

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Jared McGrath <jared.r.mcgrath@gmail.com>
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Subject: Resident Opposition to Zoning Case: 20-18

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Zoning Case: 20-18
Written Testimony: Jared McGrath
October 23, 2020

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Jared McGrath. I have been a resident of Southwest DC since 2017. This written testimony is in opposition to the 1319 S. Capitol development project, as it does not meet the goals of the Southwest Neighborhood Plan (SWNP).

The SWNP specifically states the following: "Southwest will remain an exemplary model of equity and inclusion - a welcoming and engaged community that celebrates and retains a mix of races, ages and income levels and enhances well-being for all amidst neighborhood growth and change. They [residents] also want new housing developments to offer varied products, especially units sized for families. Development pressures and potential gentrification were specifically considered a threat to the most economically vulnerable residents. Southwest's most defining characteristic is its people. Residents overwhelmingly expressed their desire to maintain the economic and racial diversity that makes the community so strong and vibrant."

The application of the SWNP to this project clearly shows that it is not in compliance. Out of the 310 units in this project, only 24 will be "affordable," amounting to 8% of the total units. 8% is the legal minimum in terms of IZ. Achieving the "minimum," in any endeavor, is not exemplary. Achieving the minimum in regards to "affordable" housing, during an affordable housing crisis, in an area that has experienced almost unprecedented gentrification and displacement, and is situated within an Opportunity Zone, is unacceptable ethically, and an insult to the Southwest community who advocated for, and deserve much more.

We know better, and we can do better.

The Zoning Commission must step-up and address the affordable housing crisis with a response appropriate to the level of the crisis by demanding more affordable units from projects. The idea that unaffordable, market-rate units will solve the affordable housing crisis is not only inaccurate, but is also the opposite of justice.

I ask that the Zoning Commission require more affordable housing to be included in the project. Specifically, one-third should be market-rate, one-third should be workforce, and one-third should be affordable.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jared McGrath
Concerned Resident of SWDC