

My name is Joshua Daniel, and I've been a priest for nearly six years at St. Columba's Episcopal Church – one block West of the Tenleytown metro station. I also live on the church grounds where I am employed – and very likely would not be able to afford living in AU Park otherwise. My wife and I have three children currently enrolled in DCPS schools: one at Janney Elementary, one at Deal Middle, and one at Jackson-Reed High School. Each of them walk to and from school each day. Because our neighborhood is so vibrant and thriving there are many work days and even work weeks that I do not use a car for transportation. I'm able to walk to the gym (nearly every day), get groceries and home supplies, and meet parishioners for lunch all on my city block. We love our city and neighborhood and wish more people could share in this great community.

Also, my church has been involved with faith communities across DC who seek to build affordable housing units on their properties. This is extremely difficult, expensive work that on average takes more than 10 years to complete. While we find this work to be an important part of living out our values of faith we know that we can accomplish only so much this way. Even if our efforts are successful we know we are barely affecting the barometer of social change.

We hope to encourage the city to ramp up their efforts in expanding housing in DC, especially in our Ward 3 neighborhoods. Our city needs people of good will – like our faith communities – doing what they can to address this need, but we also need a systematic approach that can scale in ways faith communities cannot. I know that this is difficult work that requires lots of strategic planning but also a bit of bravery in the face of vocal neighbors who strongly prefer to keep things the way they are. Any real effort to address systemic problems will encounter this kind of resistance. But the benefits of this plan are not only about increasing access to a fantastic neighborhood like Tenleytown – it's also about the city doing what only it can do to meet and address issues of equity and justice. Many, many of my parishioners and neighbors will lend our vocal and sustained support to you in this journey.

In summary, I support the rezoning of this Wisconsin Avenue corridor as proposed by the office of planning.