

Subject: Letter in opposition to ZC No. 24-15

Date: June 9, 2025

Dear DC Zoning Commission (ZC),

We are residents of Brookland and are writing to express opposition to the current alley and access design of the proposed ZC No. 24-15 901 Monroe St development. While we support development of the site and the construction of additional housing in the District, the current proposal should be redesigned to better fit into the existing neighborhood and prevent unfair burdens being placed on existing residents. We encourage the Zoning Commission to require the developers to redesign the project to protect existing residents nearby.

The proposed use of the Lawrence Street alley as the main entrance/exit for 233 units creates safety hazards for existing residents, particularly young children, who directly abut the alley and regularly use it to access their homes. Converting it to a high-traffic corridor puts the existing families on the block—who have no protection between their back yards and the small alley—at risk. Traffic may be especially congested due to an expected high number of daily deliveries at the 901 Monroe St apartments, and the traffic that will service the retail space allocated in the building. The constant flow of vehicles entering and exiting will also create air and noise pollution, which poses health risks for children.

901 Monroe Street should use the currently existing curb cut on 9th street; that alley entrance served the businesses and homes previously on the property (which were demolished by the developers). The 2011 design for this site used the 9th Street curb cut; furthermore, to minimize adverse effects on the adjacent town homes. The 2011 design included tree buffers in the alley—these elements should not have been abandoned in the current proposal. Additionally, the ZC should require a green buffer in the alley so that vegetation can provide a visual screen, noise buffer, and air quality increase.

If the alley must be used, the developers should be required to compensate the homeowners on the block, who will have to install significant infrastructure in their backyards to protect their health and safety.

We seek development that balances density with neighborhood compatibility. The developer has the means to achieve their development goals without sacrificing neighbors' safety, air and sunlight, and quality of life. We request major revisions to align this project with the community most impacted.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Harnik and Erin Garnaas-Holmes
1612 Kearny Street NE, Washington DC 20017