

City of Takoma Park

Takoma Junction Community Comments

JESSIE CARPENTER of College Park, MD
Commented on: Tuesday, September 28, 2021

No comment.

Steve & Kathy Breckbill of Takkoma Park, MD
Commented on: Monday, June 28, 2021

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

We wanted to thank you for your recommendation of denial to the Montgomery County Planning Board.

We especially want to thank Council Members Kovar and Smith for their leadership in understanding the need to cut ties to NDC. We appreciate knowing that all of you recognize the seriousness of the list of problems with the NDC proposal that you present in the recommendation to MCPB. Please hear the concerns of Kovar and Smith and join them in moving to break with NDC.

NDC continues to twist the meaning of the development commitments they agreed to and contend that they have fully met them and have worked closely with the City and the community. All we have really seen from NDC is bullying and pushing their own agenda. We have not seen an honest collaboration with the city and with the Junction businesses that works within the limits of the lot and its location to benefit all of us. Their comments on SHA's recognition of the hazard of any lay-by at that location have been condescending and insulting. They have not addressed the other shortcomings noted in your recommendation and appear uninterested in doing so.

Again let us say, we all want to see a great development at the Junction. It's now time to put the relationship with NDC in the past and get the process back on track. Welcome new City Manager Jamal Fox with clear direction for removing NDC and finding a reputable development partner.

Thank you for all your efforts.

Mary Mihalyi of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Wednesday, June 16, 2021

The actions by NDC, including failing to stick with the chosen plan and the totally unacceptable threats to the TPSS Co-op, lead to no other conclusion but that the city of Takoma Park should cease to do business with them.

There has been so much debate and controversy over the redevelopment and the way forward is still not clear. Perhaps it's time to step back and re-think the whole idea.

Jay Levy of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Wednesday, June 16, 2021

The handling of the Takoma Junction redevelopment process is probably the greatest fiasco in the 46 plus

years I've lived in the city. Paramount to any final decision whatsoever is the viability of the Co-op to continue its excellent service to the community its excellent service to the community.

Stephen Brown of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, June 16, 2021

The Takoma Junction development project is simply a bad idea from any angle. The parking lot currently is a support of small business and the Co-op and has value to the community. If you look at the plan put forward from Vision for Takoma, you see a lower impact use of the land that would welcome use by groups and individuals in Takoma at a much more reasonable cost to the city. Where have we lost our way? NDC has already made clear to us how little regard they have for the city and it's residents. This corner is already a traffic problem every day. And what in our history makes us feel qualified to be commercial landlords of a project like this?

This is a bad idea that needs to stop now.

Betty Krier of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, June 16, 2021

Disapprove NDC's plan options! The city council and mayor need to take this step in no uncertain terms. Multiple sources have determined the plans to be unworkable for the coop, and the coop is an important and integral part of the of the Takoma Park community. NDC is obviously incapable or unwilling to reasonably accommodate the coop, so NDC must not be accommodated. The city council and mayor need to finally proved themselves responsive to citizen concerns and long standing activism in this matter.

Ben Rempell of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, June 15, 2021

I support moving forward with the modest development project at the Takoma Junction. We live in an amazing urban community with the privilege of proximity to public transit, yet also a growing number of options to fulfill our shopping and entertainment interests within our community. Adding modest and limited options such as offered at the Junction will not change the nature or culture of our community, and also add nice new options to our community to improve the walkability, tax base, opportunities to interact with other members of our community, and over time build cohesion. I believe over time the divisions that have been created from this project will dissipate. Change is always hard, and we have real challenges in our community that our elected leaders have not been able to make progress on due in part to the intense battle over this modest proposal. I hope the council will allow this to move forward so they can build the local tax base and move onto much more vital issues such as racial equity, increased opportunities for our lower income neighbors, and increased public transit-friendly density necessary to do our part in the battle against climate change.

Richard Levine of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, June 15, 2021

The current proposed plan should be rejected. It is dividing instead of unifying our community and did not follow or include the the recommendations of the citizen advisory committee created to propose use of the junction. Any proposed plan must have much broader community support which requires closely listening to opposing voices to arrive at a win win proposal

Michael Schoenke of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, June 15, 2021

The Takoma Junction development has been under negotiation for approval for at least that past five years. It has created major divisions in our community. On the cusp of approval, NDC revealed its true colors as being profit motivated and not working in the best interests of the community.

It is time to move on! Lets invest our time and resources to address other more pressing needs in our community - creating more employment opportunities for youth, re-envisioning our police services to focus on public safety, fostering diversity and racial equality, supporting local businesses, expanding affordable housing initiatives and investing in climate friendly programs to reduce our carbon footprint.

I am confident that the Takoma Park community can come up with other creative, minimally disruptive and equally sustainable ways to utilize the land for the benefit of everyone.

Elaine Emling of SILVER SPRING, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, June 15, 2021

As an experienced planner who worked in Loudoun County, VA [retired], I can say that the process this NDC plan has gone through would indicate a denial by the powers that make a final decision.

It is folly to violate the agreement to accommodate the Co-op in the plan; dangerous to propose a lay-by that interferes with pedestrians, other vehicular traffic, cyclists; and a darn shame to approve a plan that would terminate this Co-op.

Please relieve the NDC of this opportunity to destroy a valuable business in Takoma Park. My husband and I are members.

MaryAnn Henry of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, June 15, 2021

As hard as it is to give up a project you've put a lot of time and work into, sometimes it needs to be done. A large, multi-use building at this busy intersection is a bad idea; the layby is a bad idea; treating a local business like its needs don't matter is a very bad idea. The Co-Op is obeying the terms of the contract. NDC is not. It's time to terminate the contract with NDC and start over with something that will actually work in and for our community.

Linda Carlson of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, June 15, 2021

Dear Mayor Stewart and Council Members,

I'm writing to express my very strong hope that you will vote to disapprove the NDC Takoma Junction Plan and will sever ties with NDC, for the sake of the unity of the community, the survival of the Coop, the health of other Junction businesses, the safety of pedestrians, the preservation of public space, and for many more reasons that countless others have laid out in written and public testimony. Thank you.

Roland Weiss of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, June 15, 2021

The draft disapproval resolution states that "More work is required to address the rear facade design," which significantly understates the issues. Resolution 2018-41 required NDC to design the rear of the building to minimally impact the residential neighborhood and the wooded lot behind it. The design significantly impacts

the residential neighborhood, which is part of the Historic District. The NDC Statement of Justification states that the proposed development does not need to be compatible with the character of the residential neighborhood. The design for the rear of the building has not been reviewed by the Historic District Commission. The design removes a significant number of trees from the wooded lot which would provide screening, and the trees being planted will not provide screening for decades. The illustrations provided by NDC in response to community requests are clearly unrealistic.

Roland Weiss of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, June 15, 2021

The draft disapproval resolution does not mention traffic issues. Resolution 2018-41 stated that NDC's and the City's traffic studies found that the intersection is currently near capacity and would exceed acceptable levels with the addition of future traffic resulting from other development projects unrelated to this project and traffic studies recommended a reconfiguration of the Takoma Junction intersection. A significant reconfiguration of the intersection is unlikely to occur.

Jacqueline Moore of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, June 14, 2021

It is way past time to sever relations with NDC. We need transparency, not continued opacity, by our city officials. Stop NDC now!

Gary Geck of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, June 13, 2021

I support the Takoma Junction development in the scale and layout as it is now presented. I preferred more density and a back alley for deliveries, but the progression of feedback to the plans over the years haven't made me against the current plans.

I also wish to note that the "optional demographic question" missing is "how long do you intend to live in Takoma Park? Building at Takoma Junction is for the people living here over the next 40 years. While I support maintaining the historical integrity of the City and the neighborhood, I expect the City to evolve to the needs of the next generations. Most importantly for sustainability is to make denser, walkable neighborhoods with services available to the surrounding residents.

Jane Hsiao of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, June 11, 2021

Whether you are for or against the current development plan, it is impossible to ignore the fact the process has been a divisive nightmare. It would be so nice to put something in the parking lot that would bring people together. The current plans have caused a tremendous amount of ill will among neighbors for many years now. As a long term resident of Takoma Park, this has been so sad for me to watch. Disheartening as it may be to see a great deal of work go down the drain, it seems like the time has come to start over in a spirit of peace, collaboration, and friendship.

Steve & Kathy Breckbill of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, June 10, 2021

Mayor and Council Members

We have read the drafts of your recommendation to Montgomery County Planning Board. It is not surprising that your 3rd option lists some serious problems with the NDC plans. That option recommends that the Planning Board disapprove the NDC plan. Please send that disapproval to the Planning Board.

We and many others have registered many safety, traffic, parking, open space, tree preservation and storm water runoff problems.

Most important, NDC has shown complete disrespect for the Council, the residents and the City as a whole, not to mention the legal and binding agreements it signed! Voting for any of the other options would be voting for more of the same from NDC.

In the next few days, please take the time to walk around the former 7 -11 location at 218 Carroll Street across from the Takoma METRO stop. This is owned by NDC and is their other project in the Takoma Park area. We know the potential problems at the Junction, but this seemingly abandoned and derelict lot could be a warning for the future of the Junction. The fence is bent and looks as if it could fall at any time. It obviously has not kept the vandals out. There is quite a lot of graffiti. The building is showing damage. There is much trash, both litter and large objects. Weeds are sprouting in every crack. It is very depressing to pass this corner.

NDC has had this property for a number of years. They promised many things but alas, nothing is happening but degradation.

This is NOT the good neighbor they're promising to be. This is NOT the developer we want to be partnered with.

Please send the disapproval recommendation to the County Planning Board. End this disastrous relationship as soon as possible.

Respectfully,

Steve & Kathy Breckbill

George/Marcie French/Stickle of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, June 09, 2021

Testimony to Request City Vote to Disapprove NDC Takoma Junction Project, 6/9/20, City Council Meeting.

The City finally acted and got NDC to rescind its absurd directive that the Co-op vacate its delivery area, and parking lot that it subleases to the Co-op.

This directive caused the Co-op to have to sue both the City & NDC, and incur unnecessary grief, worry, and time, and lawyer and court costs, that may never be recovered.

The City was complicit in causing this unjust action by NDC who thought they saw a way that they could force the Co-op out of business.

The City likes to term this as a dispute between the Co-op & NDC, but in reality it is a dispute between the City and NDC.

Before the Lawsuit and Injunction by the Co-op was necessary for the Co-op's survival, the City gave NDC a directive to rescind their letter to the Co-op of several weeks ago to vacate the City parking lot, which NDC ignored up until now after the lawsuit was brought.

Think how difficult it will be to make NDC do the right thing once they put a shovel in the ground; they won't play softball; they will play hardball on steroids. There's no reason to assume they will comply with other City directives.

It took them weeks to comply initially. Now is the time to end the flawed relationship, to say goodbye to NDC before they continue to act inappropriately, irreparably harming the Co-op, and perpetuate chaos at the Junction.

NDC has had several bites of the apple with both Mo Co Planning & SHA. Please end this theater of the absurd, and sever ties with NDC. They cannot be trusted to do the right thing. What kind of shenanigans will they engage in when and if construction commences.

NDC should realize that a large segment of Takoma Park residents have lost all confidence in them. If NDC does not have the decency to walk away, the City must insist they do so.

Think how hard it will be to hold NDC to other commitments and to the contract once construction starts.

NDC will continue to look for waivers to game the system.

Please vote to disapprove the NDC Project; please sever ties with NDC. They are not worthy of our Town's spirit.

Their project devours our Co-op, our multi-cultural heart and soul anchor, our cornucopia of goodness serving all, celebrating its and our 40th Birthday!

