

## Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

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**From:** MaryAnn Nash <mornash@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 30, 2025 11:33 AM  
**To:** DCOZ - ZC Submissions (DCOZ)  
**Subject:** Letter in Opposition (Case 25-09)

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Dear Zoning Commission,

I am writing to oppose the current proposal to create the Cleveland Park Neighborhood Mixed Use Zone (Case No. 25-09). As a resident of Cleveland Park, I believe strongly in the importance of protecting the neighborhood's historic buildings and streetscape. I also believe that historic districts can and should grow, and that they must contribute to the District's affordable housing goals.

The rezoning framework outlined by the Office of Planning would introduce a level of height and massing that has no precedent within the historic portion of the Cleveland Park commercial corridor. Under the proposal, buildings could rise to seven stories or more, with penthouses above, in an area currently defined by modest early 20th-century structures. Without requirements for setbacks, height transitions, or other design controls, new construction could visually dominate the contributing buildings rather than complement them. These design tools are essential in any historic district to ensure that added density strengthens, rather than diminishes, the neighborhood's character.

Human-scale design is not an abstract planning ideal; it directly shapes whether neighborhood retail districts succeed. Over Thanksgiving weekend, as I was out shopping with friends and family, it was striking that the most vibrant and welcoming districts were those that maintained comfortable proportions between building height, street width, and pedestrian experience. Bethesda Row, where buildings generally top out around five stories with apartments above, was bustling with shoppers and diners. Georgetown, with its consistent low- to mid-rise streetscape, was equally lively. These areas thrive precisely because their scale feels coherent and inviting.

If Cleveland Park is to remain a successful, walkable commercial corridor, it must retain that same human scale. Density can be added, and affordable housing included, without compromising the historic district or the essential qualities that make this neighborhood appealing.

Thank you for considering these concerns. Growth in Cleveland Park is both possible and desirable, but it must be undertaken with care, respect for our historic district, and an understanding of what makes neighborhood retail districts thrive.

Sincerely,

MaryAnn Nash  
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