

I am a 29-year-old resident of DC and currently live in Petworth, but often go to the U street area for shopping and exercise. I love living in DC; in fact, moving here has been one of the best decisions of my life. I deeply value housing affordability, environmental sustainability, and community, which is why I am excited to add my comment in support of high density development on U street, and specifically this proposal to upzone 1617 U street to MU-10 in line with the Comprehensive Plan.

Right now, as a society we are facing several interconnected opportunities and challenges. More people want to move to DC than ever before. However, DC, like many cities across the country, has a massive housing shortage. When cities have a shortage of units, gentrification worsens because the wealthy are willing to pay higher amounts for available units, drastically raising prices and crowding out everyone else. Moreover, these density restrictions result in suburban sprawl, which is terrible for the environment in many ways. When we can't build up, we build out. If we hope to address the intertwined housing and climate crises, we must invest in our cities to be denser and provide options other than cars for transportation. We especially must invest in affordable housing for low-income residents.

We have an opportunity to build a significant amount of housing at 17th and U Street, in addition to other community spaces such as a new public library. In fact, because development would be on public land, DC requires that at least 30% must be permanently affordable units, which would be great. To me, it seems like an absolute no-brainer that we not only should be building housing in this space, but that we should build as much as possible. I would love to see a tall apartment building in that space which is currently very under-utilized. In order to make that possible, this upzoning proposal should be approved swiftly and without undue delay.

Thank you,

Miranda

Submitted on 2/20/2023 by:
Comments in support of upzoning 1617 U street