George French & Marcie Stickle, 510 Albany Ave., TP 20912

Paul Chrostowski of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, June 09, 2021

ANOTHER FALSE AND MISLEADING STATEMENT ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT

City Staff has repeatedly asserted that the current parking lot at the junction is a heat sink (that contributes to atmospheric warming) which will be mitigated by the development. In reality, no one has a clue whether this is true or not because no one has done the calculation. The ability of a structure to absorb and retain heat is based on three factors -- albedo (solar reflectivity), thermal emissivity and the heat capacity of the construction materials. Heat capacity is the most important of these three over the long term. It depends on the material itself and the mass (amount) of material used in the building. Asphalt actually has a lower heat capacity than many other materials including light concrete, wall board, hard brick, and plaster. So if these materials are used, the heat island effect from the building can easily be greater than the parking lot. The albedo of asphalt is also comparable to that of concrete, most roofing materials, and even tree canopies. The City should refrain from spreading these false assertions unless they have done their homework and can defend their results with standard engineering calculations.

Joan Murtagh of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, June 09, 2021

Please vote to disapprove the plan for the Junction and end all interactions with NDC.

Rachel Hardwick of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, June 08, 2021

NDC has shown all of us its true colors. You have observed its lack of cooperation behind the scenes and its total disregard of our community and our desires (as spelled out in the RFP, resolutions, and the development agreement). We witnessed NDC bully the Co-op, leaving the Co-op with no choice but to ask a court for an injunction (as a former Co-op board member and president, I know that was a very costly undertaking for our community grocery store). Furthermore, NDC minimizes our concerns about aspects of the project, telling us that it knows best and we'll love it once its built. We should believe what we see: NDC is not cooperative, does not respect the community it claims to serve, talks to us as if we are stupid, and bullies our businesses. We most definitely should not continue in a 90+ year relationship with NDC. As the old saying goes, "fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me." In the case of NDC, it would be shame on our City Council if it approves going forward with NDC.

Esther Siegel of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, June 08, 2021

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

This is a moment of opportunity. We are about to welcome a new City Manager, who we trust, after through research, was the best candidate. Someone, by the way, my nephew has worked with in Portland.

This is a moment of opportunity to welcome him with a clean slate concerning the junction. It is not fair to saddle him with defending a flawed and unwanted development. This is the time we can all start over.

There is so much evidence that the current development does not meet your most fundamental provisions. You have identified persistent unresolved issues that continue to be unresolved. The developer has proven over and over again there are unwilling to accommodate your specifications. Further, the developer has cleverly manipulated you to bend to what they want. I remind you, you represent us, not the developer.

A Ritchie Ave resident wrote on the listserv, "Why do we accept uncritically the idea that profits will always be maximized and supply will always follow demand, and not the idea that people want to live in quiet areas with less density? We know that blind adherence to classical economics has brought our planetary life support systems to the brink of collapse, and we are free to reject these outdated ways of thinking anytime".

You can show us that you have learned important lessons from the pandemic such as the absurdity of building new office space when the rest of the world is re-thinking and re-imagining the use of existing office space. You know in your heart of hearts no "service non-profits" will afford or be willing to pay what the ultimate rental cost would be and, that open, public space for community events is what is needed and essential for our health. How did you let that disappear?

Public space is publicly owned, it is accessible, shared physical space where people can gather and interact. Public space acts as the cultural, social and environmental connective tissue between business, homes and institutions. Do these words sound familiar? Does this current development meet the terms you outlined the Development Agreement and 2018 Resolution? You know the answer is NO.

You can make good your commitment to the Co-op, as expressed in the Development Agreement and 2018 Resolution. The Co-op is one of the most successful businesses in our community. By now, no matter what yet another configuration is presented, it is time to finally say NO to this ridiculous lay pay concept. Remember, this layby would serve all the businesses. May I also remind you that several delivery drivers have expressed concern that their company would probably not be able to continue to deliver to the Co-op under the layby condition. Remember, you publicly support the viability of the Co-op. Are you listening and standing behind your own words?

You can win back the confidence of businesses and honor their commitment to our community who right now

fear that you would not support them in deference to an outside developer.

You can bring our community back together to be the unique, vibrant, special community.

If you do support the current development and insist on choosing the developer over your constituents, you will succeed where the I-95 project failed – you will succeed in permanently dividing Takoma Park, and destroy our unique, wonderful, vibrant community. That will be your legacy.

This is a moment of opportunity.

I trust you will take to heart your own commitment to the Co-op and your constituents who want our public space to serve the community.

Thank you,
Esther Siegel
on Erie

Jenny Apostol DiPaul of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, June 07, 2021

When I heard that NDC had resubmitted a site plan to SHA with a shorter lay-by, I couldn't imagine how that could possibly be a credible solution to any of the issues barring SHA approval. Is shorter safer for pedestrians and traffic? I expected the City to immediately reject such a proposal--if it is really too short to accommodate delivery vehicles-- since that would go against mandates the City requires to accommodate delivery and loading capacity for the Co-op and other area businesses. Such tactics, including an attempt by NDC to ban use of the lot by Co-op suppliers, waste time and taxpayer money as well as drain Co-op funds. The City's stated position of neutrality during this process is laughable, since it would be insane if the City did not favor approval the development after so much time and resource has been devoted to this project. That desire to get the deal done should not inhibit the City from demanding responsible and collaborative project management from their partner. This has been a much more confusing and divisive process than necessary due to lack of clear directives or consequences from City Admin.

Adriana Elefante of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, June 06, 2021

This project is short-sighted and fatally flawed in not including the Coop building and site from the beginning. This plan will perpetuate and worsen the problems of the intersection, which could be ameliorated or solved with a different approach.

- The lay-by represents a stunning degree of wishful thinking about traffic. It is a deal breaker.
- Parking for the project is problematic, as are the effects at the rear of the site, including stormwater management.
- The sidewalk treatment has some appeal, but the suggestion that it is a public gathering space is laughable.
- There is not even a nod to affordable housing.

All in all, this proposal has the appearance of one designed to generate the most profit. Is this the only way to develop this site? Is it in the city's best interest?

I recommend going back to square one:

- Make a basic plan for the whole Junction
- Make a considered plan for the City site, and find a way to include the Co-op site in it.
- Use some sort of arrangement that does not place profit before other considerations.

Bill Brown of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, June 06, 2021

I urge the council to follow their own judgement on this. They are the only ones who've attended all the meetings, read all the documents, studied all the issues, and listened to all the opinions. They are in the best position to decide.

Kristin Treado of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, June 06, 2021

I remain concerned that State Highway seems uninterested in fixing the intersection at the Junction, which is confusing, dangerous, and frustrating for drivers and pedestrians. While I would like to see the parking lot developed into something that serves the community and contributes to the tax base in Takoma Park, I worry about inviting more people to an intersection that can't handle the traffic it has now.

Salim Furth of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, June 05, 2021

Dear Council members,

As a neighbor of the Takoma Junction site, I am eager to see it developed in a way that contributes to the liveliness neighborhood and replaces the ugly parking lot. Please vote to recommend approval of the NDC project so that it can proceed without further delay.

Respectfully,
Salim Furth

Elizabeth Maury of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, June 05, 2021

The NDC has proven itself to be a bad actor in many respects. It has attacked the Co-op, a longstanding and thriving business in Takoma Park, and has put in jeopardy the other businesses at the Junction. Its proposed lay-by, even with modifications, threatens the safety of pedestrians at the Junction and will block traffic in both directions on State Highway 410. The stormwater, parking and issues for neighborhood residents have not been addressed. Please drop NDC.

Lynn Baumeister of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, May 19, 2021

NDC has shown itself to be a bully and non-responsive.

Please drop NDC now.

Do not see any benefit, and many negatives, in a long term contractual agreement between the city and NDC

Mike Lastort of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, May 13, 2021

Judge Storm has given, and granted temporary relief to the Co-Op from NDC's attempt to stop deliveries in the parking lot. It's now time to cut ties with NDC before this goes to court.

I'm sure the mayor and city council don't want to go down in history as the government that was taken to court by the Co-Op.

Dump NDC! Do it now!! Do it in memory of Sammie Abbott.

You know it's the right thing to do.

Roland Weiss of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, May 11, 2021

Given all the effort by the Mayor, Council-members, and County and City staff on the project over the years, I understand it's difficult for them to terminate the agreement with NDC. I have supported development of the lot, but after NDC's move against the CoOP, I don't believe that NDC is a good long term partner.

When SHA disapproved the lay-by, I hoped the City would be able to work with NDC in developing a new, smaller site plan that addressed community concerns and clearly satisfied all of the provisions of the Junction resolution and development agreement. Instead NDC responded by trying to put the CoOP out of business. They had to know what the community reaction would be. That NDC has not responded to the City's request to not interfere with the CoOP's use of the parking lot for its deliveries and parking is a sign of things to come.

If the project with NDC continues, many very difficult issues are certain to arise in redesigning the site plan, during construction, managing the development, and maintaining the wooded lot. I'd expect NDC to behave as they have with the CoOP when it suits them. I'd like to see the lot improved, but I don't think NDC is a partner who will work constructively with the Council, existing Junction businesses, and residents. I don't see any alternative to terminating the agreement. It will be even more difficult to terminate after this point.

Wilbur King of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, May 11, 2021

If this "development" of the Co-op's parking lot goes through as planned, it will mean the end of Takoma Park as we know it. It will be the destruction of a way of life. We may as well be in another Bethesda, which may be the intention of the developers.

edwin stromberg of takoma park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, May 11, 2021

The issues is clear. NDC actions are intended to hurt The TPSS coop. Dup NDC now.

Mark Fisher of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, May 11, 2021

With its disavowal of the baseless "letter of concern" generated by our city manager, the city has done the absolute minimum to compensate. The NDC has clearly demonstrated its contempt for our city by ignoring the city's timid request that they not violate their sublease with the Co-op.

It is time to take clear action, and sever relations with NDC.

Susy Cheston of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, May 11, 2021

The TPSS Co-op is a treasure of our community and needs full support from the city. I appreciate good faith efforts that have been made to negotiate with NDC to date and recognize it is hard to pull the plug on the initial investment, but we need to face that there is a disconnect between our community values and this development plan.

Linda Rabben of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, May 11, 2021

I've been a resident of Takoma Park for more than 30 years and a homeowner in the city for 27 years. Since public resistance to the TJ project became vocal and sustained about 3 years ago, I've been thinking more and more that the quirky, diverse town I've called home for 3 decades is no more. Gentrification, unaffordable taxes and unresponsive government have killed it. The city manager's and city council's arrogant refusal to listen to or even acknowledge public concerns about the TJ project has been especially disheartening. I no longer trust or believe anything they say. The mayor's abject failure to take responsibility for the city's role in inciting NDC's outrageous misbehavior was the last straw. As a result I'm moving away in a couple of months. Still hoping that the public will prevail in spite of everything, I bid you all a sad Adieu.

Joan Murtagh of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, May 11, 2021

Please drop NDC permanently now. This is not what the junction needs.

Beth Grupp of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, May 11, 2021

I urge this city to end this bad relationship with NDC. At every stage they have shown themselves to be a bad actor and this is not how we should be as a city.

I support development at the junction. Just not like this and not with these people. Please end this contract!

Ryan McAllister of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, May 10, 2021

Dear Council,

I understand you receive many complaints and it's probably very tiresome.

I am writing to share disappointment that the council hasn't at least ordered NDC to allow the co-op to continue parking lot use.

While I would much prefer that you dismiss NDC entirely, I see it as the council's minimum responsibility as the community's representatives to explicitly order NDC to allow the Co-op to use the lot as previously agreed. I see leaving the dispute to the co-op to resolve as irresponsible.

You and the Co-op are both engaged in many valuable efforts for our community. It's true and my fault that I fail to write you appreciation notes for these. Still, I hope you will take this note in, and I hope one or both of these actions will come from you soon, so that you and the Co-op can focus on those other efforts.

