

May 12, 2021

District of Columbia Zoning Commission  
441 4<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Suite 200S  
Washington, DC 20001

RE: Zoning Case Number 20-27

Dear Chairman Hood and Members of the Zoning Commission:


I have lived on Marion Street since 2014 and during this entire time, the parcels of land at the end of the street have been vacant and neglected. (For a time, one was used by Roadside Development for temporary office trailers used to oversee their construction at City Market at O, but this barely moved the needle on their vacant and neglected status.) The parking lot currently occupying the corner of Marion and P Streets has been poorly managed, with overgrown vegetation, refuse dumping, overflowing trash cans, rodents, and broken fencing.

Marion Street itself is a vibrant little community with numerous families and children who play every day in the Marion Street garden, a nonprofit space run by City Blossoms to encourage public schoolchildren and local residents to learn about gardening and nature. The garden has an enthusiastic volunteer base and is well used, particularly by small children, many of whom had no other outdoor space during the pandemic shutdown of parks and rec centers. The garden would be in the shadow of any new development at 7<sup>th</sup> and P Streets and we hope it would not suffer during the construction period.

I would be glad to see the quality project proposed by High Street Development replace the empty lots at the end of the street. In presentations to neighbors, the developers have explained that they would widen the alley for access and off-street trash management, and improve the external streetscape on P with art and a pleasant experience for pedestrians.

Although the building would be the largest thing on the street, greater housing density and green building approaches are essential for 21<sup>st</sup> century sustainable cities, and we support the provision of affordable housing and units suitable for families or retirees. We were pleased to see the revised plans that reduce the building elevation on Marion Street to four stories and increase the setback of the higher floors—changes that will make that façade of the building more compatible with the petite proportions of the 140-year-old homes on Marion Street.

Sincerely,

  
Juliet Berger  
1535 Marion Street NW  
Washington, DC 20001