

**From:** [chris somers](#)  
**To:** [DCOZ - ZC Submissions \(DCOZ\)](#)  
**Subject:** Affordable Housing  
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To the Office of Zoning and Commissioners,

Please see my written comments below (for the record) and please sign me up to testify on January 8, 2024 in opposition to the rezoning application for 1617 U Street NW

I am opposed to this rezoning application and ask that you ask OP to go back to the drawing board and actually work with the community to build a collaborative plan and resubmit their application to replace the one now before you.

I believe that D.C. is making the same mistake that many others cities have which is not making sure there is affordable housing. Workers need affordable housing and by not prioritizing this then you end up in a situation where workers and eventually businesses (because businesses need workers) move away because it is not affordable to live there. For example Jamie Dimon said that San Francisco needs more affordable housing so that companies can attract workers and create jobs. I see that Washington D.C. seems to be making the same mistake as many cities by not making sure that they have affordable housing. Many cities like San Francisco, New York City, Los Angeles, and even Summit County Colorado have failed to prioritize affordable housing for their workers. In places like San Francisco and Summit County Colorado they can't find workers. They can't find teachers, police officers, restaurant workers, trash collectors, hotel workers, healthcare workers and the list goes on, because the housing is not affordable. So people move and go find jobs somewhere else, where the housing is affordable. If you want to bring back people into the offices then you need to create affordable housing so that they don't have to spend a long time commuting. I understand that you want to prioritize development, which may have worked when baby boomers were in the workforce, but now you need to balance that development to include affordable housing where you can attract average workers those working in the restaurant or nurses or teachers. I know everyone wants rich people or rich companies but rich people and companies want services like good schools with good teachers. So it is vital that you work on making sure these middle class workers have an affordable place to live. I urge you to do more research on this issue and look at what other communities are dealing with by not having enough affordable housing.

I myself move out of D.C. because the housing prices were unaffordable for me. I was

ZONING COMMISSION  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO.23-02  
EXHIBIT NO.586

looking for housing in 200s range and I was constantly competing with investors saying that this would be a good unit to add to your portfolio. Too many investors are buying units in older condominium complexes and then driving up the price. For example Sean Hannity has a portfolio of \$90 million in rental housing in New York. Like really does he need more money. While I was looking around I definitely noticed that those units that didn't allow investors to buy were more affordable but then they went quickly because you have lots of workers competing for the low inventory of affordable housing. I urge to you rethink your stance on using public land for high end development and failing to address the affordable housing. I also urge you to look at other communities that are struggling with the lack of affordable housing and how it has impacted them. By failing to make sure you have affordable housing it will hurt D.C. economically and you will lose an important group of people who will move to other communities that are willing to make sure they have affordable housing.

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Former resident of D.C. and current resident of Maryland