

Testimony for the Public Hearing of CASE NO. 16-11

**Park View Community Partners & District of Columbia –
Consolidated PUD & Related Map Amendment @ Square 2890, Part of Lot 849**

**Before the Zoning Commission
Chairman Anthony Hood**

December 5, 2016

By Cynthia Purekal Keenan

My name is Cynthia Purekal Keenan and I am a resident of Ward 4. I used to live close to Park Morton, near the Petworth Metro, and know the area well. For many people, Washington DC has become unaffordable. People who have lived here for generations are being pushed out by the rapid development the city has seen in recent years. It has never been my desire to live in a homogenous city. In fact, one of the things I love most about DC is its diversity- people of all different races, religions and backgrounds live here and it is vitally important to me that that diversity continue to exist. This can only happen if we maintain and increase affordable housing.

I have met some of my neighbors from Park Morton and I have seen where they live. They are decent, hard-working people who should not have to endure unclean, unsafe conditions. They deserve better. I firmly believe that every man, woman and child deserves a clean and safe place to live. Every man, woman and child deserves to live with dignity. The conditions in which my neighbors at Park Morton currently live are unconscionable, and I believe the city needs to prioritize Park Morton's redevelopment and the development of the Bruce Monroe temporary park into safe, quality affordable housing. Green space is a great thing- I enjoy DC's parks as much as any other resident. But we cannot prioritize a piece of land, which was never intended to be a permanent park, over the lives and wellbeing of our fellow DC residents - especially when this redevelopment project ensures that the community will still have park space at the end of the day!

In closing, I would just say that I recently got married and my husband and I hope to start a family soon. It is important to me to raise my future children in a place where all people are valued and where it is not simply accepted that some of our neighbors live in squalor. I want to be able to take pride in my city. For this reason, I stand with my neighbors at Park Morton. I stand with low- and moderate-income residents across the city who both seek and deserve a decent place to call home.

Thank you.