

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Danielle Paula <daniellepaula2@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 05, 2016 11:50 AM
To: DCOZ - ZC Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: Opposition to Planned Development at Bruce Monroe Park

Good morning,

I am writing to oppose the Planned Unit Development of Bruce Monroe ZC Case 16-11. I oppose the following aspects of the proposed development:

1. **Scale:** At 9 stories, and 120 feet, the building is far out of character with the surrounding 2-3 story row houses and small neighborhood/community feel of the surrounding area.
2. **Density:** The Bruce Monroe site is slated for 273 units, which would add approximately 700 new residents to the block, more than triple the current population. An environmental impact study has not yet been conducted to determine how this will impact the surrounding neighborhood. Additionally, the city has failed to propose a plan to mitigate the increased population and reduce congestion in an already congested area for traffic and pedestrians.
3. **Architectural Character and Design:** At the community meetings, the developers and DMPED planners agreed that the structure (if approved) should be made to blend in with the current architecture of the surrounding neighborhood. The neighborhood is surrounded by single family 2-3 story brick row homes. The planned drawing do not at all represent the current neighborhood feel and instead impose a towering building in a very modern form that is very uncharacteristic of the late 19th century homes that fill the area.
4. **Traffic:** The project and the dramatic increase in density will exacerbate existing traffic issues on the very congested surrounding streets (Columbia Rd., Irving St., Sherman Ave., and Georgia Ave.) and at already failing intersections. The city has not done enough to reduce the additional congestion this will cause to include parking.
5. **Parking:** The plan fails to adequately address the predictable parking challenges created by the increased density from this project, and the numerous other developments being built in our area that will increase the population. The structure only calls for approx. 90 parking spaces of which most are for compact vehicles. Since this is new construction, the site should have ample parking made available to the residents of the building and I would propose that the site needs to have at least 1 parking spot per unit. In addition, the city has proposed dedicated bus lanes for Irving St. and Columbia Road, which will eliminate half of the currently available street parking and further congest the already busy streets with traffic.
6. **Inadequate Benefits Package:** The list of "public" benefits the developer is required to offer is insufficient, not to the benefit of the entire public, or of little to no value, i.e., park and street naming opportunities, a smart transit screen for the residents of the apartment building, a therapeutic pool for the senior building, upgraded street lights, etc. There have been other development proposals which require the developer to offer amenities to the benefit of the ENTIRE public surrounding the site. Why would we allow the developer to take away such a valuable piece of land and not provide the residents that will lose a valuable asset compensation

7. Reduced Park Space: In a meeting a little over a year ago at the Park View Recreation Center, the mayor announced that she would not be in favor of a plan that did not keep at least 50% of the plot as a park. This plan does not keep 50% park space and the mayor has already backtracked on her promise. Additionally, the mayor promised to keep all of the current uses at the park. The current plan does not have enough planned recreational space and is missing 1 basketball court and a tennis court. Lastly, the park space currently slated is not specifically outlined to be managed by DPR and is in the control of the developers. In an area where park space is at a premium already (Howard University and public elementary schools are NOT public green space) we need to protect the green space we have.

8. Lack of a plan 40 years from now: the plan only requires the developer to provide affordable and public housing for 40 years while the land lease is for 99 years. There needs to be a plan that covers the entire land lease as well as a plan to help residents better themselves and get out of public housing permanently. We have heard from residents at Park Morton that some of them have been in Public Housing for as many as 42 years. The system is broken and just building a fancy new apartment building that will fall into disrepair over the next 40 years is not going to help them. We need a REAL plan to help residents exit poverty.

Thank you.
Danielle Paula

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