

Hello, my name is Alejandra Jolodosky and I'm a Ward 3 resident. I am part of SURJ DC, Empower DC, and the Brookland Manor Coalition. I deeply care about public housing and stopping displacement and gentrification in DC, specifically of Black, brown, and poor communities.

I am outraged to hear that the Office of Planning is leaving the residents of Barry Farm out of the redevelopment process by rezoning the area. It is clear that the rezoning is being done to avoid the Planned Unit Development process which gives the community more input on what happens with redevelopments. On top of everything, the rezoning completely ignores the decision by the Court of Appeals to have the New Communities Initiative (NCI) renegotiate with the residents to make a better plan with the residents. NCI has never honored its commitments to build first when possible, to replace public housing units one-for-one, to rebuild communities, and to return residents to those communities. Never once have they redeveloped a community from start to finish and returned the residents. When residents challenged NCI's redevelopment plan, the Court of Appeals agreed with them in full. The Court wanted to make sure that the residents were included in the redevelopment process, not be completely pushed aside. The residents of Barry Farm are now demanding for the court case to be honored. And it's not just one court order that the Office of Planning is avoiding. It is also disregarding active policy documents like the New Communities and the existing Small Area Plan.

DC has a history of broken promises to public housing residents even when there are policies or statutes in place. If we allow the rezoning to take place, it will act as a precedent for other redevelopments, such as Brookland Manor, undermining the rights of all public housing residents. We want the humanity and the rights of BF – and all public housing – residents to be respected. It is inhumane to pretend that this historic parcel of land is not significant to residents. We also want DMPED to address the hardships that residents face as a result of their displacement, such as providing adequate support with moving and storage and funding reunions.

Thank you.