Thank you for your time,

Ryan McAllister

Susan Kerbel of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, May 09, 2021

Drop NDC. Now. There is more than enough evidence that they are untrustworthy actors and a terrible fit. Find your spine. Do your job.

marguerite cyr of takoma park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, May 09, 2021

The City leadership needs to step up and resolve this situation that the City created by posting false statements in the first place. It is not enough to retract their false statement. Leadership needs to deal with the consequences of their actions by stepping in and enforcing NDC to adhere to its contract or get rid of NDC for being bad players.

Teal Edelen of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, May 08, 2021

Is there something we don't know? Why are all communications from Takoma Park government opaque, noncommittal, and neutral at this point when the character of the developer has been revealed? Why are we battling our city government to do the obvious thing that is best for this town? NDC needs to go.

Mark Freedman of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, May 05, 2021

If I may, I'd like to share an observation about project partners. The city's website says that "In that correspondence, the City requested that NDC do so by noon on April 23, 2021. NDC did not respond to the City's request within this period."

Putting aside the substance of the dispute, I think that their refusal to respond sends a chilling message about their approach to the City and the community. A simple note that they received the communication and are diligently working on a meaningful response with a proposed date would have been easy. This project, in the best of circumstances, will involve major disruptions to a central road artery and adjacent to a vital business. There will be countless, significant issues that require trust, good faith, and honest cooperation. I have deep reservations about a developer that cannot maintain good faith communications at a stage like this. I recognize that there will be no perfect way to improve the use of this lot, but I question whether this developer meets the minimum requirements for this type of partnership.

As for lost opportunities, 20 years ago I couldn't imagine our region tearing up parking to build dedicated bike lanes. Now, along the train tracks in North Takoma, we have a dedicated biking-hiking path from Piney Branch Rd. in DC all the way to Montgomery College. It replaced dozens of parking spaces and eliminated what could have become a second lane of traffic for vehicles using our neighborhood as a shortcut from Silver Spring through to the Piney Branch arterial road. I don't see every parking lot as blight. Sometimes it's a way of

holding space for the right future opportunity.

Yours respectfully,
Mark Freedman
7311 Baltimore Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912

stephanie fitzpatrick of takoma park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, May 05, 2021

I believe that Takoma Park's Coop is a valuable member of the business community in the City and should not be forced to relocate in order to function adequately on the present Takoma Junction site. If, however, it is not possible to compromise with this Developer in order to allow the Coop to remain and function adequately in this location, I would support the decision to end any association with them.

Further, it seems clear that the City Manager has been unethical and should not be included in any further, related discussions with this Developer.

Stephen Whitney of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, May 04, 2021

NDC has not lived up to its commitment as a collaborator on this project. It has seduced well-intentioned city staff with concept drawings but no acceptable substance has been provided. NDC appears capable of designing a generic building but has failed in its attempts to address the complexities of the Takoma Junction site. And it was for this expertise that the City of Takoma Park sought a partner. Instead of acting in good faith, NDC has sought to manipulate the community into a very bad site solution. NDC is out of its league with the Takoma Junction site. The open space feature fails miserably, the critical stormwater management challenge has become a can to kick down the road (this is unthinkable) and the pedestrian unfriendly plan seems like a very bad cynical joke to prove that a so-called developer can obfuscate the truth and get whatever they want in the state and county. Shame on NDC.

Adam Bodner of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, May 04, 2021

I fully support the junction redevelopment project and the point of view expressed by the Revitalize Takoma Junction.

Carolyn Pion of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, May 04, 2021

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE drop the Junction Developer

They are not a good fit - OBVIOUSLY- and actually seem to be going out of their way to be confrontational and uncooperative:(

Takoma residents have continually pointed out the flaws in the plan and the Developer just ignores the feedback and pushes full speed ahead .

And - there appears to be duplicity - if not outright lying - concerning the false accusations concerning the Co-op's use of the adjacent lotimplications that it was unsafe !

As we all know that is completely false !!

Cancel this Development contract - the sooner the better !!

Save the Co-op!!!

S. Rawal of BETHESDA, MD

Commented on: Monday, May 03, 2021

As a member of the Takoma Park Coop, I'm very disappointed to hear about the actions of NDC. Based on that company's history, I feel it would be in the best interest of the local residents to terminate any and all contracts with NDC and ensure that the Coop is permitted to continue providing a valuable service for the community.

Esther Siegel of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, May 03, 2021

To the City Council and Mayor,

Michael and I, as well as most of the residents of Takoma Park, work very hard for our money and because we love Takoma Park, are willing to pay the dual taxes required. However, we strongly object to our hard-earned money being spent to defend the City Council in a lawsuit that was completely preventable. It is simply unfair of the Council to expect those of us who object to the current development at the Junction and the damage it is continuing to do to our community and threat to the Co-op, to allow our taxes to be used to protect your irrational position in this way.

The Council members are protected from individual liability, paid for by our tax dollars if they make decisions that don't fall under a very high bar for negligence or impropriety, but us regular citizens have no similar protections against what we might consider Council decisions that have monetary consequence to the use of our tax dollars.

It was hard to read the Council, fearing most are still not listening or will not be moved even now that NDC has shown it is not a true partner and only out for themselves. It is impossible to fathom why it is not now crystal clear that the relationship must end. It is tragic that the Council let the situation reach this painful moment when the Co-op felt it had no other recourse to defend its survival than a legal one.

There is no question that this could have been avoided if the Council had ended the relationship a long time ago, but if not then, then as soon as NDC wrote its cease and desist letter. How many last straws have there been?

Perhaps we all should be reminded of the unique qualities of Takoma Park and why this development does not meet any of those qualities.

Families and individuals want to live here because of the location, the beauty, the amenities, and wonderful neighbors. But, Takoma Park has a rich, exciting and meaningful history which is what makes Takoma Park so special. Every new resident ought to know:

1. that Sammy Abbott and his leadership along with committed citizens struggled to prevent 95 from splitting our community which is why we still have our community.
2. why, even though it might sound silly, voted to be designated as a "Nuclear free Zone", a really courageous collective statement about opposing nuclear bombs.
3. why the city decided not to buy vehicles and other items from companies that support the military industrial complex, again, a bold collective statement against war.
4. why our community welcomed a food co-op, in which anyone can shop, but anyone can also become a member and have a role in the management and leadership of a food establishment that is more than just a grocery store but has invested in the community in real tangible ways.

5. why we proudly became designated as a Sanctuary City.

And on and on, the commitments to social justice.

So, we implore you to end this relationship before our hard-earned tax dollars are spent to perpetuate an untenable situation.

We prefer our tax dollars go to help our neighbors who have been impacted by the pandemic, help with rent, avoid evictions, prepare schools, etc.

With respect,
Esther Siegel &
Michael Tabor

Paul Chrostowski of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Monday, May 03, 2021

Although the focus of late has been on misleading information about traffic safety, we should not forget that additional misinformation about this development proposal is still alive and well. The City stated "Any new development on the lot would be required to treat all stormwater on site through environmental site design, reducing the adverse impacts of the parking lot." The reference to treating ALL stormwater is in error. The design documents submitted by NDC to the planning board propose to treat only a small fraction of the stormwater falling on the site. Based on NDC's data, I have calculated that about 34% will be treated for a 1-year storm (2.57 inches), 28% for a 2-year storm (3.1 inches), 18% for a 10-year storm (4.77 inches), and 11% for a 100-year storm (8.23 inches). As a matter of context, in the past two years we have experienced a 5.27-inch storm. The remainder of the stormwater that is not being treated will run off either onto Carroll Ave or down the hill toward Columbia Avenue. Currently, 37% of rainwater at the site is potentially controlled by infiltration through non-impervious soil at the site, therefore, stormwater impacts are likely to worsen if this development is improved.

I first brought this error to the attention of City Council on March 22, 2021. No one from the City contacted me although my calculations were attacked publicly by a council member without offering any evidence or alternative calculations whatsoever. The error has not been corrected and the erroneous information is still being used by project proponents.

Steve and Kathy Breckbill of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Monday, May 03, 2021

And so we wait . . .

The citizens have made it very clear that they want the city to have nothing to do with NDC. The Co-op has made it very clear that they cannot coexist with the NDC development. NDC has made it very clear that they intend to sidestep city mandates, county regulations, and citizen fears to push through their unwanted development. The mayor and council have said . . . nothing. Done . . . nothing. They blithely continue with photo contests, camp registrations, and virtual 5K races, but action or comment on NDC is . . . nothing. Do Mayor and Council even hear what we are saying?

We get polite emails thanking us for commenting, but then . . . nothing.

And so we wait . . .

Steve and Kathy Breckbill

Dee 1965 of WASHINGTON, DC

Commented on: Saturday, May 01, 2021

Takoma Park coop is a unique resource for families in the data, reverb those if us who live fritter will travel to find unique brands and wholesale bulk items if nutritions natural foods.

Janet Pegues of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, May 01, 2021

I am writing again to complain about the treatment of the COOP. As a long time resident , I know the COOP is an institution in TO.....it is intergral to the fabric of this city. The current treatment is beyond disrespectful.... I will fight for the COOP and if the council is not more transparent the next election will yield appropriate results. This shady developer will not succeed in commercializing this wonderful area.

Neela Seldin of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, May 01, 2021

I'm sure I'm just late to the party, but from the descriptions of the problem it seems that whomever is discussing these problems has not made it clear why the parking area cannot serve both the Co-op and the redevelopment goals. Is there really no room for compromise?

The Co-op is a beloved part of our community and adds a very traditional Takoma Park, home town, atmosphere to our view of ourselves as a long-time, especially connected community. It should not be treated like just another store.

Sean Gallagher of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 28, 2021

Greetings: Takoma Park Mayor Stewart, Takoma Park City Manager Ludlow, Takoma Park City Council Members and other City representatives:

My name is Sean Gallagher, and I am a Resident of Ward 3.

Regarding the slated Redevelopment at Takoma Junction:

Given the Neighborhood Development Corporation's (N.D.C.'s) recent decision to issue a Cease & Desist Letter to our neighborhood Food Co-op, essentially stopping the Co-op's Contractual Right to receive goods (shipments), via truck, using the City-owned parking lot (that the Co-op leases for approximately \$22,000 per Month), until the redevelopment construction begins, is both unacceptable, and very likely illegal.

As a Resident of Takoma Park for over 14 years, and customer of the Co-op, I find both N.D.C.'s and the Takoma Park City's treatment of the Co-op and Residents truly sad, unbelievable, and reprehensible..

The Co-op's recently filed lawsuit, against both N.D.C., and The City of Takoma Park, while timely and completely understandable, given her treatment as *The True Anchor Tenant of Takoma Junction*, is very unfortunate for City Residents, because it is the Residents of Takoma Park who will ultimately and quite literally end up paying the Legal Fees and/or any Settlement that the T.P. City incurs, not to mention the potential loss of our Food Co-op.

It is unfair and unacceptable for the City to hold it's Residents hostage and to essentially make them pick up the tab for the City's lack of transparency and negligence regarding the treatment of the Co-op and the Co-ops right to do business without undue interference Let's not kid ourselves it is past time for us to cut

through the denial, and realize that N.D.C. does NOT have the best interests of our City, or Residents in mind, regarding this ill-planned development, and the Rights of the Co-op to continue to serve our Community, as it has FOR OVER 40 YEARS...

That Said, I respectfully ask The Mayor of The City of Takoma Park, The City Manager of Takoma Park, The City Council of Takoma Park, and The City's Lawyer(s), to END Takoma Park City's Contractual Agreement with The Neighborhood Development Corporation (N.D.C.) as soon as possible. This is clearly within Takoma Park City's Contractual Rights, without penalties, as I understand the agreement.

Any action short of this, does a big disservice to their Constituents, Residents, and anyone else who shops at the Co-op.

PLEASE.. => DROP N.D.C. NOW! <=

Be strong and do the right thing, while there is still time.

Thank you for seriously considering this very viable, and timely option, given N.D.C.'s lack of good faith, and Breach of Contract.

