



PAUL M CADARIO

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January 5, 2024

Mr Hood, Chair
and members,
Zoning Commission
District of Columbia

Dear Mr Hood:

I am submitting for the public record for ZC Case Number 23-02 these comments in support of the proposed up-zoning to MU-10 of the MPD/FEMS property at 1617 U Street NW. I ask to be added to the list of speakers at the upcoming hearing.


I have lived on the 1500 block of T Street NW since March 1977. I am a member of ANC2B's Mobility Committee. After a career at the World Bank, I have taught civil engineering design at the University of Toronto, design of sustainable projects and public policy to enable them.

I am a member of the Dupont Circle Citizens Association, and I oppose the organization's motions opposing this project. My review of the file suggests that in the forest of template submissions and duplicative comments from some of my neighbors, the community is roughly evenly divided on the matter. With the widespread misconceptions and misrepresentations offered by the project's opponents, it is little wonder that confusion has arisen.

My support for this project aligns with the points set out by the Coalition for Smarter Growth in their November 23, 2023 submission.

The proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Although a competitive and transparent RFP will define the exact specifications of a public private partnership, the existing public safety agencies will remain in place, in new, fit for purpose, state-of-the-art spaces that will let both MPD and FEMS do their important work more effectively. Ugly streetscapes along the U Street and 17th Street frontages will be replaced by modern residential buildings and possibly other community facilities, to be defined by the agencies involved (notably DCPL) and the taxpayer funds available for their operation and maintenance.

DMPED/OP's revised proposal calls for maximizing the IZ Plus aspects of the development and the amount of affordable and deeply affordable housing in perpetuity, which comports with resolutions by our three adjacent, elected ANCs. New affordable housing and less market rate housing means more affordability on a site where no housing exists in a transit-oriented, walkable neighborhood. We are not losing public land;



we are adding a new use on an underused public site, housing, that helps lower-income people live in our neighborhood.

What will be key, however, is that the RFP be transparent, and that it be subject not just to ANC review but also to public charettes and transparent and public analysis of the financial commitments by the developer that is eventually selected after a comparison of the qualified offers. In this context, ANC1B's civil and well-chaired meetings on the apparently stalled Reeves Center redevelopment are a useful model. The delay at the Mayor's office in announcing the awardee is not.

Although that is not the Zoning Commission's responsibility, I trust that we can look forward to the promised public engagement focused on content and substance rather than the procedural and legal jostling that has, regrettably, characterized much of the community discussion so far. The Zoning Commission's clarity in giving its approval would be desirable, not only to resolve some of the misconceptions but also to reduce or maybe even eliminate vexatious litigation, and to encourage DMPED to adhere to proper procedure.

Sincerely,

s/**PM**Cadario

Paul M Cadario, BAsC, MA, MSOD, LLD