

6/19/25

Submitted via email to zcsubmissions@dc.gov

Mr. Anthony Hood, Chairman
Zoning Commission
441 4th Street SW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Chairman Hood and Members of the Commission,

As neighbors within 200 ft. of the proposed 901 Monroe St. development, we are writing to express our **support** for ZC Case No. 24-15. From our perspective as neighbors and as Washingtonians, the project stands to deliver considerable benefits, outlined below. We strongly support the **inclusion of retail space** in the development, as per the Joint Resolution (cf. Letter of Support from John Leibovitz, May 15), and also agree with other comments that the developers should compensate any adjacent neighbors with affected rooftop solar panels.

Welcoming new neighbors and commercial space to this block will improve the vibrancy, character, and economic health of the neighborhood. The 12th St. strip, the only real commercial area on this side of the tracks, is struggling – no surprise when it is surrounded almost entirely by very-low-density housing. Existing businesses (and, by extension, we as neighbors) are likely to benefit from the new development, as new residents mean new customers, and new businesses can attract visitors who would also visit 12th St. More specifically, retail on this block of Monroe St. could serve as a “bridge”, facilitating the flow of foot traffic between the Metro and 12th St. Best practices for transit-oriented development emphasize the importance of mixed-use development, and the need for commercial space south of the Metro station was identified over 16 years ago (e.g., in the Small Area Plan.) **The inclusion of retail space is key to the project’s potential benefits**, and if possible, it should incorporate more than the 1800 sqft. included in the Joint Resolution.

We **strongly oppose any suggestion to increase the amount of parking** in the new development, as this would increase the proportion of new residents using cars and thus exacerbate traffic congestion – a well-documented effect.¹ For this reason, minimizing parking in new transit-adjacent developments is widely recognized as a crucial factor for their success.² Considering the site’s immediate adjacency to the Metro, the bus bays, and the popular Metropolitan Branch Trail cycleway, as well as the laudably modest number of parking spaces and the other traffic demand management measures proposed, we believe a massive influx of traffic is very unlikely to materialize.

¹ Millard-Ball, A., West, J., Rezaei, N., & Desai, G. (2021). What do residential lotteries show us about transportation choices? *Urban Studies*, 59(2), 434-452. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098021995139> (Original work published 2022)

² Graeme, B. “Eliminate or Reduce Parking Minimums in Areas with Access to Transit-Oriented Development”. <https://sustainablecitycode.org/brief/eliminate-or-reduce-parking-minimums-in-areas-with-access-to-transit-oriented-development-4/>

The vast vacant lot currently comprising the site is a dead zone providing no value for anyone – not even as green space, since it is treeless and closed off to the public. The adjacent Metro station is a valuable resource, but remains largely untapped due to this empty space. The beautiful homes and gardens emblematic of Brookland's character sprawl far beyond the site and are not jeopardized by the project; the neighborhood's character was not ruined by the Monroe St. Market development, and it will not be ruined by this one. On the contrary, the project stands to enrich the neighborhood for all its residents. We look forward to welcoming our new neighbors.

Sincerely,

Cody Parker & Keerthana Chandrashekar

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