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Zoning Commission

As a resident on Franklin Street NE, the McMillan proposal directly impacts myself along with all residents living along the corridor of North Capitol Street. First, the decision to recalculate zoning so as not to include residents on the unit blocks of Channing, Douglas, Evert, Franklin and Girard Streets as "parties" is not only insulting and wholly out of order -- but raises a number of questions and concerns about those making the decision not to include residents directly impacted by this rezoning. This proposal to "zone" for high rise buildings will have far-reaching impact on the North Capitol Street corridor.

As of this writing, there is no traffic access to 1st Street NW, causing traffic delays into the MedStar, Children's Hospital Consortium resulting in traffic overflow and additional delays for those travelling on North Capitol Street. These delays are directly impacting our quiet community with increased traffic through the alleys bordering North Capitol Street, i.e., Franklin and Girard Streets, drivers often travelling at speeds well above legal 15 miles per hour; placing residents waling at risk who have long used these alleys as a travel alternate/conduit to/through Michigan Avenue. This current traffic overflow is a small picture of the huge and long-term impact of what will become of our beloved community if the issue of traffic is not closely examined. Not only is it an issue of traffic management and congestion; there are major concerns both in the interim and afterwards about the sustainability of growing traffic on North Capitol Street; specifically, the work required to rebuild the infrastructure to handle increased residential and commercial occupancy and the disruption created while the infrastructure is being retrofitted; this will literally create a nightmare for traffic purposes along North Capitol Streets and Michigan Avenue during the proposed period of increasing the number of lanes and directly impact all residents on the aforementioned streets. Not only will this construction create a huge inconvenience to the community but likewise to those travelling along this major street artery. Then there is the issue of fiber optics; which no doubt will be a part of rebuilding the infrastructure and the disruption of laying these lines and the impact resulting to existing and future residents. The impact of overloading fiber optic and electrical circuits in order to compensate for increased population in our community could conceivably create some of the same issues experienced in Georgetown. There is also the issue of parking; recently, for the first time in over 12 years, there was a need to park on North Capitol Street because of lack of parking space on Franklin Street. Trying to get out of the parking space on North Capitol Street was quite challenging and took an unusual amount of time as it was rush hour; it stands to the reason this problem will be magnified if the Vision McMillan proposal is approved as submitted. The need to park on North Capitol is a direct result of increased population within the community; i.e., two-car households and will be further exacerbated as Hospital visitors are likely to park in residential neighborhoods in order to avoid paid and street parking which will cause residents living in the community being unable to park on the streets in which they live. There are lights both at Bryant and Channing Street, both necessary in order for residents to get out of the neighborhood; particularly during rush hour traffic. Currently, the timing of those lights to access North Capitol Street favors the latter. The only other way for residents to gain access to North Capitol Street is by utilizing either the alleys and/or the Bryant Street traffic signal; and the latter very cautiously if travelling northbound. The community is held hostage to the North Capitol Street traffic with very little opportunity to get in and out of the neighborhood; this will only get worst with increased population.

Has careful and long-term planning been given to the electrical band-width required to cover an increased population within the Stronghold-Bloomingdale community. Increased power usage within the community, together with what will be required by Hospital community; particularly with respect to power outages is a major concern. Over the last few years, the Stronghold community has had to deal with a number of power outages due to the original infrastructure not being adequately constructed to cover its growing population; resulting in residents having to go without power for a week in one instance. Adding residential and commercial properties will further negatively impact the residents as well as the Medstar and other medical communities. Forethought and far-reaching long-term planning must be given not only for future use but to increasing demand and use of energy via Pepco and the underlying and residual impact of laying fiber optics.

It is clear that financial gain is driving this proposal despite objections from the majority of the community. While there is some appreciation for urban renewal; when is "enough ENOUGH?" relative to construction in this city; we are fast becoming a slab of concrete. The growth of condominium, apartment and townhouse communities within DC and a few trees planted about them is not adequate to sustain the environment. Who has been tasked with the long-term impact (beyond 20-30 years) that this proposal will cost the city? Is there any concern beyond financial profit and particularly so given the centrality of the North Capitol Street corridor? The very same scenario is happening on New York Avenue with construction of retail and residential property; the difference being it isn't surrounded by residential property. Not only does the McMillan project impact the Stronghold-Bloomingdale-Medstar community immeasurably -- but the city as a whole. What with the proposal to eliminate much of the green space on the Washington Mall, there is not one place in all of Washington DC proper that mimics the beauty of Grant Park in Chicago and Central Park, in New York City. As currently proposed, the Vision McMillan design proposal would forever obliterate the skyline, the historic views of Howard University and eliminate more than 50% of the green space given the proposed height and density of both commercial and residential buildings. The only benefactors of the current proposal are new residents and the financial purses of the District Government; and the developer of course.

Current steps are being investigated and taken by DC WASA and other agencies to address the recurring flooding issues in Bloomingdale; and perhaps to some degree in preparation for the building proposal. If it has taken years for pipes to be replaced, etc. to get to the root problem of how best to deal with flooding in the Bloomingdale community a very small square footage; is there real preparation to deal with additional flood and sewage water issues likely to result from the additional population from the McMillan proposal? The issue of water flow, sewage, quality of water are still very much an issue that has not been resolved for the current population. Adding more residential and commercial property within an area that still has not resolved all of these issues is unwise.

I strongly oppose the rezoning proposal and will be taking steps to insure that I am included as a "party" as both myself and the Stronghold community are directly impacted by any construction taking place on the McMillan Water Filtration site. I ask that the Zoning Commission postpone rezoning until a future proposal more fitting for the community and honors the heritage of the McMillan property are submitted. I respectfully request the Zoning Commission DENY the request to rezone as currently proposed by Vision McMillan developers.

Sincerely,


Jeanette M. Corley