

ANC 5B04 Commissioner Ra Amin Zoning Commission Testimony – Case No. 24-15

Good evening, Chair Hood, and members of the commission and community. As noted, I'm Commissioner Ra Amin. I've been designated to represent ANC 5B as well as the constituents of 5B04 on Zoning Case Number 24-15.

On behalf of ANC 5B and the residents of 5B04, I'm requesting that the Zoning Commission approve Zoning Case Number 24-15, the Consolidated PUD and Zoning-Related Map Amendment. I make this request with the majority support from the residents of the impacted and surrounding community after an extensive public engagement process. As a matter of practice, the SMD, ANC, the Development, Zoning, and Land Use Committee, conducted an extensive, extended, and transparent public engagement and review process, which included, but was not limited to, the Brookland Neighborhood Civic Association, the 200 Footers, and ANC 5F.

Depending on who you speak with, some will say that this case started 17 years ago, some will say 14, others 10, some 10 months, and I believe you can still find some in our community that will say that they've never heard of this case or the location that we're discussing. I've led the public engagement and review process from August 2024 up until now, with a commitment to continue the process throughout this stage while I'm the ANC Commissioner and a resident of this community.

The process included virtual meetings - all recorded, in person meetings - sign-in sheets available, walking tours around the site - signing sheets there, walk audits with neighbors, tabling at the farmers market, meetings with the BNCA, ANC 5F, and the 5B DZLU Committee. We've also conducted meetings with all of our businesses along the Monroe Street Corridor, as well as the 12th Street Corridor. We've spoken with all our community partners, including GBIV and WABA, DeafReach, Casey Trees, DCTV, Friends of Noyes Park, and the Farmers Market. We also spoke with all the schools around our area too: Noyes Elementary School, Luke C. Moore High School, St. Anthony's School, and Churches. We've done a very extensive and thorough review throughout this process.

We held several meetings with DDOT and OP. I personally had three meetings with Council Member Parker, two in my person and one over the phone where we specifically focused and talked about this project and making sure that we are hearing and meeting the needs of our community. Constituent Service Directors from Council Member Parker's and McDuffie's teams have been present in all of our meetings.

We've had meetings in various venues and forms at different times of the day, on weekdays and weekends, to assure that everyone could and would have the opportunity and options to connect with me, the ANC, or the project team responsible for this development. I've

also had weekly conversations, or as we call them check-ins, with the project development team that became bi-weekly check-in phone conversations between February and May, where we review comments from the tabling at the farmers market, activity on the website, emails that have come in, phone conversations, one-on-one and in-person meetups, as well as the community meetings.

As you heard from others, you can see why the ANC supports this community project. I'm honored to be a part of this historic opportunity and to lead the commission on the 901 Monroe Street PUD and related Map Amendment. I want to thank the Commission for their time.

I have some responses to the Zoning Commission comments that I wanted to put in the record. I appreciate all the comments that have come from the Zoning Commission, and these are some of the same comments that we've had to consider as the ANC.

To Commissioner Miller's comments about why a PUD and not a MAP amendment. As I started saying earlier, the community was relieved and excited to engage in the PUD process. We've been involved in other PUDs. We've done them well, and we know how they go. But we have also had situations in the past at the other end of our community where conversations that started out as PUD agreements turned into Map Amendments. As a result, the community is now living with projects that are not the best suited for our community. All of the areas that we could have addressed in a thorough, open, and public engagement process, we did not get the opportunity to. Like construction management plans, waste management plans, pickup and drop-off sites, and parking for the residents of the building (such as RPP status). All of those things can and will come up if you don't have a thorough community engagement process.

The other thing that I want to address here is the concern about the Construction Management Plan. Again, ANC 5B has done other projects and been involved in other PUDs. We're very confident that we will be able to implement a very strong Construction Management Plan. At no time did the ANC ever feel like we were being slighted or ignored during that part of the process. We have a Construction Management Plan that has been agreed upon along with a demolition plan (which we would not necessarily need in this in this particular situation). One of the things that we wanted to do here is to make sure that we implemented that plan, but also we were able to tweak that plan as it best suited this particular project. So not at any time has the ANC ever felt like the project team or anybody else tried to slight the 200-footers or the community from being involved in the Constructive Management Plan.