Sincerely,

Sean Gallagher

(4/28/2021)

Patricia Richter of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 28, 2021

I have been shopping at the Co-Op since I moved to Silver Spring in 1994; it's invaluable. Much of what they carry is either difficult to find elsewhere or available only at a premium. It is an essential part of the community, and, I believe, an example of the direction in which marketing must move if it intends to be sustainable. Thank you for your consideration.

Stephanie Hartman of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 28, 2021

I am disappointed that today's statement from the City presents NDC's brazen breach of contract as a failure of NDC and the Co-op to get along. The Co-op has been in compliance with the contract and cannot stay in business if it cannot receive deliveries.

The statement also represents the City as a helpless bystander, when in fact the City has the power to resolve this crisis at any time. The Friday deadline was meaningless because it attached no consequences. Of course NDC saw no reason to comply.

NDC could have won over the community through collaboration and compromise, and chose not to: not to include public space for us, not to ensure that other businesses have parking, not to work with our Co-op from the beginning.

At this point, there is no way to save this development. NDC's bullying behavior has won it no fans. Now NDC is forcing the City make a choice: between the survival of a member-owned, ethical, community-serving Takoma Park institution and whatever upscale retail we'll be boycotting if NDC ever manages to attract any tenants. It doesn't seem like a tough decision.

George/Marcie French/Stickle of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 28, 2021

NDC did not comply with the City's requests to stop its cease and desist harassment or even to communicate

about it, provoking the Co-op to sue.

We hate to have to write again about this issue for the umpteenth time, but we fear losing our unique Co-op after this latest stunt by NDC, and NDC's refusal to abide by the City's wishes.

How can the Co-op survive not being able to receive deliveries and trash collections from the City-owned lot? NDC has forced the Co-op to sue, so our Co-op can continue to provide wholesome food, good-paying jobs, a sense of well-being to all, sharing its generosity of spirit with our communities, partnering with other equitable organizations to further outreach, to mention just a few of its exceptional qualities.

We believe Mayor Stewart and the Council can rescind the agreement/contract with NDC. The time is now. Please use your option and end our Town's nightmare. The City cannot afford to lose our most cherished and dynamic business of 40 years to a developer who does not possess Takoma Park values.

Please help our multi-cultural Co-op, a cornucopia of goodness to all, celebrating its 40th Birthday Year, to survive and thrive.

Enjoy! <https://tpss.coop/>

Please stand for goodness and not meanness, greed, avarice, and bullying.

George French & Marcie Stickle, 510 Albany Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912, 301-587-5955,
marcipro@aol.com

From TPSS Co-op Website!

"Takoma Park Silver Spring Co-op promotes healthful living by offering wholesome foods, high-quality produce, and community resources in a clean, friendly, and cooperative grocery store...that you can own!"

Steve & Kathy Breckbill of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 28, 2021

We are very concerned about the way that NDC's development plan will negatively impact the Junction and has already caused major disruption to the City. The lack of transparency about the relationship between City government and NDC from the very beginning has brought us to the worst City crisis since the time of Sam Abbot.

NDC has refused to adhere to the parameters that were agreed to in the original contract. A lot of citizen and Council effort went into planning how the development could meet the needs of the Junction and the City but we seem to have wandered way off that path. We could have anticipated that from a developer, but we expect City government to look out for our best interests. The most distressing part of our present predicament is how the City government and Council have sat back and allowed NDC to move forward knowing that their plan was in violation of the contract.

We've always been proud of the way Takoma Park provided a model of participatory democracy, with the citizens working in close partnership with City government. It feels as though we are losing that connection and trust in the present crisis and we the citizens are being ignored.

The crisis has now reached a point where the NDC plan is irretrievably flawed and NDC has created so much bad blood and chaos that the only possible option is to cancel our relationship with NDC and move on, using the experience to shape our plan going forward.

Steve & Kathy Breckbill

Kirsten Stade of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 28, 2021

At a time when climate change and associated ecological collapse is threatening our existence or at very least our well-being on this planet, "mixed retail" that benefits only a bad actor developer and the city's tax base seems an uninspired use for a public lot. Takoma Park should kick NDC to the curb (or the lay-by) and model what small cities can do to create outside gathering space, affordable housing, permanent outdoor markets, or other uses that benefit all.

Mike Lastort of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 28, 2021

The city's "current status" was updated today (see <https://takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/takoma-junction-redevelopment/>), and, of course, the response is toothless.

"As Mayor, I am extremely disappointed that NDC and the Co-op have been unable to successfully resolve these issues, and that this dispute has now moved into a court of law," said City of Takoma Park Mayor Kate Stewart. "NDC must abide by its existing agreements with the City. The City is exploring all possible options to find a solution to the situation. It is in the best interests of our residents that these issues get resolved as quickly as possible."

Well, you gave NDC an ultimatum, told them they had to comply by Friday, April 23rd. They called your bluff and ignored you. So now what? More meaningless statements that accomplish nothing? More hemming and hawing and pretending to lead the city?

NDC is holding the city hostage, but only because of the complete surrender of the mayor and city council.

So now what? How is the city going to get this resolved as quickly as possible? Another ultimatum to NDC that will be ignored? More hand wringing? Maybe another press release about closing gas stations to deflect attention?

Sammie Abbott would be ashamed if he was still alive to see what our local government has become.

Meriwether Jones of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 28, 2021

No worries, Anicca. My wife and I are still cracking up over your insightful comment on April 23rd (currently located on page 5):

"Regarding the limp response to an issue requiring backbone. i.e., 'matters related to communications between the Neighborhood Development Company (NDC) and the Takoma Park Silver Spring Co-op (Co-op)' seriously, does the city really see this as a failure to communicate?"

lol

While we're posting outside resources, does anyone have a public link to NDC/Adrian Washington's letter to TP citizens, the one from April that is often quoted here, but thus far only in part?

anicca jansen of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 28, 2021

correction to my earlier post. I have been informed that the link I cited was not to an NDC blog. Still I don't believe the City has been blind sided...

anicca jansen of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 28, 2021

just found this NDC blog from May 2017 that makes it VERY clear NDC has long openly intended to shut down the Co-op... (see <https://takomaparktundra.wordpress.com/2017/05/20/tpss-co-op-a-beacon-of-lies/>) Concluding words "The TPSS Co-op has to go."

I imagine the City is aware of this public statement.. but just in case not. Seems pretty hard for the city to defend its defense of NDC or to convincingly act blindsided.

I am not against making better use of the parking lot.. but NDC is a stinky partner and unsuitable for this community.

Jenny Apostol DiPaul of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 28, 2021

A different developer, or a different managerial directive to that developer, might make for a more coherent and sustainable project and lead to relationship building rather than this wasted opportunity. This hasn't worked—from a regulatory standpoint, from a geographic standpoint, from a City coordination and collaboration standpoint. The goal is community development sustainable for the long term in a shifting environment. Bad relationships never get better no matter how hard the City has tried.

Marika Partridge of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 28, 2021

The City of Takoma Park is responsible for the divisive debacle at the Junction. The City is endangering beloved local businesses. Step back and take a look, Mayor and Council. Can you create outdoor gathering space, support local businesses including the coop grocery store, and move to a Junction vision that is appropriate in size, scales and intent? The fact that the City is still fighting for an oversized development that crushes the Coop is confounding. I used to brag about this amazing small city with its convictions clearly based in concern for community. Now I am disappointed and bragging no more... It's not too late to do the right thing.

James Wang of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 27, 2021

If the city is still considering NDC's proposed development even after the SHA letter and NDC's attempt to block the Co-op's use of the parking lot, I urge the City Council and Mayor to do the following: Please carefully and impartially weigh the costs and benefits of the plan, in its current form, in making your final decision.

It seems pretty clear to me that the costs related to traffic volumes, pedestrian/bicyclist safety, tree removal and stormwater runoff, negative impacts to neighboring businesses and residents, etc., would greatly outweigh the benefits, which mainly consist of tax revenue for the city. The development would not contribute towards many of the city's priorities, such as creating affordable housing or promoting equity. Given that NDC would be charging market-rate rents (and probably much higher rates than existing ones in the city, according

to numbers that have been presented in recent discussions), the development would do nothing to provide opportunities for local, under-funded entrepreneurs. And the upscale restaurant and other businesses that can afford the high rents would be catering primarily to affluent customers with lots of money to spend.

I hope the city can come up with a much better vision and plan for the site, perhaps involving an affordable mixed-use development or ecological cohousing. And could the city partner with a non-profit developer--like it has done with Habitat for Humanity--to avoid having to make numerous concessions to a profit-driven entity?

Thanks for taking my input!

Tina Hudak of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 27, 2021

First of all, I appreciate all the hard work committees, neighborhood groups, the Council and esp. the TPSS Coop have contributed this far. Having said this, I feel that it is important to postpone any development if the Junction at this time despite the money poured into it so far. There are too many unresolved, serious issues on all sides, both with residents, commercial business established and the developer: lessening established green space, parking and delivery problems, gentrification that increases already high rents, etc.

I am not understanding how the City administration can promote being "green," "community oriented - "A sanctuary city" with encouragement of a diverse population and still go forward with the current plan. It will call for an increase in homeowner's property taxes, who bear the brunt (and amount) of taxes provided and it is dividing residents against living in a city so once admired – a small, caring town.

I would prefer my tax dollars help to provide affordable housing for moderate income families such as those who live in the nearby apartments at Grant and Hancock Avenues near the Junction, and for better maintenance by City staff of streets, sidewalks, advocacy tree and urban forestry to all areas including apartment properties, PEPCO, Piney Branch School, and for small business loans for our established businesses already present at the Junction to improve their spaces.

I am opposed to any development going forward until all issues that will stem from this are fairly resolved economically, aesthetically, and resolutions include social justice commitments by the City government seriously.

Dave Paris of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 27, 2021

Neighbors -

The so-called "compromise," layby that was forced on the Coop, has been rejected as unsafe and unworkable by several county agencies and by the SHA. NDC has responded by precipitating a trumped up crisis involving the current delivery system by proclaiming the existence of undetailed "serious safety concerns."

Meanwhile, claiming that "minor" safety issues regarding the layby have been worked out, NDC has submitted a revised plan that it claims "meets their objections." However, the legal action against the coop seems to be a desperation measure, since it threatens to undermine the cooperation agreement that is muzzling the Coop.

It is time to end this wasteful and divisive city development adventure that resulted from mismanagement when the city had maximum leverage.

Keep Safe,

Dave Paris

paul ruther of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 27, 2021

I applaud the city's decision to call NDC into account for its efforts to deny the co-op access to the parking lot on which it depends for deliveries. As a former natural food co-op manager, I know for a fact deliveries are essential and once the SHA determined that the layby plan was unsafe, that the parking lot was now essential for the coop continuing to be a successful business.

I also believe the initial efforts to develop what seemed like a underused lot were begun in good faith, but even out the outset the city deemed the co-op an anchor tenant and claimed its survival was important to the community. The city should also consider what NDC would find if it dug up land once used by an electrical supply company and an old gas station (I was told this, have not verified). Maybe keep the paved lot is the safest environmental move for the city.

I think the city needs to stand by the initial decision to support the Coop and recognize that NDC's development plan neither benefits the co-op or the city. While cutting the cord with NDC might be painful for some and expensive for Takoma Park taxpayers, they have showed themselves to be unethical and ineffective.

Thank you for reading my comment.

Paul Ruther

Thomas Di Liberto of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 27, 2021

Hello,

Given all of the giveaways the coop has received from the city including a grocery monopoly in the area and a requirement that NDC build them a layby, as well as the rental use of a city lot, their desire to sue the city shows an incredible amount of privilege and disrespect.

The city should no longer continue to give the coop the benefit of the doubt. No other for-profit business would ever get such beneficial and patient treatment. And for the city to give this treatment to a boutique grocery store that serves the least diverse customer base of any food store in the city would be a sign of white privilege. This is especially true considering that the most prominent boosters of the coop are richer, older and whiter residents of Takoma Park.

