Outlook

Urgent Request for Legislative Intervention, Small Area Plan Mandate, and Independent Impact Studies for Change Area 4.3 (Crestwood & 16th Street Heights)

From Binta M Robinson [redacted]
Date Wed 5/13/2026 9:19 AM
To Janeese Lewis-George <jlewisgeorge@dccouncil.gov>
Cc Smith, Kristian A. (Council) <kasmith@dccouncil.gov>; Rosenfeld, Benjamin (Council) <brosenfeld@dccouncil.gov>; Binta Robinson <[redacted]>

2 attachments (1 MB)
Exhibit 1.pdf; Exhibit 2.pdf;

Dear Councilmember Lewis George,

I am writing to formally transmit a critical request regarding the Office of Planning's (OP) proposed text amendments and upzoning for Change Area 4.3 under the Comprehensive Plan rewrite. Recent written correspondence from Ryan Hand, Associate Director of Citywide Planning, exposes severe, systemic blind spots in the District's planning framework that require immediate legislative intervention. [1]

First, the Office of Planning explicitly confirmed in writing that its displacement focus isolates only low-income renters in unsubsidized housing and low-income people who rent their housing. (See Exhibits 1 and 2). This admission reveals an official policy blind spot that completely ignores and fails to calculate the distinct displacement risks forced upon long-term, senior, and fixed-income homeowners as well as fixed-income renters across Crestwood and 16th Street Heights. These homeowner constituents and stakeholders are frequently equity-rich but cash-poor; they hold significant illiquid home equity but remain highly vulnerable to sudden, speculative property tax escalation, while fixed-income renters face rapid rent inflation that outpaces their static incomes.

Second, the Office of Planning has asserted that the District's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) requirements do not apply to "policymaking." (See Exhibit 1). OP is actively using this hyper-technical loophole to dodge physical accountability, skipping the mandatory infrastructure reviews that are a core, legal component of a standard EIS. While OP claims they do not have to look at infrastructure yet because it is just "policy," passing these map changes now makes physical infrastructure failure and severe community displacement a mathematical certainty later.

To protect our neighborhood's legacy from speculative displacement, we request that you follow the successful equitable planning precedents established in Ward 3 through the Chevy Chase Small Area Plan (CCSAP). As a stakeholder dedicated to protecting my family's multi-generational home, I urgently request that you use your legislative, oversight, and budget authority to suspend all FLUM adjustments and text amendments for Change Area 4.3 until the D.C. Council formally mandates and funds a comprehensive Small Area Plan (SAP) for this footprint. This SAP must execute, publish, and adjudicate the following eight independent, scholar-led impact studies:

1. **A Historic Preservation and Cultural Resource Inventory:** A comprehensive evaluation conducted with the Historic Preservation Office (HPO) to document, analyze, and safeguard all modern and

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EXHIBIT NO. 12O

contemporary architectural assets throughout the entirety of Change Area 4.3, as well as the affected spillover zones of Crestwood and 16th Street Heights outside the change area—including, but not limited to, establishing protective design baselines for the vital mid-century and 1970s residential works designed by pioneering Black architect Robert Nash, the first African American president of the AIA.

2. **A Comprehensive Transportation, Traffic, and Parking Study:** An independent evaluation conducted in coordination with DDOT, FEMS, and WMATA to analyze how the addition of thousands of residential units will impact commuter traffic, residential on-street parking capacity, and life-safety emergency vehicle clearance/response times for all residents—and most critically for vulnerable elderly populations—within Change Area 4.3 and the broader spillover zones of Crestwood and 16th Street Heights, alongside a rigorous capacity review of the already-overcrowded 16th Street Metrobus corridor.

3. **A Cumulative Environmental Impact Analysis:** A comprehensive study evaluating the specific impact of a moderate-scale residential framework, as well as medium-density upzoning, on the fragile Rock Creek watershed, conducted in strict connection with the proposed expansion parameters of the Rock Creek Tennis Center, detailing infrastructure capacity, environmental disruption, and the specific spillover environmental impacts on the broader Crestwood and 16th Street Heights ecosystems.

4. **An Infrastructure and Utility Rate Impact Review:** An independent calculation of how the projected increase in impervious surfaces under both the proposed moderate-scale residential framework and any proposed medium-density framework will impact local stormwater management systems, specifically measuring the resulting financial impact on residential utility rates and Clean Rivers fees for occupants within Change Area 4.3 and the surrounding spillover impact zones of Crestwood and 16th Street Heights.

5. **An Independent Economic Impact Investigation:** A localized study conducted by independent researchers measuring the near-immediate impacts of developer-driven upzoning and FLUM-stage speculation on land values, property tax escalation, and housing affordability, explicitly factoring in the speculative cloud over land values and the inflationary real estate pressures exerted across the broader Crestwood and 16th Street Heights communities.

6. **An Expanded Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA):** A formal equity assessment that explicitly accounts for indirect displacement risks to vulnerable renters both inside 16th Street Heights and within or near Crestwood, including those in single-family rentals, ADUs, and multi-family complexes, as well as long-term or equity-rich homeowners, and specifically isolates the severe economic health impacts and spillover displacement pressures facing senior citizens and fixed-income individuals both within Change Area 4.3 and nearby blocks, rectifying the Office of Planning's stated exclusion of the homeowner demographic.

7. **A Targeted Minority Socioeconomic and Asset Study:** A specialized demographic and economic study conducted by independent scholars isolating the Black and minority populations within Change Area 4.3 and measuring the socioeconomic spillover effects in Crestwood and 16th Street Heights, specifically evaluating localized indicators across family income brackets, systemic educational equity, and household asset protection—including the preservation of generational real estate wealth.

8. **A Tenant Protection and Anti-Harassment Review:** An assessment of how FLUM-stage speculation correlates with predatory buyout offers, using tracking metrics from properties like the Soapstone apartments to establish baseline tenant protections against market-forced displacement throughout the entirety of 16th Street Heights.

Conversational assurances and leading questions directed at a promoting agency during public proceedings cannot substitute for a rigorous, objective investigation. When the cultural, financial, and ecological survival of our neighborhood is at stake, we must rely on neutral, third-party data from independent scholars and experts. We look forward to partnering with your office to ensure our community is protected by comprehensive, legislative due diligence rather than speculative developer incentives.

Sincerely,

Binta Robinson
Cell Phone Number: [redacted]
Childhood Family Home: [redacted]
Attachment: Written Correspondence from Ryan Hand, Office of Planning