

Hello my name is Julia Conte. I am a resident of Petworth and have had a garden plot in Bruce Monroe Community Garden for the past four years. The park has given me a sense of belonging, community, and home in DC. During my second year as a garden member, I remember feeling so proud when I showed my plot to a friend visiting from out of town. I had learned a few gardening skills the year before and had vegetables to show for it. That summer, I picked eggplant after eggplant and got to meet some smart, energetic kids who enjoyed watering and even planted some beans of their own.

As important as the park has been to me, I know how important it is for Park Morton residents to have safe, dignified housing. Over the years, I've heard from Park Morton residents and other housing advocates about the poor living conditions at Park Morton as well as the long time that these residents have waited for the city to fully fulfill its promise of new, quality housing. I believe that quality housing for all residents is foundational in maintaining the vibrant community that I have grown to love. While the community will lose some of the space that is available to garden, play sports, and enjoy the outdoors, this will provide the opportunity for others to have a comfortable and welcoming space to call their own.

Zoning a portion of this land to be designated toward this housing development is necessary to ensuring that all residents of the areas have access to the fundamental aspect of vibrant community--quality, affordable housing.