

**COMMENTS IN OPPOSITION OF ZC CASE 19-04**

Dear Zoning Commission:

It has come to our attention (and that of over a dozen DC residents) that the outcome of tonight's zoning hearing could take away the power of DC residents and the ability of our ANCs to weigh in on important matters affecting our communities.

**We respectfully oppose** the proposal which will permit massive solar installations throughout DC to be a matter of right and not subject to the current special exception process requirement. Communities will be stripped of the due process that is currently in place and the current checks and balances will be eliminated on matters related to solar "arrays" or solar farms.

The ZC Case 19-04 proposal and the current "emergency" review process will have a detrimental impact on issues currently before at least one of our ANCs (5C):

1. It will allow organizations and agencies to forgo the ANC and BZA process in order to install solar panels that can be as high as 40 feet and quite expansive (panels potentially expanding across multiple acres of property) in our neighborhoods without input from the community. Communities may have to live next to massive solar projects for decades that could pose safety, environmental and fire hazards; impact our property values; impair our health; and compromise our quality of life--all without any opportunity to have those concerns addressed when the project is initiated with the BZA.
2. Last week's 5C ANC meeting last week was attended by many members of the Woodridge and Brookland communities who had concerns about a plan that impacts their properties near the Catholic Charities facility on Otis St, NE. While case 19-04 does not specifically mention the Catholic Charities project, it DOES have a direct impact on the ability of the community and ANCs to review and weigh in on issues related to that project.
3. From our understanding, since this matter is being considered under emergency procedures before the ZC, it will take affect immediately if the ZC makes a decision tonight in support of the proposal. That means that the community and ANC lose any leverage to ensure that the concerns that the ANC and community raised at the 5C ANC Commission meeting last week will be addressed by Catholic Charities. It also appears that Catholic Charities would not have any incentive or duty to complete nor provide the reports that the ANC requested.
4. The proposal in ZC Case 19-04 is not narrowly construed to apply to just the DP and DOEE project that requested the emergency ZC review (which they requested because of deadlines related to a specific project's funding expiration), the proposal is now broad and impacts all solar projects currently under consideration and those planned in the future. If DP indicates that there is a narrow reason for this proposal, the language must be refined to address that specific DOEE and DP project---not a broad proposal that encompasses all solar projects across the city.

There are a number of citizens who have weighed in in opposition of the ZC Case 19-04 proposal. We will be present and serve as witnesses at the hearing this evening.

Please do not allow our voices to be silenced and our right to express legitimate concerns eliminated. We should be able to be heard before the BZA on issues related to solar farms in our neighborhoods.

We do not oppose responsible solar installations (and as noted at the 5c ANC Commission meeting, some of our neighbors have solar installations on their roofs) but we do oppose allowing agencies and organizations to put massive solar farms in our communities without giving DC citizens and voters--- who are the backbone of our city-- a voice in the process.

**We oppose the proposal as written. We strongly urge the Commission to oppose the proposal as it is overly broad and expansive with unintended consequences on our communities--including the low-income communities this proposal proports to benefit.**

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request for action.

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