Takoma Park has so many other more important things to worry about and plan for including investment in the poorer wards of the city than to have so much focus continue on a boutique grocery store in a rich part of town. I hope the city and NDC can come to a conclusion and push this development forward. It's been delayed too long already.

Crystal Silmi of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 27, 2021

DROP NDC NOW!!!!

Save the Co-op - this local business is what makes Takoma Park special. NDC OFF OUR LOT!

MICHELLE MONFORT of Covington VA

Commented on: Tuesday, April 27, 2021

The Co-Op is a place where people can walk to and get healthy items it will not benefit community to remove it

Robert Engelman of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 27, 2021

Typo correction: The crux of the issue the city faces is not so much the Co-op (pick up rest of comment below).

Robert Engelman of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 27, 2021

The crux of the city faces in not so much survival of the Co-op, important as that is, as what to do in relation to NDC and its planned but clearly misplaced development. The company has demonstrated bad faith and disrespect not just relative to the Co-op but to the city (its development partner and landlord) and the community, as well as lack of concern for public safety at a small and complex state highway intersection. The city and community need to start over, respectfully tell NDC the deal is off, and collectively reimagine what can be done with this space we own. "Holding space for the right future opportunity," as a neighbor has commented, is an inspired phrase for the direction we should go.

Brian Slocum of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 27, 2021

While I have largely stayed out of the debate over the Takoma Junction development, I do generally support the idea of developing the site to make more efficient use of our ecological footprint in Takoma Park. I don't have a strong opinion about NDC as a developer other than the fact that they are minority-owned and have been carefully vetted by the city, which are marks in their favor. IF, however, the rumors are true that NDC is trying to force the Co-op to stop receiving deliveries in its parking lot with no alternative delivery plan, then this strikes me as an effort designed to inflame residents to a degree that would cause the deal to break down so they can exit. While the Co-op isn't affordable to all, it plays an essential role for many members of the community. I haven't done the research to determine whether NDC's efforts are as sudden and stark as has been said, but if so, then I would argue that it may be time to cut them loose, since they still haven't broken ground on a project that has dragged on for years. In addition, my strong preference would be to see a mixed use development that prioritizes affordable housing. We have a shortage of affordable housing, not commercial property, so that would be a much more efficient use of the space, especially given the rate at which the real estate market has exploded.

In short, it's time to fish or cut bait on the NDC project. If they have suddenly, unfairly, and perhaps extralegally changed the terms of engagement with the Co-op in a way that's untenable, then let's let them go and get a developer in who can put together an attractive building that prioritizes city needs. If, however, this issue with the Co-op deliveries is either a lot of hot air or easily rectifiable, then let's get some equipment in, start digging, and put the endless hair pulling over the NDC project to rest.

Clara Baines-Love of Washington, DC

Commented on: Tuesday, April 27, 2021

Please do not close the store and restore the parking as before when the business began. Thanks. A great

store for the D.C. community.

Zachary Arnold of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 26, 2021

I live a few blocks from the Junction. The current parking lot is a real waste of space, and the objections to NDC have seemed pretty extreme to me. I hope the lot will be developed without delay, and ask City Council to approach this latest skirmish with that goal in mind.

More generally, I have a hard time with calls on behalf of "the community" to slow or halt the development process. Certainly many in our city are against NDC's project. But on the other hand, the candidates opposed to it lost big time in the last election, including in the wards closest to the Junction.

Thanks for considering.

Eric Jonas of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 26, 2021

NDC's most recent attempt to prevent the TPSS Coop from carrying out its essential business operations leaves little room for doubt that they are attempting to drive the Coop from its longstanding home in furtherance of their own business interests. I do not believe the city of Takoma Park should be doing business with a corporation that has displayed a willingness to engage in such cutthroat business practices. The Coop represents what makes Takoma Park different from other places: a unionized workforce, sustainable food offerings, a cooperative business model. The city should not partner with an organization that sees the junction as nothing more than a resource from which it can extract profit at the expense of the values that make Takoma Park a great place to live.

Amy Brookman of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 26, 2021

The Co-op is an extremely valuable business serving our community. My family shops there regularly. We've lived here in the City of Takoma Park for twenty years. We're very tired of the years of interference that this development project has presented against the Co-op's ability to function and continue at its present location. And the City government's cooperation with the developer and lack of support for the Co-op appears to go along with many examples of displacement of long-term BIPOC businesses and residents, harming neighborhoods throughout our region and the entire U.S., in order to gentrify neighborhoods for richer and whiter folks.

Mitchell Lazarus of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 26, 2021

The Co-op provides value to the community not measurable in dollars -- including their helping safe survival through the pandemic with no-contact shopping in that same parking lot. As 30+ year TP residents and multi-decade Co-op members, we are shocked to see to see the City siding with gentrification and against the needs of current residents.

Kelly OKeefe of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 26, 2021

We must not be held hostage by the co-op.

It is ridiculous that this one little grocery store - used by the few and not the many in Takoma Park - is the reason why we cannot develop an unused, untaxed city lot.

Taxes are soaring in Takoma Park and many cannot afford to grow old here and/or even purchase first home. Our taxes have increased exponentially in the 11 years we have been in Takoma Park. We need a tax base and we can increase our tax base through the development of this lot.

It is absolutely beyond comprehension that a private business is unable to adapt, change its model to fit this new reality. And that it needs the use of an entire public lot to function.

I am in favor of the co-op existing and thriving. I am in favor of the co-op putting good faith effort to figure this out. I am in favor of development.

I am NOT in favor of keeping an empty lot to be used for co-op deliveries.

Joan Duncan of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 26, 2021

Dear Mayor Stewart and City Council,

A message posted in the Takoma Junction Redevelopment Comments bears repeating: "We are waiting for your bold and creative leadership." Let's keep our eye on a positive outcome and imagine a development which meets the mission which we have set for ourselves.

Let's imagine a development which enlivens the street with a smaller footprint and a Takoma Junction-scaled structure. There is pleasant pedestrian access, public space and safe accommodation for bikes and a bus stop. Servicing for the Co-op and new users is the rear with deliveries and trash pick-up occurring safely and out of view. There is parking for new users and also for the Co-op and local businesses. Delivery areas can double as community gathering space during the evenings and weekends. Instead of asphalt the parking surface catches and soaks in rain. No trees are cut down and stormwater is reduced.

Let's imagine a plan which doesn't cause bitter battling. Act now, cut ties with NDC, work towards community consensus and on a creative plan for the Junction. It's time to move forward with imaginative solutions.

Joan Duncan

Pine Ave.

Allegra Cangelosi of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 26, 2021

I cannot drive (legally blind). The Coop has been a life line for me, offering groceries within walking distance. It is a part of this community and should not be threatened by a for-profit developer and an, at worst, complicit, and at best, inept, Takoma Pak City government. Shame on our city government for letting this process reach this messy state of affairs!

Sholey Arganiof Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 26, 2021

As a long term Takoma Park resident, I value our local businesses, part of the "fabric" or our community.

I joined the Takoma Park Coop as a member well over a decade ago. I shop there several times a week. Thus, I write in support of the Coop retaining its access to the large adjacent parking lot. The Coop's business requires deliveries & customer access.

Any development plan or partner must include the COOP & needs of the community. I distrust NDC's approach. Please let us know how you plan to proceed.

Janis Totham-Davies of TAKOMA PARK, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

I am disgusted and very disappointed with the City Manager, Mayor Kate, Kacy my Ward 3 Rep and the overall City Council of Takoma Park. You have played a very dirty game upon the TPSS Coop, and you have blatantly lied about the Coops deliveries on your website.

I will be writing to you all individually as I need and explanation of your actions and the Coop need a written apology from you all.

I am also writing to SHA and NDC to let them both know my feelings and disappointments in them both. NDC doesn't even try to come too the table with something resembling the building we all put our time and suggestions into, and SHA has taken far too long to let everyone know that yet again the layby won't work in its present incarnation.

Basically we are all rather tired and fed up with your games and lies about the NDC building, which keeps growing, now out into Columbia Ave. It now has the awful look of a block storage warehouse design, in the latest drawing for the Mall of shops etc. Nothing like the interesting designs and materials to be used when we went along to all those meetings. So, obviously NDC was just paying lip service to us to get their foot in the door. They certainly have accomplished that but little else unfortunately.

If NDC does not withdraw their threats to block deliveries to the Coop starting this week we will have no choice but to block NDC's plans to build a mall at all. We will also march on City Hall, and I intend to get my Congressman and Senators involved to monitor your dreadful track record with this project.

There is a way forward for all involved but not with behavior like this. You started these threats, lies and delivery blockade by putting up lies on the City web site. Now you have to do rather more than taking them down, though we have copies anyway.

Your actions make you all look corrupt and in collusion with NDC to force the Coop out by deliberately blocking their deliveries. I am now asking for all of you to be investigated by Montgomery County and the state of Maryland.

Alan Robson of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

The Mayor of Takoma Park and the City Council must end their relationship with NDC now!
NDC's plan for the development of Takoma Junction has done nothing but sow division in our community for years. NDC has a track record of harassment and hostility towards local small businesses. Now NDC has turned on the Co-op, ordering it to stop using the adjacent lot for deliveries and parking, in contravention of its agreement with the city.

The large lot next to the Co-op is the last large vacant lot in the City. It is owned by the City, who leased it to NDC, in the face of huge public opposition. This last parcel of public land should be used for the public good and for the support of local businesses. Takoma Park residents overwhelmingly support the Co-op and many of us are outraged that NDC, whose only concern is profit, should be putting pressure on this important cooperative community resource.

The Covid pandemic has shown that the last things we need are more retail stores, restaurant tables, and underground parking spaces. We need more common space for community events. We do not want NDC's plan for Takoma Junction. Get NDC off our lot!

Carol Hotton of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

I would like to add my voice to the community opposition to NDC and their unjustified attempt to terminate their sublease with the TPSS Coop. The Coop has been an exceptionally good neighbor: pivoting almost overnight to an online store in the beginning of the pandemic, lobbying for the use of SNAP benefits in online ordering, offering their parking space for food pantry programs, among numerous other actions. I do not understand why the City Council with its progressive reputation consistently backs the NDC, which is proving itself to be an unreliable partner at best. You MUST take stronger action to force NDC to live up to its obligations with the Coop, as the Coop has been living up to its part of the agreement with NDC. The City Council needs to seriously rethink the current development proposal by NDC, especially the unresolved issues with traffic, the size and the function of the development. The world has changed dramatically since this development was first approved? Who are the proposed tenants? Who will benefit? How has racial and socioeconomic equity been addressed? Please re-think this ill-considered plan.

Sarah K of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

I'm writing in to urge the Mayor and City Council to end their relationship with NDC.

One of the biggest reasons I moved to this area was the co-op, which has an incredible community that revolves around it. If you refuse to honor the co-op, you will be ruining the soul, and an institution, of this area.

Honoring the co-op is an investment in our community, and a commitment to its people. Do not sell us out. Continuing a relationship with the NDC is a mistake. The NDC will destroy our values and what is special about this place if you let them. So do the right thing and keep the co-op alive.

Katherine Katzin of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

Please end the City's partnership with NDC now and explain to the public what happened in the three consecutive closed City Council meetings. The NDC has said the Co-op will lose access to deliveries on the City lot tomorrow. Please support the Co-op and local businesses. We cannot go forward with a "development partner" that has made these threats to the Co-op. Please end the partnership with NDC now.

Lauren Van Tol of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

I hope the city seeks out the voices of diverse and underrepresented groups and does not let the views of well-connected homeowners impact this decision and prevent the development of the lot. I think the recent

mayoral election was a decisive vote in favor of the development by the majority of residents. I hope the contract is not canceled and the development moves forward.

Mary Forrest of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

It seems obvious that NDC is clearly signaling it does not have the best interests of Takoma Park in mind. Not one bit.

Jill Gay of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

The City and NDC must make it so the Coop can use both parking lots for deliveries and customers so that the Coop can be viable. The Coop is essential to the City of TP as a place to shop for food and as a community hub and as a place of employment. The City of TP does not need NDC.

