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TO: ZCsubmissions@dc.gov  
BCC: NeighborsOfParkview@gmail.com  
SUBJ: Opposition to park tower (16-11)

DC Zoning Commission:

I am writing to express my deep opposition to replacing Bruce Monroe Community Park with a 9-story-plus-penthouse tower. (Case 16-11).

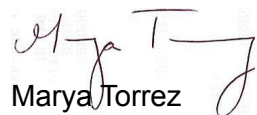
The city's new Comprehensive Plan requires a thorough impact assessment -- ensuring that negative impacts on neighborhoods, transportation, environmental quality, and other issues are assessed and adequately mitigated. The DC Appeals court made clear this was not thoroughly done.

I am an 18-year resident of the District of Columbia, and I have lived two blocks from the park since it was built in 2009, having bought my house in Pleasant Plains and lived in the neighborhood since 2007. During that time, I have seen the neighborhood change in both good and bad ways. Gentrification has forced many long-time residents to leave the area. At the same time, most development has been thoughtful and local, allowing local businesses to grow and flourish. The park has been one of the bright spots during that time. It has always been utilized by all aspects of the community and provides a wonderful spot for people of all different ages, backgrounds, and demographics to spend time and build community. People use it regularly to play basketball, meet with friends, play on the equipment, and grow local food. It has considerable environmental benefits as well. It has also served as a refuge to me during the COVID-19 pandemic. Having spent the last eighteen months working from home and seldom leaving my house, the Bruce Monroe Community Park is my go to for walks, fresh air, and has been critical to my mental health. All of that would be lost if the park is redeveloped to serve corporate interests, not the community.

Moreover, as you undoubtedly know, there has been a housing boom in the District, which has severely limited affordable housing, while also creating fancy and expensive apartments and condos that remain vacant. The pandemic has further driven residents out of the city, making the need for more of this type of housing even less necessary.

I live and work in this neighborhood and am deeply invested in the community, and I adamantly oppose redeveloping the park with (unaffordable) housing.

Sincerely,

  
Marya Torrez