
Opposition to ZC Case 24-11

From Allison Clausen <allisonclausen@gmail.com>

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To DCOZ - ZC Submissions (DCOZ) <DCOZ-ZCSubmissions@dc.gov>

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Re: Opposition to ZC Case 24-11 (Montana Triangle PUD)

Dear Chairperson Hood and Commissioners,

My name is Allison Clausen, and I am writing in strong opposition to Zoning Commission Case 24-11. For nearly two decades, the District has envisioned the Montana Triangle as a neighborhood-scale opportunity for housing, retail, and public space—a gateway that could welcome residents and visitors alike. Instead, the proposal before you would rezone almost five acres of this land to PDR-1 industrial use, a choice that would not only stall the promise of a livable community but also strip away the potential for improvements at an environmentally degraded site.

As someone who has spent years advocating for urban tree canopy and ecological restoration across Washington, I cannot overstate the importance of this site. New York Avenue is one of the hottest, least shaded corridors in the city. The removal of its few remaining natural buffers in favor of warehouse and truck-dependent operations will magnify air pollution, noise, and the urban heat island effect for the surrounding neighborhoods. It will also exacerbate stormwater pollution, flooding and stream degradation. A responsible plan would expand tree canopy, increase stormwater retention, and protect or create habitat opportunities—not foreclose them for a generation.

I urge the Commission to consider three points:

1. Industrial zoning here directly undermines District climate and equity goals. PDR-1 permits the very uses—heavy repair, self-storage, waste management, distribution depots—that are incompatible with neighborhood-scale resilience. No combination of “public benefits” can offset the environmental damage that would follow.
2. The proposal chills future investment in mixed-use growth. By anchoring the Triangle with truck bays and loading docks, the applicant sends a clear signal to adjacent parcels: this will not be a walkable, livable neighborhood. Once such a precedent is set, the damage extends beyond the two acres at issue.
3. We are losing the chance to restore green infrastructure at a city gateway. For years, community members have asked for shaded walkways, green buffers, and publicly accessible open space along this corridor. Rezoning to industrial use does the opposite. It turns our eastern entrance into a heat sink and pollution source, when it could instead be a model of sustainable design.

The Zoning Commission has the responsibility to weigh not just the applicant's short-term interests but the long-term health of our city. With the climate crisis already at our doorstep, approving more asphalt and exhaust in place of trees and housing is simply indefensible.

I respectfully urge you to deny Case 24-11 and insist on a plan that aligns with the District's Comprehensive Plan, its tree canopy targets, and its commitments to livability and equity.

Thank you,

Allison Clausen
Ward 5 Resident
Langdon Park Forest Steward
Community Representative, Urban Forestry Advisory Council