

Letter from DC HUD Complainants

District of Columbia Zoning Commission 1100 4th Street SW
Suite E650
Washington, DC 20024

7/27/2024

Subject: ZC Case 24-03 Opposition to Rezoning MU4 to MU7 1603 Marion Barry Avenue SE

Dear Members of the Zoning Commission,

We write to you as complainants represented by the law firm Daniel & Beshara, P.C., filing a complaint against the District of Columbia with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD has accepted the complaint, and an investigator has been assigned. The District's allocation of LIHTC housing projects is currently under investigation including the property at 1603 Marion Barry Avenue SE.

This complaint, which we are sharing publicly, brings attention to the urgent need for equitable, affordable housing throughout the District and policies that genuinely advance fair housing practices. The complaint cites the District's racial discrimination through the misuse of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. According to the District's tracking dashboard titled "New Affordable Housing Units Since 2019 by Planning Area" see Table 1, it clearly shows that new affordable housing units are not distributed equitably. LIHTC projects are overwhelmingly concentrated in predominantly Black neighborhoods such as Anacostia in Ward 8. This concentration further exacerbates the apartheid level of racial segregation existing in the southeast quadrant and denies equal housing opportunities throughout the District.



Table 1: New Affordable Housing Unit Since 2019 by Planning Area

The proposed rezoning of the property at 1603 Marion Barry Avenue SE from the MU-4 zone to the MU-7A zone will result in further overconcentration of low-income affordable housing in our community. This would perpetuate existing racial and economic segregation patterns and undermine our neighborhood's diversity and economic balance. The Far Southeast/Southwest Planning Area already exceeds its target as shown in Table 1 for the provision of affordable housing. Additionally, increasing the Zoning from MU-4 to MU7A will increase the number of IZ's units that would be required at the site which will only exacerbate this issue, further entrenching segregation and economic disparity.

While Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) projects are often termed mixed-income housing, they primarily serve lower-income households, which does not meet the need for true income diversity in our community.

At the July 9, 2024, monthly Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 8A meeting, a representative from the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) addressed the community, expressing opposition to changing the zoning of 1603 Marion Barry Ave from MU-4 to MU-7A. The OAG representative argued that the zoning change would necessitate more Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) units due to the increased density. They further contended that Anacostia already has its fair share of affordable housing and that the Office of Planning has the authority to make such changes under the current circumstances. Ultimately, ANC 8A voted to reject the proposed zoning change. To hear the testimony from the OAG's office and the official vote from ANC 8A, you can listen to the ANC 8A Zoom meeting recording [here](#) [video1559099149.mp4](#) .

We recommend opposing the rezoning to prevent further increases in affordable housing. We urge the Commission to consider the long-term impacts on our community. It is time for D.C. to live up to its stated ideals of equity and inclusion, providing all residents with access to quality affordable housing options throughout our city.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns. We look forward to your thoughtful consideration and a decision that promotes equitable development in our community.

Sincerely,

Ms. Kristina Leszczak, 2308 Shannon Pl SE, Washington, DC, 20020.

Mr. Camille Bourguignon, 1345 Valley Pl SE, Washington, DC, 20020.

Mr. Bruce Holmes, 1513 V Street SE, Washington DC, 20020.

Mrs. Nikki Waddell, 1344 Maple view place SE, Washington, DC, 20020.

References: - "Anacostia Residents Fight for Balance in Affordable Housing Development," Washington Informer. [Link] (<https://www.washingtoninformer.com/anacostia-residents-fight-for-balance-in-affordable-housing-development/>). - ZC 24-03 – Hearing Report for a Petition to Rezone the property at 1603 Marion Barry Avenue SE from the MU-4 zone to the MU-7A zone, Office of Planning, July 19, 2024.

