

From: [Aaron Kassraie](#)
To: [DCOZ - ZC Submissions \(DCOZ\)](#)
Subject: Opposition to Zoning Application Case No. 23-02 for 1617 U Street NW
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Dear DC Zoning Commission and Staff,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the upzoning proposal for 1617 U Street NW, outlined in ZC Case No. 23-02. While I acknowledge the need for redevelopment and growth, I am deeply concerned about the potential negative impacts this project may have on our community, particularly in terms of affordable housing and the overall well-being of our neighborhood.

First and foremost, the proposal lacks clarity regarding the number of affordable housing units that will be included in the development. The absence of this crucial information raises concerns about the density and livability of the area. Given the pressing need for affordable housing in our community, it is imperative that any new development prioritizes inclusivity and accessibility for all residents.

Moreover, the absence of guarantees for public amenities and the lack of studies related to traffic, environmental impact, and the effect on the Strivers Section historic district are troubling. A thorough examination of these factors is essential to ensure that the proposed project aligns with the community's needs and preserves our neighborhood's historical integrity.

I also share the sentiment that the engagement of public officials in this project has been inadequate. The lack of reporting from the July 2022 DMPED meeting and insufficient information about the current administrative meeting further underscore the need for more transparent and inclusive communication with the community. Waiting until May for a formal hearing only exacerbates the frustration and limits the opportunity for meaningful public input.

Furthermore, the current area boasts a diverse mix of households, many of which have called this neighborhood home for generations. The proposed project poses a significant risk of displacing existing affordable housing, thereby undermining the social fabric and diversity that make our community unique and vibrant.

I echo the sentiments of fellow residents who have raised concerns about the lack of substantive planning studies and the potential arbitrary and capricious nature of this rezoning. The proposed high-density rezoning to MU-10 seems disproportionate for the 1617 U Street location, especially considering the delicate foundations of the historic buildings in the surrounding area.

In conclusion, I request that my comments be included on the public record in ZC Case No. 23-02. Additionally, I urge the Commission to consider alternative approaches, such as a

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mixed-zoning strategy, that would better align with the character of our community. I seek a collaborative planning process that incorporates real data, transparent dialogue, and a focus on public needs, truly affordable housing, and the prevention of displacement.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I kindly request the opportunity to testify on Monday, January 8, 2024, in opposition to the rezoning application.

Sincerely,
Aaron Kassraie
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