

## Case 20-12

**Presentation by Westminster Co-Pastor Ruth Hamilton to Zoning Commission**  
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Monday, October 4, 4pm

I am Ruth Hamilton, who along with my husband, Brian, have served as Co-Pastors of Westminster since 1996. The church has been an important faith institution in SW for 168 years. If we weren't still in the COVID era, you would see the hearing room packed with an array of people counting on your support for this project: members and friends from every corner and condition of the community and beyond; representatives of the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly, the SWBID, and Councilmember Charles Allen's office; fellow SW pastors; even neighbors who oppose most developments would be here to show support for our project. I'm sorry you can't physically see these folks behind us. You do have their letters of support in hand.

Westminster started this major project because the church is confronted with essential \$2m+ capital improvements needed in our 1965 building. We have great human resources with which we have done a lot for DC—founding Food & Friends in the 80s, making Jazz Night and Blue Monday Blues at Westminster among the best and last-standing venues in the city, touching 1000s of lives and standing with the most vulnerable in our community. Westminster has hosted numerous Government of The District of Columbia meetings, events, and other activities, even housing the ANC office for many years.

This redevelopment project and our partners are a blessing. With this project we will be able to have a fully functional church building. We are especially excited about the ability to bring senior affordable housing to SW. Through the joint venture, Westminster will be able to ensure that the senior tower remains affordable for the life of the building.

We are very excited about the design of this project which supports our church mission and understanding of what it takes to be an effective church in today's increasingly unchurched culture. We love the new more open church entrance with its warm tone and human scale tree of life-- a meaningful symbol for all people. We love the cross against the softly lighted tower. The cross declares our faith tradition while the tower symbolizes the hope and light of God for all creation.

On behalf of the church officers, our members, DC's great jazz and blues musicians and their 1000s of fans, the seniors awaiting affordable housing, and all who appreciate Westminster's presence and values in SW DC, we ask you to do everything in your power to get this done--sooner than later. As I look around at all the varied designs and primarily market rate buildings that have gone up in our ANC6D in the last few years, I can't imagine that this project doesn't deserve your full and rapid support. Thank you.