Patrick Smith of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

Dear Mayor and City Council,

Enough! Who is running the show? The people have spoken. Obviously NDC DOES NOT CARE ABOUT WHAT WE WANT. THEIR CONCERN IS THEMSELVES.

Who is going to act for us? Why is this called the Takoma Park Redevelopment Project. This is the TP Destruction Project. Get rid of NDC now.

David Lamoreaux of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

I am greatly disappointed that the Takoma Park City can't see how an enormous error was made in signing up with NDC developer group. Serious errors and threats being made to take away a business ability to have deliveries made?? You gotta be kidding. If you don't block such a destructive move being made by NDC do you realize how much jeopardy you put the Takoma Park government in??

No plans made for the changes proposed have met the county and state approval. Stop ignoring the pleas of the small businesses around the Takoma Junction. I may not be a resident of TkPk but I frequent many businesses.

Suzanne Costilo of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

The Takoma Co-op has been an essential part of Takoma Park for many years.

This is the type of business which we are proud of and deserves the support of the Takoma City Government.

Many of my neighbors feel the same way, and are very upset at the difficulties facing the Co-op.

If the Takoma family prides itself on its ethics then now is the time to activate those ethics.

Vincent Wong of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

Dear Mayor Stewart, Dear Ms Kostiuk:

In light of recent details of NDC's actions compromising TPSS Coop's capacity to continue deliveries, I am very concerned about its long term sustainability. Can you please work towards a viable resolution for use of this city-owned lot that prioritizes and allows for the viability of The COOP. If this means ending the partnership with NDC, I would be fully supportive of that course of action. This is an issue of primary concern to me and my family - far outweighing any proposed junction developments.

Dave C of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

Greetings,

The developer was contracted to design, build, and lease commercial space at the Junction. It is no surprise that their design maximizes profit and minimizes other concerns such as building size, traffic problems, and public space.

Once the relationship between the city and NDC is formally ended, we can hire an architect to design what we want. After a plan is agreed upon, we can then have developers or construction companies bid on building that design. This would remove the conflict of interest inherent in the original design process.

The parking lot is well used and benefits local businesses and shoppers alike. Why not leave it? We could improve and beautify the lot with solar panels above the parking spaces, electric car charging stations, more trees and plants, a permeable surface, and fix the issues with the old dump and storm water. Perhaps some green space with tables as well. This would leave open space at the Junction, allow necessary parking, and the lot could continue to be used for public events like the Halloween Parade and food trucks. It would also preserve a mainstay of the community, the Co-op.

Sometimes less is more.

Best,

Dave

Nina Falk of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

We moved to Takoma Park in 1997, drawn by the strong sense of community here. We have been richly rewarded with wonderful friends and neighbors. We consider the Co-op to be one of the main anchors of the community, and are members and regular shoppers. A community is one of the most important elements of a happy, fulfilled life, so we do not understand how the Mayor, the City Manager, the City Council, and a new developer would not see the unique strength of what we already have here and want to preserve the best of what we have while supporting growth. The Co-op has been an great example of good practices during the pandemic, caring for its staff and customers to protect our health while providing food. What could be more essential? Please end the agreement with the NDC. Our precious city deserves better.

Betty Krier of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

It is time to recall Kate Stewart and the city council members who have put NDC's needs ahead of Takoma Park residents.

Lyndon Wilkes of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

Stop coddling the Co-Op! They had a chance to participate in the NDC project and chose not to do so.

They made a bad business decision but should be made to live with the consequences of their decision.

Let NDC go forward ASAP.

Robert Dreher of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

The success and survival of the Coop and other small businesses in Takoma Junction are the highest priority for the neighborhood around the Junction, and should be the highest priority for the City government. It must be clear by now that the project and the developer are threats to the fabric of this community and to our values of honesty, fairness and sensitivity to others. It's time to end the City's relationship with NDC before this becomes a tragedy.

Cafini Z of Washington, DC

Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

The Takoma Park Silver Spring Co-op is a staple in the community and has continually delivered on its contractual agreements by paying rent to avail the parking lot right beside it to customers and workers. It makes no sense to remove this ability when the Co-op has not reneged on any of its agreements. Please do not punish the Co-op and its community for Neighborhood Development Company's irresponsible behavior.

Larkin Kern of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

When a country obtains great power,
it becomes like the sea:
all streams run downward into it.
The more powerful it grows,
the greater the need for humility.
Humility means trusting the Tao,
thus never needing to be defensive.

A great nation is like a great man:
When he makes a mistake, he realizes it.
Having realized it, he admits it.
Having admitted it, he corrects it.
He considers those who point out his faults
as his most benevolent teachers.
He thinks of his enemy
as the shadow that he himself casts

If a nation is centered in the Tao,
if it nourishes its own people
and doesn't meddle in the affairs of others,
it will be a light to all nations in the world.

Amy Zimmermann of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

Please prioritize the long term viability of the co-op in our neighborhood. The co-op is an essential business that contributes so much to the neighborhood and it'd be a tremendous loss to lose them. Thank you.

Liz Langran of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Sunday, April 25, 2021

NDC is not the right partner - it is clear that they do not have Takoma Park's interests in mind. If the Council is forced to decide between putting up a mixed use/condo building on public land vs. supporting a community co-op grocery store, anyone who cares about this community would choose the co-op. I don't care if the land stays a parking lot - that's fine with me. We've seen throughout this pandemic how important outdoor space is - can't we do something that is of more value (beyond \$\$) to our community that we can all benefit from and use?

Elaine Emling of SILVER SPRING, MD
Commented on: Saturday, April 24, 2021

To the City of Takoma Park,

I am alarmed at the turn of events re: the parking lot/delivery area for the Co-op. I am not clear how NDC will prohibit deliveries, but all I can see ahead is danger and injury as the Co-op tries to take deliveries.

The fact the NDC will not communicate with you, or be reasonable with the Co-op, strikes me as good reason to terminate your partnership with them. Consult your lawyers and look carefully at the contract with NDC.

I am an alarmed Co-op member, as is my husband.

Matt Anton of SILVER SPRING, MD
Commented on: Saturday, April 24, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

It has come to my attention that Neighborhood Development Company (NDC) has terminated the lease they had entered into with the Takoma Park-Silver Spring Food Co-op, thereby making it so co-op customers could no longer park in the city-owned lot adjacent to the store. In addition, NDC has demanded that the co-op no longer receive deliveries in the lot. Both of these changes would make it very difficult for the co-op to continue functioning, as well as place a burden on those of us who shop there. In my view, the co-op provides an invaluable community service, and I am grateful it is there for me and my family. It strikes me as the kind of resource Takoma Park would want to go out of its way to support, rather than allow any other entity to threaten its existence. We, for example, would be less likely to come as often to Takoma Park (where we spend money at other stores) if it weren't for the presence of the co-op. So please consider investigating this

matter and do what you can to make sure the co-op continues to be the vibrant and valuable business it is. If that means ending the city's relationship with NDC, which from what I understand has not operated in good faith in its dealings with the co-op, then so be it. Businesses like the co-op are the kind that make Takoma Park the welcoming, unique, and thriving community it is.

Thank you for taking my views into consideration.

Sincerely,
Matt Anton

Ross Wells of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 24, 2021

I am one of 20 Takoma Park neighbors who volunteer with Food Justice-DMV. Since last September, we have used the City Junction parking lot for food distribution. We also provide essential items like diapers, formula, sanitary pads and Tylenol to immigrant families who have been intentionally blocked from receiving government aid throughout the Pandemic. Our distribution takes place each Thursday and serves over 400 families in Langley Park and other nearby communities that have the highest rates of Covid 19 in the state.

The Co-op has not only let us use their designated parking spaces but has become an integral part of our distribution; providing space, tents, advice and food at wholesale cost. Each week they order produce for us through their vendors, who then deliver it to us on the lot. The Co-op has become, in every sense of the word, our partners in providing food justice. We are on the lot early every Thursday and see the deliveries, which are heavily weighted to the mornings. During that time, we have not witnessed any unsafe conditions caused by vendors loading and unloading in the City lot. In fact, the former Safeway store that the Co-op occupies, was constructed specifically with these deliveries in mind and has been used continuously for that purpose for decades. We do not understand why this is even an issue. It makes no sense.

Please know that we volunteers value our partnership with the Co-op. We support their effort to overturn this irrational and unethical challenge to block them from using the City lot. We understand that NDC has a 99-year lease for the lot. They also have a contract with the Co-op that guarantees the Co-op access for loading and deliveries until construction begins. They cannot be shut out of their right to stay in business by cutting off their lifeline.

I urge you to use the weight of the City Government to demand that the Neighborhood Development Company withdraw its aggressive, "Cease and Desist" edict against the C-op.

Ross Wells
12 Sherman Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912
301-213-8967

Patricia Childs of Washington, DC

Commented on: Saturday, April 24, 2021

Please end your relationship with NDC. If parking next to the Co-op is no longer available not only will the Co-op be affected but small junction businesses will also be negatively impacted!

Brenda Freeman of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 24, 2021

I am a member of the Takoma Park -Silver Spring Co-op (TPSS). and have been for years. It is my primary grocery store for organic food. It is also a small community based local business. I intentionally support it because of those reasons

I oppose the Takoma Park Junction development proposal because it will make shopping at the co-op difficult, exacerbate the current traffic situation that is already bad and destroy the green area behind the Co-op. Green space is important and is disappearing all over Montgomery County.

]]The main beneficiary of this development project is the developer, not the Co-op or the surrounding community.

Also the fact that the developer is being given a 99 year lease to the parking lot which is public land, especially if it is tax free lease is a bad idea. and a costly one for tax payers..

Monica Allen of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 24, 2021

The Takoma Park Food Coop is an astounded high quality store with wonderful, thoughtful and helpful employees who have made shopping a real joy. Anything that threatens or diminishes the ability of this store that employs more than 50 community people is bad for the health and well-being of the entire Takoma Park and Silver Spring community. I am against the plan that would take away the parking lot which is so essential to the store, deliveries and customers. Please act reasonably and strongly to protect and boost this rare local business that has been devoted to community physical, mental and spiritual health and well-being.

Wilbur Wright of Washington, DC

Commented on: Saturday, April 24, 2021

Thank you for the news update !
You have my total support Thank you.

Stay STRONG !!

KEEP UP THE STRUGGLE!

(any idea what is motivating NDC ?? Strange behavior !)

Do they have some plan to transform the area into some massive commercial enterprise?? Point out to them that the access streets do NOT make that specific area very desirable for high volume commercial use.

Julie Boddy of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 24, 2021

Why hasn't City staff seen fit to post the Council discussion of NDC, leaving off the possibility of lengthy public comments?

Doesn't the public have the right of seeing how we're being represented on an issue that has generated so much public interest?

As the City's elected officials operate largely through our tax dollars, as well as our consent, it seems incongruent to shut us off from this important decision making process.

Tracy Wright of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 24, 2021

There is a lot of greed taking advantage of these troubled times.

Please protect our cherished TP Co-op!!!!

Stop developers from changing TP unrecognizably.

Stuart Gagnon of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 24, 2021

Concerned Citizens' request to the Council and Mayor: Perhaps, look back and register where things went wrong, where the expectations of transparency and accountability became opaque and irresponsible action. Admit that commitments were made by the City to support the Co-Op. The City has failed us and now must make reparations to this valuable institution! ===== No matter which developer is allowed to carry out their vision on that property, a LAYBY (or service/delivery space) must be sustainable with only minor impact on the traffic flow inside the intersection -- and on the two state highways and other streets intersecting there. Preserve the City's charm and reduce neighborhood impacts with low-impact, minor changes to the Junction's roads.

Terese Bouey of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 24, 2021

April 24, 2021

To Mayor Stewart and All Takoma Park Councilmembers:

I live on Philadelphia Avenue, just four houses down the street from the fire station on Carroll. I have lived in this house since 1996. I am writing to express two of my concerns over the proposed development at the Junction and the recent actions taken by the developer. Please take the following into consideration.

