

Anthony Hood, Chairman DC Zoning Commission

May 7, 2014

Subject: Testimony in Opposition to proposed McMillan Park PUD (Case # 13-14)

Dear Chairman Hood and the Office of Zoning:

It is a clear and irreversible mistake to proceed with the VMP plan. The design is not thoughtful about the incredible opportunities presented by the space, nor is it even remotely pleasing to the eye. The VMP plan is a wasted opportunity to enhance a historic and vibrant community in DC and represents an enormous waste of time and money. You must insist on a more thoughtful and meaningful development plan. Since VMP doesn't seem willing to do this, others should be allowed to develop competing visions for the park for public review.

I am a resident of the community surrounding McMillan Park, and I have hoped that this site would be developed in a way that makes it a source of pride in DC, rather than just another overdeveloped strip of DC.

I am also concerned about the negative impacts this development will bring:

- The size and scale of the development. The proposed plan is too massive and dense for this residential community and includes 13-story office buildings, which would dwarf the historic 2-3 story row houses surrounding McMillan Park and destroy its protected historic vistas, a priority of the National Capital Planning Commission.
- The dramatic increase in vehicle traffic. The applicant estimates that the proposed project would create at least 6,000 additional car trips to the McMillan Park area each day, which place an unbearable strain on our already congested streets in a neighborhood with many intersections that already receive failing grades from DDOT. This additional traffic would also increase noise and pollution, and make traveling more dangerous for people walking or on bicycles. The proposed plan fails to mitigate the gridlock traffic congestion that would result from the proposed project.
- The loss of parking spaces for community members living near McMillan Park.
- This proposed plan fails to take into account the Summary of Recommendations for Site Revitalization of McMillan Park (DC Office of Planning, February 2002), a city-led effort to identify community priorities for the site. This study identified many of the applicant's proposed uses for McMillan Park as unacceptable including hospital/medical facilities and high-rise office and residential buildings. The current VMP plan completely disregards key recommendations of the study:
- "A minimum of 50% (approximately 12.5 Acres) of the McMillan site should be revitalized as publicly accessible open space."

- “The remainder of the site should be developed with low and moderate intensity uses.”
- “Vistas from the site are significant and should be preserved in conjunction with development of public open space.”

This development plan is unacceptable for a Park that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Please do not vote to re-zone McMillan Park to permit high-rise buildings.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "LeighAnne Olsen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "L".

LeighAnne Olsen  
56 V Street NW