells.

Adverse Affect on Neighboring Property Values:

- Due to traffic and noise concerns raised above, as well as potential concerns about security, the relocation of the Central Cell Block to 501 New York Ave., NW, is likely to have a negative impact on neighboring property values. A new development including 500+ units is being planned directly across New York Ave. The relocation of the Central Cell Block could jeopardize the construction of that development, which would take away much needed new housing from the neighborhood during a national housing crisis.

Furthermore, the proposed temporary nature of this relocation does not mitigate the immediate and substantial harm it would pose to residents, business owners, and community organizations.



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The ANC's decision reflects a broader consensus within the community, emphasizing the need for the Board to reconsider the proposed plan. The residents and stakeholders of ANC 6E have dedicated years to cultivating a neighborhood that is both vibrant and welcoming. Introducing the Central Cell Block threatens to undermine these longstanding efforts.

Considering these concerns, ANC 6E urges the Board to consider the decision of ANC 6E and the community sentiment. ANC 6E hopes the Board will acknowledge the valid concerns raised and act in the best interest of the community it serves and deny the special exception relief needed to relocate the Central Cell Block to 501 New York Avenue, NW.

On behalf of the commission,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Hart".

Chris Hart
Chair, ANC 6E