1. One of my key concerns with the proposed Junction development which unfortunately is not voiced by many others, is the impact on the quality of life – and the property values – of residents on the arterial streets feeding into and out of the Junction. The quality of life of residents on the arterial streets will be severely impacted by the increased traffic backups brought about by the proposed layby combined with the proposed multilevel parking garage.

As someone who has seen traffic and backups increase on Philadelphia Avenue exponentially over the past 24+ years, I am literally bracing myself for what will happen from the proposed development in terms of traffic backups as cars wait to get through the lights in order to move through the Junction. Has there been any study done of what effect the proposed, disproportionally sized development will have on traffic backups? Is there any plan to mitigate those backups? If not, I do not understand how elected officials of Takoma Park would fail to take into consideration the impact of its decisions on all of its residents – even those who don't live on the quieter side streets.

Just as one example of the ripple effect from whatever happens in the Junction...the change in the timing of Junction traffic lights about 1 ½ years ago when the cross walk at Grant was added more than doubled the time it takes for eastbound cars in front of my house to get through the light. Please stand at the fire station one day during evening rush hour or even late afternoon and count how few eastbound cars get through each light cycle. – Even during a pandemic.

What that has meant to me and all the neighbors down the street is that cars are backed up all the way down

to Maple Avenue – and beyond. And... that brings with it the constant noise of booming music and large idling vehicles that literally vibrate our windows and eardrums until the light finally changes. And then the next musical selection takes its place. And... then there is the steady honking of horns and screamed obscenities from frustrated drivers that assault us and that we cannot avoid as they wait to get through the light. And...It means that I have to pay to clean an increased amount of dirt from the front of my house because of longer idling times. And... It means we can't get out of our driveways until all the cars pass through the light or someone takes pity and lets us enter the street – every time we want to leave our own homes. And... It is also more than likely that those frustrated drivers especially at rush hour will spill over onto the side streets in their rush to circumvent Junction backups.

2. The TPSS COOP is not the enemy - or the problem. The strong-arm tactic that NDC used this past week against the TPSS COOP, however, was appalling and straight out of the history books and news stories about how large developers and corporations bully small municipalities, local businesses and their communities in order to line their own pockets. An expanded tax base is important for Takoma Park. But continuing to work with a developer with a track record of bad practices in other communities and an openly hostile attitude toward our local businesses and those residents who don't like what they have to "offer" will leave much less behind in terms of long-term value to our community. And to have some part of the city government seemingly complicit in alleging years' worth of never reported traffic violations and dangers for the developer to conveniently point to is unconscionable.

I am a long-time member of the TPSS COOP, but even if I weren't I would consider them to be a strong example of what a business and an employer should look like in any community. Just look at their track record during the pandemic. I would not want to live in a community that allows its local businesses to be shoved around - but rather live in one that protects and lifts up their entrepreneurial spirit.

I would like to have new development at the Junction to help with increased city revenue and to better meet the needs of the community, but I believe it should be proportional in size with the rest of the Junction businesses, more historically appropriate, more creative in its design and purpose and not at all negatively impact either other small businesses or any residents. On the contrary, I believe that any new development should creatively reflect who we are as a community and serve our needs and interests - and not just be another place for some to spend their money.

The agreement the city reaches around a new development should be with a developer that has a track record of honestly and respectfully engaging with city officials, existing businesses and the community at large. NDC has not shown themselves to be that kind of developer. Their recent actions with regards to the TPSS COOP and their "response" today to the community have shown that. And their proposed design has changed throughout the entire process as have some of their earlier "commitments" to address the needs and interests of the community.

As a long-time Takoma Park resident, I ask that the city reject this proposed development by NDC and look back at the many suggestions community members have already offered to incorporate other possible uses of the Junction. And then, please start the process over with another developer. Thank you.

Terese Bouey
14 Philadelphia Avenue
Takoma Park, MD
tybouey@gmail.com

Anne Becker of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Saturday, April 24, 2021

The City Council, Mayor and City Manager have shown through the dealings they had with NDC that they do not prioritize the well-being and safety of the citizens of Takoma Park over the desires for profit of this unfortunate company. The question is why?

Joseph Uehlein of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 24, 2021

I'm writing as a 37 year resident of Takoma park, and as the founder of Voices for a Sustainable Future, incorporated in MD and based in Takoma Park employing 15 people, four of whom live and work in MD. Let's be clear: The Takoma Park government, council, and mayor, have been advancing this project hand in glove with the developer. The accountability lies in their hands. NDC has proven to be an unworthy and dishonest "partner" to our elected leaders. Their plan does not meet the definition of sustainable development. A new plan of less size and scope and one that saves and promoted the Co-Op could easily be developed. The Co-Op is not an issue between NDC and the Co-Op, but between NDC and the government of Takoma Park, which of course means the people. Do the right thing for the people you represent and end the relationship with NDC.

Miriam Szapiro of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 24, 2021

I am a long-time resident of Takoma Park and have been a member of the Coop since it relocated to Takoma Park, much to the joy of Takoma Park residents.

I'm requesting that the City take whatever steps necessary to rein in NDC and protect the Coop from NDC's most recent coercive tactics - ordering the Coop to cease its loading and unloading activities in the parking lot and giving a 30-day notice of termination of the Coop's parking lot sublease.

I'm also writing to renew my request that the City reject the NDC design, which, besides its other significant drawbacks, presents unresolvable safety problems, as most recently confirmed by SHA.

Thank you,

Clara Paynter of Silver spring, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 24, 2021

I love the TPSS Coop. Please keep long standing businesses like this one in the community!!

Dani James of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 24, 2021

Save the Co-Op! Hiding behind closed doors to discuss this is a clue that your methods are not in the best interest of the town you were elected to serve. Drop NDC.

Joan Samworth of TAKOMA Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 24, 2021

I don't understand why this relationship with NDC still is in the "working out" stage when it is so obvious that there is no resolve with them. The mayor and city council members need to explain to the residents of Takoma

Park why they are intent on pursuing an agreement that is detrimental to the Co-op!

Janet Pegues of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

I can't imagine why the city of TP would continue to do business with this unscrupulous business. I have been a COOP member for more than 20 years and a regular shopper since the 80s. It is a reliable longstanding respected entity and it's important in this community cannot be overstated. It feels like NDC is attempting to sabotage the COOP and force them/us to move or shut down.... I hope the City will decide on transparency.....the citizens of TP deserve that.
J Pegues

Regina Tosca of Washington, DC

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

As a Takoma Park Coop member and customer, I am writing in support of the Coop retaining its access to the large parking lot next to its store. This lot is vital to the Coop's business as it enables deliveries and expands access for customers like me who drive to the store. The Coop provides a critical service to the community and the City should preserve its ability to conduct its business without interference from NDC. Please reject the proposal for Takoma Junction and retain the Coop's use of the large parking lot.

Ellen Kennedy of TAKOMA PARK, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

Just wanted to express my support and love of the Co-op. I urge you to do whatever it takes to keep it in business. I know there are many factors that will go into the junction redevelopment, but please keep the Co-op at the forefront of a redevelopment. Thank you.

Esther Siegel of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

Dear Council and Mayor,

Thank you for your courage to demand NDC rescind the egregious act toward the Co-op. But your work is not done. I believe NDC does not respect you. Their behavior demonstrates that they think they can walk all over you. Show them that is just not true.

I implore you to end this relationship with NDC. You keep using the words, "City-owned parking lot at Takoma Junction". Please take ownership and revert the Junction back to its rightful owners, us. How much clearer can it be that NDC wants to destroy the Co-op.

How many more times do you want to be pushed around by NDC. They miss deadlines, you push their deadlines back, they send revision after revision that continue to be inadequate, yet you persist. And now, this:

"In that correspondence, the City requested that NDC do so by noon on April 23, 2021. NDC did not respond to the City's request within this period. Therefore, the City is presently evaluating its potential courses of action, while continuing to communicate with both NDC and the Co-op concerning the issues previously identified by both parties. The City remains committed to seeking a resolution of the issues between NDC and the Co-op in order to ensure the Co-op remains operational "

I trust that once the contract is ended with NDC, with all the enthusiasm and interest in the Junction, we, as a community, will find the right use for the space. Have faith in your constituents, and stay strong and resolute in what you need to do to end this.

Esther Siegel
on Erie

Risa Shaw of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

Mayor Stewart, City Council Members, and City Staff,

I'm glad to see that the false statement about the "danger" the deliveries to the Coop pose has been removed and retracted. The falsehoods in that "fact" sheet have done damage to the Coop and I hope that whoever created it and propagated the lies will be held accountable, and that part of that accountability is that they no longer be allowed to be involved at all in the development work (or any city work at all).

I'm also glad to see that the City requested action by NDC by today at 12 noon (actions that allow the Coop to continuing functioning). The fact that NDC has not responded again speaks volumes. I hope that you all will listen to the manipulation and dishonesty being put forth by NDC and cut ties with them. Choose another developer and take our losses where they are now.

Denny May of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

The crisis at the Junction stems from the deceptive bait-and-switch by N.D.C. that promised one kind of development and then presented the city with another. That deception was augmented by City and developer pledges to protect the Co-op, something neither of them really believed in as demonstrated by a host of subsequent actions. What followed were years of stalemate and divisiveness dominated by an imperious City Manager who ignored a constant chorus of valid citizen concerns and conducted herself like an N.D.C. employee. The Mayor and City Council (with one shining exception in Ward 5) supinely accepted whatever was given them by the City Manager, lacking as they do their own staff capability to help provide good governance. The resulting debacle has degraded the City's reputation and split the town right down the middle. The only realistic solution would be to: sever the contract with N.D.C.; replace the City Manager with a skilled professional from the community who is respectful of citizen concerns and values; establish a Charter Commission to investigate reforms to our dysfunctional governance model; and unite the community around a workable model for development of the Junction that protects our community grocery store and the vibrant businesses that surround it while at the same time offering new amenities and opportunities for local residents.

Stephanie Hartman of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

I am writing to follow up my 4/13 letter to the City Council in which I expressed concern about NDC's plan and its disregard for community needs, including the welfare of the Co-op. At every stage of the process, NDC has pushed to maximize its space and profit, and, with only minor modifications, the City Council has let NDC get away with flagrant violations of the original agreement, such as not providing public space, sufficient parking, or rents that small local businesses could afford. At a recent meeting, Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot memorably called the City Council's support for NDC's plan a "stunning" and "inexplicable abuse of authority."

NDC's recent refusal to allow the Co-op to receive deliveries is completely on brand. There should be no accommodation of this aggressive action. In response to my April 13 letter, Kate Stewart wrote, "please know that it is in our Development Agreement (DA) that deliveries to the co-op must be accommodated. I helped get that in the DA and a number of other things that require NDC to accommodate the Co-op and other businesses."

I ask that the City Council decisively uphold the Development Agreement and end the contract with NDC now. Perhaps understandably, NDC seems confident that it can get away with whatever it likes. It is banking on the City Council's willingness to put the Co-op out of business, perhaps because so much work has gone into the plan already. But this time, it has gone too far. I applaud the members of the City Council who have had enough of NDC. I hope the rest of you will protect the Junction community by joining them.

Richard Pilkinton of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

NDC never intended to cooperate with the City.

NDC did not care about the Co-op. It was a marketing ploy to get the city on our good side

NDC would like the Co-op to go out of business and this has been part of their plan all along.

NDC has a record of this type of strong arm tactics, misleading and false promises as well as complete lack of consideration for the neighborhood.

They must be stopped.

David Band of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

Enough of NDC's strong arm non-cooperation with the local residents of Takoma Junction area. Blocking access to the coop parking lot, proposing to endanger the pedestrians and bicyclists and vehicles by the absurd lay-by structure, and doing nothing beneficial at all for common space for the local citizens besides proposing to swap the area with unimaginable traffic buildups and intersection blockages. Time to dump them and design something more friendly to the people of Takoma Park. We own the area, we need to have it add to add something useful for the public not take away the current conveniences we now derive from it.

