

To: D.C. Zoning Commission

**Re: Zoning Commission Case No. 24-03 – 1603 Marion Barry Avenue, SE – Letter in Strong Support**

I ask that the Zoning Commission approve map amendment proposed by the above referenced case to rezone the property from MU-4 to MU-7A. The proposed zone district is appropriate for this site and for this important commercial corridor that is, frankly, highly underutilized. The proposed MU-7A zone is completely consistent with the Future Land Use Map designation of Moderate Density Commercial recently approved by the D.C. Council in 2021. We should not let this opportunity to enhance the zoning along this corridor go to waste or pass us by.

I understand that Good Hope Road LLC intends to develop the property as the result of the map amendment. The proposed development addresses the inefficiencies of low-density buildings along this property's stretch of Marion Barry Avenue SE and avoids a poorly planned approach that is inadequate for the needs of our neighborhood. This site is currently underdeveloped and presents an opportunity for our neighborhood to thrive and further develop economically. The development concept has already received a unanimous vote at the Historic Preservation Review Board and is compatible with the Anacostia Historic District. This is a good sign that the proposed zoning is consistent with the neighborhood and the Comprehensive Plan's treatment of it. We note that ANC 8A voted in support of the project. It is completely unclear why ANC 8A would not also vote to support the proposed map amendment.

This intersection and the business that previously occupied the building at the property had been frequented by crime and violence. On 4/13/20, the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) filed a Complaint for violations of the Drug, Firearm, or Prostitution-Related Nuisance Abatement Act. It's important to me and to my neighbors that this property is developed to its full potential so we avoid another vacant or underutilized property and so that we can see what this unique corridor can become when not faced with chronic disinvestment and short sightedness.

The Ward 8 community needs a thriving Marion Barry Ave. and Marion Barry Ave. needs more commercial and residential density to thrive. I welcome the map amendment – and the proposed development that it allows - at the property in the hopes that Marion Barry Ave. becomes a more vibrant mixed-use corridor that serves everyone in historic Anacostia.

With the approval of a map amendment to MU-7A, the developer can proceed with the already approved building plans for this lot in the Anacostia Historic District. The development concept

is consistent with the D.C. Comprehensive Plan and Anacostia will benefit from the additional housing, commercial space and community services.

I also support OP's recommendation that this map amendment be approved **without incorporating IZ Plus**. This neighborhood and this Ward has already been asked to provide too much of the affordable housing supply for the District – already exceeding the Mayor's Housing Equity Report goal by over 100%. The construction of new market rate residential use and new ground floor commercial space is a tremendous benefit to the community and a welcome investment.

I appreciate the opportunity to **extend my strong and unconditional support for the proposed map amendment application** for the site and the development plans it allows.

Signature: *Patrick O'Keefe*

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