

## Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

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**From:** Laura Milanowski <lmilanowski@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 18, 2021 3:09 PM  
**To:** DCOZ - ZC Submissions (DCOZ)  
**Subject:** Opposition to Park Tower (16-11)

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DC Zoning Commission:

I oppose replacing Bruce Monroe Community Park with a 9-story plus penthouse high rise building. The city's new Comprehensive Plan requires a thorough impact assessment – ensuring that the negative impacts on neighborhoods, transportation, environmental quality, and other issues are assessed and adequately mitigated. The DC Appeals Court made clear this was not thoroughly done.

Our community values and uses Bruce Monroe Park year round. Our kids enjoy playing on the playground and in open spaces. The community garden helps households grow their own food, and the garden's community plots provide fresh food for neighbors. The basketball and tennis courts are popular with kids and adults alike. The pavilion and expansive green space is used by community groups for outdoor festivals and by families and neighbors for birthdays and other events. This summer we saw the entire neighborhood come together for the weekly community event with bounce houses for the kids, bikes and scooters to ride around the courts, snow cones, popcorn and a chance to meet the neighbors. This park is truly the only neighborhood park in our community valued by nearly everyone in the neighborhood, where all walks of life come together. It is difficult to understand how the city could have brought us to the terrible current situation -- a nine-story plus penthouse, 120-foot building developed on top of a popular public park in a neighborhood of two-story historic townhouses and three to four story condo buildings. This makes no sense.

Our community sees the vacant properties along Georgia Avenue and the negative impact on our neighborhood, yet still, the city wants to take away the only park in our neighborhood and develop more. It's incredible to have to argue in favor of keeping park land public over another high rise in a city with declining green space, especially in the midst of a global pandemic where many people's only way to escape their apartments and rowhouses was to seek open green space. I and the neighbors of this community support both the park and affordable housing, including housing for the residents of Park Morton. However, the residents of Park Morton do not want to live in a glass tower either, and those individuals recognize they were pawns in this massive failure by the city. They have developed their own equity plan that is achievable and is in their best interest, not in the interest of the wealthy few as developers stand to make millions off of this deal. Why can't the city keep the public park space, support the Park Morton Equity Plan that provides for Park Morton residents to have the option to return to the community many of them have lived in for years, and let the developers buy up properties vacant and prime for development along the GA Ave corridor. Everyone in the neighborhood can win, and the city needs to engage with the community instead of shutting them out of these decisions. It's time to put the quality of life and the voice of DC residents (taxpayers) and their children, above that of developers, and permanently preserve this green space.

Thank you,

Laura Milanowski

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