

**Testimony Before
District of Columbia Zoning Commission
Re: McMillan Park PUD Application, Case # 13-14**

Good evening, Mr. Chairman:

My name is Hugh Youngblood, former Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner of Single Member District 5C03 in Bloomingdale downstream from McMillan Park Reservoir Historic District. I also serve on the Board of Directors of Friends of McMillan Park, I Chair the Board of the Sierra Club DC Chapter, and I'm an active member of the Bloomingdale Civic Association.

I am testifying tonight in opposition to the master plan proposed in Case #13-14 because the adverse impacts of the proposed project on the surrounding communities would be **completely unacceptable** and would greatly exceed any proposed benefits. Specifically, the unresolvable transportation issues, the loss of historic resources, the loss of open space, and the environmental impacts of the proposed project (especially storm water management) would cripple our community's aging infrastructure and vastly erode our lovely quality of life. Furthermore, our neighborhood is already gentrified enough, and replacing our national landmark public park with a bunch of million-dollar condos and a private country club campus would certainly only exacerbate the problem.

But **the fundamental problem with the applicant's plan is privatization**. The applicant is asking this Commission to play a complicit role in a scheme to pilfer public assets for private gain. **This is wholly unacceptable**, and this Commission should reject this plan on that substantive ground alone before we even consider all of the gross inconsistencies with the Comprehensive Plan and the multitude of other technical merits that oblige you to reject this application.

Friends of McMillan Park looks forward to working with the community and this Commission to achieve a plan for **rehabilitating McMillan Park** into the grand public space that it was from the early 1900s until its tragic closure in 1941. In doing so, we should focus on **three high-level design requirements**:

1. **100% public park on the surface**. The existing 20-acre green roof is critical to maintaining our community's delicate storm water management balance. And with a baby boom now underway, we need a place for the kids to play.

2. **100% reuse of the park's underground filtration caverns.** We strongly support the DC Water Storm Water Storage Project, which will likely need to expand in capacity as climate change intensifies. The remaining dozen or more caverns could each easily accommodate a full-size grocery store and any other types of other cultural, commercial, and light industrial uses.
3. **100% public ownership.** McMillan Park is a valuable public asset that should be retained as a local and national resource and should never be treated as "surplus" public property or sold to any private developer.

As Commissioners Gwen Southerland and Tony Norman exemplify, **our community is firmly committed to protecting McMillan Park** from the types of privatization and destruction schemes like the one before you today. I assure that our growing coalition of preservationists and environmentalists will continue this fight until we cleanse our community of the applicant's divisive and hateful poison. Once we stop the applicant's reckless, destructive, and arrogant train, we will commence a process that will result in the preservation, restoration, and transformation of historic McMillan Park for the benefit of the public.

Thank you.

Hugh Youngblood
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