

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Bob Ward <bob.ward.dc@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 1:27 PM
To: DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: Comments in Support Case 20266 3400 Connecticut Ave

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To Chairman Hill and Members of the Board,

My name is Bob Ward, and I live at 2930 Macomb St NW, which is just on the other side of the Cleveland Park Library from the Macklin project site (Case 20266), putting me outside of the 200' limit, but just. I am writing to voice my support for the application for the special exception of the parking requirement for this project.

I have been engaged in this project from the beginning (Oct 2019), and have been pleased both by the project generally and the responsiveness the applicant has shown to constructive feedback both during the design phase, and this phase in creating plans to mitigate parking and loading impacts. This project today is better than when it started, as a result of both community input and a willingness to be cooperative on the part of the owners.

From the start, this project was not going to have parking. As a nearby neighbor, I am fine with that for three reasons. First, like virtually all homeowners on the first block to the west of Connecticut Ave on Macomb, Newark and Ordway Streets, my house has off-street parking. When I need on-street parking, there is always a spot close by, if not one always available in front of my house. This is true on Macomb, Newark/Highland, and Ordway Streets; it may at times require a walk. As a former resident of DuPont Circle, I view this access to street space as a luxury.

Second, car-free living is common among apartment dwellers in our area, a trend that is on the rise. That only one home of the seventeen currently occupying the Macklin has a car is testament to that reality. Future residents of the site will likely not have cars, and if they do, they will need to secure off-street parking. There is a market for it in the neighborhood. Similarly, our neighborhood-serving retail must survive with the current state of street parking, which is abundant when not needed, and scarce when it is. Building this project does not alter this equation.

But perhaps more importantly, requiring parking at a development of this scale so close to a Metro, bus lines, bike share, schools and stores is bad policy -- bad transportation and climate policy; bad housing policy; bad retail revitalization policy. We need to encourage car-free living where it can best be practiced, and there is no better place than right here.

Third, this project will add new customers/neighbors to our retail corridor than can transact life's daily business on foot, right outside their doors. Requiring parking, especially on a site so constrained in its building envelope by historic concerns (13,000+ sf of matter of right FAR left unbuilt due to historic considerations), would both further reduce the housing on the site and drive up the costs of the housing left (if it would even be built at all).

The community will benefit from a more complete retail streetscape and public plaza, but not if this project requires parking.

The community will benefit from the stairway that makes Newark Street more accessible to the commercial area, but not if this project requires parking.

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
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EXHIBIT NO.61

The community will benefit from new neighbors, including the estimated six permanently affordable homes, but not if this project requires parking.

So the question is, has the applicant done their best to mitigate the impact of not providing parking? I am satisfied with both the Transportation Demand Management Plan and the Loading Management Plan, especially with the additional details the applicant has offered in response to ANC 3C inquiries regarding the times and locations of loading for the residences and retail businesses.

This project enjoys broad support within the community, and rightly so. It will be a net-benefit to our neighborhood, not only for the specifics of the project, but for the boost in positive momentum it offers for future growth.

I ask that you please approve the special exception so the project can move forward without more delay.

Thank you for your consideration and your service to our city,

Bob Ward
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