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From: Coy McKinney <coymckinney@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 4, 2022 7:36 PM
To: DCOZ - ZC Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: Testimony case: 22-06
Attachments: SW stats.jpeg; Build Baby Build-Housing Submarkets and the Effects of New Construction on Existing Rents.pdf; Need For Family Sized Unit DC.pdf

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Dear zoning commissioners, I write this note asking you to ask for more affordable and more 3 bedroom units to be included in this project.

Southwest is part of the planning area that has added more units than any other area in the city, yet the Black population has decreased over 20% while the White population has increased 157% over the last two decades. This demographic shift is exactly the opposite of what residents called for in the SW Neighborhood Plan (residents wanted the area to "remain an exemplary model of equity and inclusion"). Of the 6,000+ units that have come online in our planning area since 2019, only 5% have been "affordable." The price of market-rate units is beyond the median household income of Black families in DC, thus, a project where 85% of the units will be market-rate is racially exclusive. My understanding is that there is only one unit at 50% AMI, which is the AMI that best correlates to Black households, therefore, of the 500 units that will be built, only 1 will be affordable to someone who struggles to find housing anywhere else in the city. As the Build Baby Build study shows, the housing market is segmented, which means, building expensive housing will either do nothing, or raise the rent of nearby affordable or moderately priced units. The best means for addressing the affordable housing crisis is to build affordable housing, not to rely on the failed notion of trickle-down-housing, which makes the people most in need of housing wait, and more importantly, hope, that sometime in the future the price of housing will decrease enough for them to afford.

While the applicant is proud of the 15% "affordable" units they are providing in this project, it is unfortunately not enough. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments says that 75% of new units need to be for low and moderate income residents. Even IZ+ is at 20%. For too long, developers have been allowed to make large sums of money off of exclusionary housing practices. When we ask for more, we're told it won't pencil, while we see other 100% affordable projects pop up in the city and other areas. We see shared equity models, like community land trusts, that are able to provide permanently affordable housing and keep people in their homes for decades. I ask, why are they are successful and are able to produce racially just outcomes, and for-profit, majority market-rate building unsuccessful? Isn't it time for developers to share some of the sacrifice displaced residents and advocates have had to endure over the years, at largely at their expense?

My understanding is that all these units will be apartments. How does 500 more rental units help the Mayor achieve her goal of adding 20,000 Black homeowners to the District by 2030? The overwhelming majority of units that have come online in Southwest have been rental. This neither helps address the racial gap in homeownership, or help create a neighborhood where residents are encouraged to stay long term and participate in civic associations.

Southwest and the city as a whole is in desperate need for affordable family sized units. Only having 8 in this project does not help this issue.

While I do not believe one project can right the wrongs of over a decade of harmful practices, each project must play a role in addressing past harms. I have read too many applicant briefs claiming their projects won't displace anyone and that it will help the housing crisis. And year after year more Black people are displaced and the cost of housing increases. How much more of this are developers and the zoning commission going to allow? We need applicants and the zoning commission to take a stand and start putting people over the interests of profits.

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"In order to be truly antiracist, you have to be truly anticapitalist."

- Dr. Ibram Kendi, author of: *How To Be An Antiracist* - ([link](#))