

Walker-Bey, James T.

From: Judy Blumenthal <judyblumenthal@earthlink.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 4:31 PM
To: Clerk of the Council
Subject: APPEAL REGARDING DSP-22015 9113 BALTIMORE AVENUE / From Judy Blumenthal
Attachments: Cherokee St morning Sunday Jan 22 2023.jpeg; Delaware Street morning Jan 22 2023.jpeg

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear Clerk of the Council:

I am requesting an appeal of the decision, and am asking the District Council to review the Detailed Site Plan and reverse, or modify the decision of the Planning Board.

For the safety and welfare of the residents who live in the surrounding neighborhoods of North College Park, I am requesting this appeal for several reasons:

Both ingress and egress on Baltimore Avenue are necessary. As you can see by the attached photos, there is no room for traffic on the two streets that border the proposed development (Cherokee Street and Delaware Street).

Precedence has already been established for ingress and egress on Route One with other developments, such as Lidl (8601 Baltimore Ave).

Denying ingress and egress on Route One will worsen the already existing fire trap on Cherokee Street and Delaware Street. In addition, emergency response vehicles will not be able to reach their destination promptly, and there will be no safe evacuation of the surrounding neighborhoods if necessary.

With proper pedestrian traffic signals, pedestrian safety will not be a concern. The cost of pedestrian traffic signals is insignificant relative to the safety and welfare of the residents who live in the surrounding neighborhoods of the proposed development.

Please consider the amount of pedestrian traffic at Lidl's, where there is no known concern. To restate: you approved ingress and egress on Route One for this high traffic and popular business.

To deny ingress and egress for 9113 Baltimore Avenue is putting the residents in the surrounding neighborhoods in harm's way.

Furthermore,

The safety and welfare of the residents of North College Park supersede allowances in the Sector Plan (dated 2010 with a website posting date of January 12, 2023) and that you deny the proposed construction.

The Sector Plan has been overtaken by environmental trends and permanent changes. The proposed construction of a 6-7 story building, with 317 multifamily dwelling units, will negatively impact the safety and welfare of the surrounding neighborhoods and residents.

Information below will address your authority to deny the proposed construction, especially the height; setbacks; parking; and area requirements such as gas lines, power grids, water and sewer.

Utilities Systems

As evident by the recent gas line problems on Route One and in the residential streets in North College Park, and previous electrical grid problems plus water and sewer (WSSC) problems, the RST proposal will over load the utilities systems. Specifically:

Washington Gas:

The proposed development will overload, the already weakened, gas lines.

Recent Washington Gas attention to serious leaks in the City of College Park occurred in February and December of 2022; the latter caused Baltimore Avenue(Route One) to be closed in both direction for several days.

In 2021 "within a 45-day period, Washington Gas responded to (8) gas leak/odor calls in the College Park area and made (25) leak repairs."

PEPCO:

Power grids cannot be maintained in our current environment. For example, the severe storm of July 2022 resulted in "more than 27,000 Pepco customers in Prince George's County experienced power outages. Prince George's County Fire and EMS received more than 350 calls for its service,... with the worst of the damage in College Park, Berwyn Heights and Greenbelt. "

WSSC:

Water Mains are old and "nearing the end of their useful life", as reported for College Park in 2013. It was further stated, "after more than 90 years of service, WSSC is facing ... decaying pipes and valves. The water mains within the [College Park] project area were originally installed in the 1920s, 1950s, 1960s and 1970s."

Traffic:

Another serious impact is the increase in traffic. As it now stands, emergency vehicles have difficulty reaching their destination promptly, plus there is no safe evacuation route if necessary. New development will even worsen this current dilemma.

Parking:

Parking, of course, will overwhelm North College Park. For example, the current traffic problems on Delaware Street will become even more unmanageable and less safe, and Cherokee Street will be more of a fire trap.

The proposed construction allows for 1.5 cars per unit. But this does not reflect the current state of affairs regarding number of occupants per unit.

Specifically, the proposal does not adjust for multigenerational family households, cohabitation, nor leasing and renting out rooms.

"According to an analysis of census data from 1971-2021, the number of people living in multigenerational family households quadrupled during that time period, reaching 59.7 million in March 2021. The share more than doubled as well, to 18% of the U.S. population. Mar 24, 2022.”

“In March 2021, there were 59.7 million U.S. residents who lived with multiple generations under one roof, compared with 58.4 million in 2019, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of census data. The share of the U.S. population living in multigenerational households in 2021 was 18%. Mar 24, 2022".

Furthermore, "this generation is investing in home ownership ... they're co-buying houses with friends".... "The number of homes bought by people with different last names has increased by nearly 772 percent from 2010 (the date of our Sector Plan) to last July [2021].”

Additionally, leasing and renting out rooms are common behaviors in a college town, especially in the City of College Park.

Therefore, with the current trend of multifamily units, cohabitation, leasing and renting, a conservative estimate of necessary parking should be no less than three vehicles per unit.

To summarize, The Sector Plan has been overtaken by environmental trends and permanent changes. The proposed construction of a 6-7 story building with 317 multifamily dwelling units, will negatively impact the safety and welfare of the surrounding neighborhoods and residents.

In your authority to serve the public interest for all persons, to protect the integrity of the natural and current environment, and to pay attention to long-range consequences -

I ask that you exercise your authority to deny the proposed construction at 9113 Baltimore Avenue.

Thank you for your consideration to this serious matter.

Sincerely,

Judy Blumenthal, Ph.D.
9205 49th Avenue
College Park, MD 20740
Cell: 202-368-6159
judyblumenthal@earthlink.net



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