

# ANC Commissioners Speak Against Radical Upzoning at 1617 U Street; Ward One Councilmember Brianne Nadeau Commits Funding to a Project That Doesn't Yet Exist (unless it already does) – Save DC Public Land: Working for a Safe & Affordable U Street

U Street AIR Press alert :: Contact

**ANC Commissioners Speak Against Radical Upzoning at 1617 U Street; Ward One Councilmember Brianne Nadeau Commits Funding to a Project That Doesn't Yet Exist (unless it already does) May 8, 2023, Washington, D.C.** — In the past couple of months, the Mayor, through the Deputy Mayor's Office of Planning and Economic Development has been pitching a radical land use change at the 2-acre public site bounded by 17th and V Streets and 1620 U Street, NW. The Mayor wants this large public site [to be rezoned from MU4 to MU10, almost tripling the allowable density of the site.](#)

## 1617 U Street NW



**AGENCY:** DMPED  
**ADDRESS:** 1617 U STREET NW  
AND 1620 V STREET NW  
**WARD:** 1  
**SIZE:** ~82,000 SF  
**ZONING:** MU-4  
**NEIGHBORHOOD:** ADAMS  
MORGAN / REED-COOKE  
**RFP RELEASE:** FALL 2022

Neighbors in the surrounding communities — that straddle Adams Morgan and North Dupont — have not been meaningfully welcomed to a highly-advertised community-wide discussion about such a dramatic land use change that may result in the teardown and disruption of the existing police & fire stations to be replaced with a 12-story (with penthouse) 100+ foot tall downtown-sized building.



mockup of potential building (no plans yet shared)

ZONING COMMISSION  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO.23-02  
EXHIBIT NO.623

DMPED has been compelling local Advisory Neighborhood Commissions around 1617 U Street to take a position in favor of the rezoning and have won those votes but with serious caveats that highlight and seek to mitigate the impacts of such a substantial land use change on the surrounding communities.

Notably, the ANC Commissioners who live closest to the Third District Police and Fire Stations have voted against the rezoning after speaking with the impacted neighbors.

- **Commissioner Barry Shapiro (SMD 1C08):** “The facts are it could all be affordable housing if the city is willing to pay for it.” “[This is about] moving this from MU4 to MU10 to an absolutely inappropriately sized building” “The idea that we would allow a zoning map change to this extent that is inappropriate to the neighborhood is a shock to me.” Exhibit #285 on ZC Case 23-02
- **Commissioner Alan Kensek (SMD 1B05):** “This whole thing has been very hard for me, but without guarantees I cannot be in favor,” “Because of what DMPED did with the Reeves Center, there is no guarantees [with this project]”
- **Commissioner Ashleigh Fields (SMD 1B07):** “I’ve received a lot of pushback, I must ask DMPED conduct & publish a risk assessment regarding displacement”
- **Commissioner John Jones (SMD1C09):** “I do not like the notion that when it is suggested that somehow we should roll over in the face of being in the middle of the city, if we don’t make sure that people live here and have a right to stay in this neighborhood, we are missing the point” “We have an obligation to consider the people who made and make this city” “Insufficient consideration has been given to the people of this specific neighborhood”
- **Commissioner Margaret Stevens (SMD 1C05):** “I have become increasingly concerned that the increase in height and density allowed by MU-10 will be too great. I am most concerned with the effects on the neighboring Strivers and 16th Street Historical Districts and the adjacent residential buildings in terms of traffic increases, access to light and adherence to the general character of the area. I had asked for the vote to be postponed giving more time for research and Community input but that was not availed to us. ... I realize that the Office of Planning has a best practices standard in place that frowns upon split zoning for plots less than 2 acres, but 1617 U Street is 1.88 acres. Therefore, I feel it’s worth a look.”

In Ward One Councilmember Brianne Nadeau’s [recent newsletter](#), she gives an update that she: “Maintained funding for redevelopment of 1617 U Street NW.”

However, no one knows for sure the amount or for what this funding is to be used for as the driving entity behind the whole deal, DMPED has been publicly stating there is no project right now to actually discuss or fund.