

Testimony of Mary Alice Levine
Before the District of Columbia Zoning Commission
Zoning Case No. 25-09

December 1, 2025

My name is Mary Alice Levine and I am testifying in opposition to the DC Office of Planning's proposal for development on Connecticut Avenue in Cleveland Park.

Cleveland Park is an ideal venue for family housing.

OP's zoning setdown report makes no provision for family housing among the many housing units it is proposing in Cleveland Park. And yet, unlike most areas of Ward 3, Cleveland Park residents are assigned to school districts that can accept new students without taxing the DC Public Schools infrastructure.

Cleveland Park's John Eaton Elementary School is a top-rated DC elementary school that is able to accommodate new families, as is Hardy Middle School and MacArthur High School, where John Eaton students are assigned upon graduation.

And it's not just *current* availability of public schools that will be attractive to new families: both Eaton and Hardy are projected to have capacity in 10 years time. And MacArthur is expanding to serve more students than the 542 students it can handle now.

- Eaton's enrollment is currently at 79% capacity. And it is projected for 75% capacity in school year 2035-36. Both percentages represent a comparatively high amount of empty capacity among Ward 3 public schools.
- Hardy's enrollment capacity is currently at 83%. And it is projected for 80% in 2035-36.
- MacArthur's enrollment capacity is currently at 72%. Because MacArthur is expanding, there is reasonable expectation for needed student capacity in ten years time.

Of course, some nearby schools, like Hearst Elementary School, are very crowded and will remain so. But it is a fallacy to think that *all* Ward 3 neighborhoods are unable to handle new students. Cleveland Park is a rare case in that it can welcome new students and provide excellent academic opportunities for them.

The presence of great schools with room for new students should be a mandate to build family housing. Families build community and stability. OP should be encouraging family

housing in order to attract families who can enjoy the outstanding educational opportunities available to residents of Cleveland Park. In addition, building *affordable* family housing will promote a stable, diverse community.

I urge the Zoning Commission to require the Office of Planning to plan for family housing and especially affordable family housing in Cleveland Park.

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Sources

DME 2024 Master Facilities Plan Annual Supplement, August 2025, see report and Appendix 2

<https://dme.dc.gov/publication/2024-master-facilities-plan-supplement>

DME Edscape <https://edscape.dc.gov/node/1385046>

DCPS School Profiles, <https://profiles.dcps.dc.gov/>