

From: [Nancy Turnbull](#)
To: [DCOZ - ZC Submissions \(DCOZ\)](#)
Subject: Opposition to Zoning Change for Proposed Development at 17th and U St NW
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I ask that this be included in the public record for ZC Case Number 23-02. I request to testify virtually regarding my opposition comments below. I live on Seaton Street, 1/2 block from 1617 U Street NW. I have lived here, in the Striver's Historic District, since 1994.

I would like to see this property redeveloped with purpose, planning and community engagement, all of which are lacking at this point. It is crucial to consider the impact of any redevelopment on the character and quality of life of our neighborhood. I have concerns regarding the current proposal to rezone this site as proposed by the City. Several supporters of this zoning change state this is "justified because a larger development at this site would be appropriate to its U Street context". This height is not appropriate. I encourage the Commissioners to walk around this block to visit the area yourselves.

There are other options available that address the low-density community to the north and west. A split zoning approach for the Site is supported by the DC Comprehensive Plan and the Generalized Policy Map, which designates the entire northern half of the Site (along V Street) as a Neighborhood Conservation Area. Upzoning to MU10 is inconsistent with the northern half of the site as **a designated Neighborhood Conservation Area**. Doesn't this designation matter? Doesn't the designation of historic districts (that surround this site) matter? A high-rise structure on V Street NW would be at odds with the City's position that the Striver's Section is a historic neighborhood worthy of preservation in its "historic" form. I urge you to consider a split zoning decision, with the M-4 classification for the northern half of the block and a higher classification for the U Street portion. The proposed zoning is harmfully out of character with the historic Shriver's and 16th Street Districts. Our neighborhood is defined by two- to three-story row houses that are more than 120 years old. The building of a 12-story structure would cause a substantial loss of light during and after the construction, and impact overall livability for residents. A redevelopment that follows the existing zoning or no more than 6 stories with appropriate setbacks from V St. and 17th St. would be much more fitting and respects the scale of the neighborhood. This is not a proposed building in the middle of the block; this 2-acre space encompasses most of the block.

Community-driven collaborative planning processes must occur and drive the redevelopment plans for this public site. To date, details have been held back, studies have not been conducted and nothing has been discussed with affected residents. Every week I encounter neighbors who have not heard anything about this project. The City has made no attempt to reach out. The disruption of relocating first responders adds another challenge. This is unacceptable but it can be changed. We can build affordable housing on this 2-acre site without a 14th Street or downtown-sized building that the high-density rezoning will trigger. As someone noted, we can build four stories of affordable housing on top of a fire station along U Street, easily without years of construction of a twelve-story building. We can include

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public green space in this area and/or other community needs.

There is no MU10 zoning in the immediate area. Even the Reeves Center proposal at 14th & U is not this high. The rezoning of 1617 U Street should be compatible with the area - high-density MU10 rezoning is not. Please consider these concerns in addition to the City's lack of community outreach, lack of planning, potential structural and environmental issues to the neighborhood, and disruption and expense to move the police and fire departments from this public land. Please reject the current proposal and ask for a re-submission with a proposal for split zoning.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nancy Turnbull
Seaton Street NW