

Dear Chairman Hood and Commissioners:

I want to express my support for the Zoning Case No. 15-16, to transform an aging strip mall into a vibrant, mixed-use development that takes full advantage of access to Metro and the Metropolitan Branch Trail. As a resident of Ward 5, I'm excited by the potential for this project to increase trail use (making the trail safer) and give more DC residents the opportunity to live near Metro. This project has so many great features – new Capital Bikeshare stations, enhancements to the trail, increased access to the trail and to the Metro pedestrian bridge, long-sought-after stairs connecting Edgewood Commons and beyond to the site and Metro station, and a grocery store that my family and I will be able to get to on foot or by bike. This is exactly the kind of transit- and bicycle-oriented development our city needs to give our growing population more housing opportunities without adding cars and congestion. It will also re-urbanize this hard-to-walk, suburban-feeling section of Rhode Island Avenue.

While I'm thrilled with all that this project has to offer, I do suggest that the Zoning Commission ask the developer to provide additional affordable housing. Given the flexibility enabled by a Planned Unit Development, a larger set-aside with more deeply affordable homes is possible.

In addition, I would ask that a more direct bicycle route connect 4th Street and the trail. It is already clear that this is a major commuting route--why not treat it as such from the start instead of forcing people on bikes to mix with pedestrians and car traffic as they move through the development?

Again, I want to say how excited I am to support this mixed-use development that promises to benefit the neighborhood and city with its provision of facilities for walking, biking, and transit. Please act quickly to approve this project.

Thank you,

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Submitted on 5/10/2016 by:  
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