Another concern we had as a community was a curb cut on 9th Street. There was never a clear consensus or majority of the community that said they wanted a curb cut on 9th Street. We talked about it. We looked at it in many different ways. You don't even have to do a traffic study. You just need to stand on the corner on 9th and Monroe and see it's probably one of the busiest intersections in our community. It's across from the Metro. You have the buses going in and out, motor vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians, all using that intersection at any given time. One concern we took in as the ANC is that any slight backup at that ingress and egress on 9th Street would make the 9th and Monroe Street intersection more dangerous than it already is. A curb cut on 9th Street also takes away valuable and much-needed parking in our community. That curb cut would take away approximately three spaces, where we gained parking spaces with the alley being extended on Lawrence Street. That's something that the community thought we could get behind. The 9th Street parking is used by the community for simple things like shopping on Monroe Street or shopping at the farmer's market on the weekend. But it's also used by residents if they know they're coming home late from the Metro in the evening, or if there's inclement weather, and they want their vehicles closer to the Metro station. A lot of us use the Catholic University-Brookland Metro station, that are not necessarily in comfortable walking distance especially if we're getting off the Metro after dark. We were very aware what that 9th Street curb cut would do.

The other thing I wanted to address about retail and parking - that's also not something we're concerned about. If you do a walk audit or survey of our community, there are always parking spaces during the day on Lawrence Street and 10th Street. I believe out of the six homes on Lawrence Street, five of those homes have driveways. On 10th Street, there's six row homes and most of those homes have behind home, off-street parking as well. So if someone's shopping, double parking or taking up parking is not a concern of our community. I walk through there every single day, and there's always parking along 10th Street in front of those row homes or on Lawrence Street. I just want to enter on the record that wasn't a real overall concern of the community.

Some of the comments that we took while we were going through the public engagement process, to Commissioner Stidham's questions and concerns, were "how come you are not encouraging them to go larger and add more mass?" We also took comments that said, "why are you supporting so much parking there when this project is across the street from the Metro and there should be no parking?" These were some of the things that we had to consider as the ANC. We wanted to be involved in the community engagement process, but also knew that we had to find the right balance for the project. And we felt like as far as the ANC, this project was the right balance. It was large enough to meet all the goals - the equity goals and the goals of our city - but it wasn't so large that it was going to be

overpowering. We did have voices in our community that wanted us, as the ANC, to support a larger project. We were constantly trying to find the right balance for our community.

Finally, I say that the public engagement process was thorough. I do appreciate everyone who was involved. I appreciate the BNCA's role, they were included from the beginning, never excluded from any conversations or any meetings, as well as the 200 footers. We really ran a very thorough public engagement process.

ZC#24-15 Consolidated PUD and Related Map Amendment Public Engagement and Community Meeting Schedule

August 8, 2024: Commissioner Amin attended an in-person meeting with Andrew Vincent and Bo Menkiti at 3401 8th St NE, Washington, DC where we were formally introduced and Commissioner Amin received a presentation of the project and layed out the public engagement and community meeting schedule he would conduct.

September 4, 2024: An evening virtual meeting with the 200 footers and development team, however the virtual room was open to all who wanted to attend.

September 25, 2024: Community Meeting (evening) at 901 Newton St (Brooks Mansion). Sign in sheet attached

October 7, 2024: Walk Tour (5:30pm) with community members and project team around the project site with comments and Q&A. Sign in sheet attached

October 16, 2024: ANC 5B recieved its official presentation from the Project Team and the 200'ers addressed the ANC as well.

November 12, 2024: Brookland Neighborhood Civic Association (BNCA) meeting 7pm. where the project team and 200 footers presented to the community and the FAQ was established that we worked from that point on.

November 23, 2024: Commissioner Amin and Project Team; Tabling at the Monroe St Farmers Market (10am-12pm) where the community viewed large scale renderings and submitted comments on the project.

December 16, 2024: Project Team presented to ANC 5F and the 200'ers and the community was allowed to comment on the project as well as the presentation.

January 2025: Tabling at the Farmers Market within large scale renderings and receiving comments from the community.

January 21, 2025: Commissioner Amin and CM Parker discussed the progress and process of the project at the BNCA meeting at Brookland Finest restaurant.

May 16, 2025: Comm. Amin and CM Parker met in-person to discuss the project and process.

May 19, 2025: DZLU committee meeting

May 21, 2025: ANC 5B vote to support ZC# 24-15 Consolidated PUD and Related Map Amendment.





GREATER WASHINGTON

Board of Trade

Date: 9/25/2024

Meeting Of: Board of

Comm. & MTG.

901 Monroe St. 12

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GREATER WASHINGTON
Board of Trade

Date: 11/23/21

Meeting Of: Monroe St.
Farmer Market

NOTES: 901 Monroe St. development

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