Kelli Cronin of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

I'm baffled by the city's lack of transparency and its insistence on continuing to work with NDC. This is Takoma Park, MD? What has become of you? I'm a member of the co-op and it's a rare sort of business in the corporatocracy that is the US in 2021. I'll have no trouble boycotting all of Takoma Park NDC businesses if you put the co-op out of business. This is shameful.

Stephen Kern of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

In an open letter dated April 18, 2021, the president of the Neighborhood Development Company writes that he's "mystified" at the outpouring of anger towards his company. Maybe the comments here on this platform

will enlighten him, but I'll add a few more reasons, just in case. And, yes, I think we know enough now to say it's in the best interest of Takoma Park to say goodbye to NDC.

1. Slandering your neighbors -

The President of NDC claims in the April letter that the Co-Op's concern about the lay-by is "typical of the hyperbole that has been the Co-Op's stock in trade for years". Slandering a business that provides fifty, good paying, union jobs, and has been the hero of the pandemic, is not a good way to build good will.

2. Bullying your neighbors -

In the same letter, the NDC President asks why there is such deep "animus" in light of all the awards they've won. But he fails to mention the lawsuits that have trailed his work. For example, after NDC abruptly padlocked the minority-owned businesses for its project in Northeast DC, that community sued NDC. The Deanwood Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner wrote, "This is not how we treat people that have been here during the bad times, and the good." I would ask NDC: are you surprised Takoma Park residents had a similar reaction when you abruptly locked out the Co-Op?

3. Misleading your neighbors -

The NDC President writes in his April letter, "you don't have to be a traffic engineer to understand" [that the Co Op's current delivery system] "creates an unsafe environment for pedestrians and bicyclists, and causes traffic problems." I'm not a traffic engineer either, but I'd suggest an equally strong argument could be made that constructing a large office-retail complex in a "failed intersection" might itself create an unsafe environment. When you weaponize an unfounded excuse (handed to you by the City Manager) to screw over our only local grocery store, its safe to say you're not going to make new friends.

4. Deceiving your neighbors -

During a recent Zoom meeting Mr. Washington said, for the record, "the lot is open to everyone, there is not an assigned — this is for you, this is for someone else ... the guarantee [for public parking] is in the Agreement." Yet NDC makes an entirely different claim on the City's website under the Takoma Junction Project Response to Resolution where they write "We will reserve some parking spaces for future tenants and office users." Which is it? What's the truth? Willfully misleading those you wish to support you is typically a non-starter.

5. Insulting your neighbors –

In the April letter you compare the residents of Takoma Park to the "Republicans who opposed Obamacare". You write that Republicans "had no idea what the program was all about," implying that Takoma Park residents (or maybe just those residents who oppose your plans?) are spouting nonsense. Again, I pose a question to the NDC President: what do you imagine angers residents more - comparing them to Republicans, or insinuating that they're stupid?

Slandering, bullying, misleading, deceiving, and insulting are terms that often arise when describing an abusive relationship. I think it's fair, in this case, after a five-year courtship, to conclude we're in an abusive relationship. As residents, we can only do so much, so I ask the Mayor and Council to please cut ties with this faithless and destructive partner.

joe cholka of silver spring, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

It seems the Council has to choose between keeping the COOP or going ahead with the NDC development plan (whatever that will ultimately be).

CHOOSE to keep the COOP; it is a great local resource.

This latest NDC letter is outrageous and, if allowed to be enforced, will inevitably lead to the closure

of the COOP.

Yes, developing the parcel is important. But NDS is not the party to do it. Their cockamamie plans have been rejected by the state, by the citizenry and now their contract should be terminated by the Council.

Jay Tucker of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

Hi,

I'm very concerned about the lack of transparency and accountability for what has happened at the junction redevelopment. I feel like the city has not made an effort in getting community guidance for this piece of city property. As a taxpayer, I'm deeply troubled. Why have we continued to contract with NDC? If they can act like an unreliable partner now how do we expect them to be one once they build on this property? My ask is that city council terminates the agreement with NDC immediately.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

Jay

Lee Peterson of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

Based on the information available the agreement we have NDC is having a negative impact on our existing businesses and the community. If the community were allowed full access to the proceedings I might feel differently. We need to terminate our contract with NDC. This land should be bringing us together and it appears NDC has only supporting their own interests.

SARA GREEN of WASHINGTON, DC

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

Don't have all of the details about this issue.

However, this Takoma DC neighbor always points to Takoma Park, Maryland as the model of common-sense civic morality whenever the DC government allows developers to behave like brutes. Please stay true to your values and protect a long-time business.

Stephen Kern of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

Dear City Council, if you remain intent on moving forward with NDC, please include a provision in the final agreement that keeps all parking spaces public, all the time.

The current agreement between the City and NDC does NOT prohibit NDC from leasing the bulk of its 50+ parking spaces to its own tenants.

The 2016 Development Agreement states: "The project will be designed to provide parking options for area businesses not located within the Project as agreed to between the Developer and the City."

This vague description allows for all kinds of wiggle room. For example, what's to keep NDC from leasing/reserving 53 of the 55 spaces to its tenants, while leaving only two spaces open to the general public? Further, there's nothing in the agreement now that would prohibit NDC from reserving parking spaces for its tenants during the day, while only allowing public parking at night – an arrangement that would have a significant negative economic impact on Spring Mill Bakery, Carriage House Cleaners, The Takoma Business Center, and others.

The 2018 City Resolution does nothing to address this issue, saying only there should be "inclusion of public parking for area businesses."

Meanwhile NDC is asking for a waiver from MoCo Planning to provide 15 fewer spaces than required by law to meet the standard set forth for its own occupants. Imagine that! NDC's plan does not meet the parking requirements for its own tenants, much less neighboring businesses!

Meanwhile, NDC is arguing overflow parking will be available on surrounding streets. Are you listening Poplar, Grant, Sycamore, Woodland and Columbia?

Meanwhile, on a recent Zoom call, the president of NDC told you and the public "the lot is open to everyone, there is not an assigned — this is for you, this is for someone else ... the guarantee is in the Agreement;" No, Mr. Washington, its not in the Agreement.

In fact, a contrary claim is made on the City's website under the Takoma Junction Project Response to Resolution, dated April 4 2021. Here, NDC says: "We will reserve some parking spaces for future tenants and office users." Which is it, Mr. Washington? All? Some? If the latter, how many?

Please, let's put Mr. Washington's claim from the Zoom call into a legal document. Otherwise there could be a net loss of 50+ parking spaces in the Junction.

And let's recall the original RFP for this project set forth in January 2014: "The development should act as a stimulus to the commercial district and locally-owned independent businesses." Now that it really matters, please demonstrate your support for existing Junction businesses by closing the parking loop-holes.

Thank you.

Norman Strike of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

Please stop the unjust maneuvers by the NDC to drive the co-op out of Takoma Park. they are a vital part of our local economy, & they should be deprived of their parking arrangement. It is totally unfair and unjust. please work to rectify the situation for the betterment of our community -thank you. Norman Strike

Sue Kerbel of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

It's time for the city to terminate the relationship with NDC. What a festering misbegotten mess. Please stop this. Now.

Pia Teehan of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

Please save the Takoma Coop grocery store. They need the parking lot to survive.

The Coop was one of the reasons I moved to Takoma.

Lori Puma of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

I hope you will support the Co-op and help enforce the lease they have with the NDC about the use of the parking lot. Thank you.

Steven and Stephanie Ney of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

Please save the Coop and terminate the City's relationship with NDC. It is time.

Bruce Kozarsky of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

At long last, the City of Takoma Park has rescinded the Big Lie that is at the root of NDC's predatory action to evict the Co-op from the City-owned lot:

"The City's March 10, 2021 'Site Conditions and Limitations' Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document, referenced in those communications, has already been removed from the City's website. It is hereby retracted in full and is without effect."

Here's what we need now:

- 1) An explanation as to how and why this Big Lie was spread and who was responsible.
- 2) The City Manager and any staff involved in preparing the Big Lie document must be held accountable, and immediate termination appears to be the clear and appropriate way to do so.
- 3) If NDC doesn't immediately withdraw its eviction notice to the Co-op -- since everyone now knows it was based on this Big Lie -- the City must immediately end the Junction Development deal. (I would argue NDC's actions deserve this response regardless, but now they don't even have a fraudulent leg to stand on.

This is a shameful episode in our City government's history. It is incumbent upon the Mayor and City Council to restore credibility, trust and accountability, all of which are lying in shambles at the moment.

David Land of SILVER SPRING, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

I'm confused about this. The co-op is probably the most iconic and perhaps most revenue generating business that operates in the city and needs the use of both parking lots to function. I'm not a resident but I shop there on a regular basis and need to park in order to do so.

Thanks,

David Land

Brad Blower of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

I am concerned about the City's commitment to the continuing sustainability of the co-op and ensuring that the intersection at Takoma Junction is safe for pedestrians and car traffic. It does not appear that NDC has a realistic plan for co-existing with the co-op and allowing reasonable access and egress from the junction.

Traffic is already an issue in this area and the NDC plan is going to make congestion even worse. I would hope the City can facilitate a better plan that preserves the co-op as a valuable resource to residents, while at the same time enhancing commerce in the junction in a way that makes sense for existing businesses.

I also am concerned about NDC's commitment to the greater Takoma Park area given not only its failure to date to develop a reasonable plan for safe traffic flow and water runoff at the junction, but also its abdication of responsibility to adequately maintain the 7-11 site just over the border in DC while it waits to begin construction there. That area is covered in graffiti and littered with trash. It is sitting as a long-time eye sore for residents of Takoma Park. We need to make sure NDC plans also consider the good of the greater community for both the junction and the 7-11.

Philip Doyle of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

Driving out of Sycamore Avenue to get to Carroll Avenue is pretty bad. Sometimes the traffic light is set to allow only one car at a time. The two sets of lights on westbound Ethan Allen often confuse drivers who plow through the intersection when it's time for the Sycamore traffic to go, creating the potential for a tragedy.

I can't see the proposed development next to the co-op doing anything but exacerbating an already bad situation.

Folks I've spoken with who support the project emphasize that something has to be done with the space, a point of view I don't share. Even so, I'm disappointed that the council hasn't been able to summon the imagination for something more community- centered than yet another too-dense commercial development.

anicca jansen of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

Regarding the limp response to an issue requiring backbone. i.e., "matters related to communications between the Neighborhood Development Company (NDC) and the Takoma Park Silver Spring Co-op (Co-op)" seriously, does the city really see this as a failure to communicate? Keep in mind, NDC is the developer who abruptly evicted and padlocked local businesses in a Deanwood area development. (see, for example, "The DCLine" Oct 15. 2018.) "When someone shows you who they are, believe them the first time." M. Angelou. NDC is an absolutely unfit partner for this community. This is not a failure to communicate, this is a failure to terminate. Step UP!

Sherri Sampson of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 23, 2021

As a 23 year resident of Takoma Park and devoted member and shopper at TPSS Co-op, I am appalled at the actions of the NDC and extremely disappointed by the inaction of the City Council. Please protect the vital community resource the Co-op represents and sever ties with the NDC. The NDC does not embody the

values of our great city and should not be our partner.

Walter Miles of TAKOMA PARK, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

This is a very difficult site to develop, small, fronting on a complicated series of intersections of busy roads, and with a steep drop in elevation to the rear. I wonder if any for-profit enterprise can successfully develop this lot in a way that is safe, and provides benefit to most residents. Maybe we need a different way, and maybe we shouldn't see it as a large source of easy revenue for the City, or as a longterm source of profit for a landlord.

Karin Chambless of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Dear Mayor and Council Members;

As a member-shopper at the TPSS co-op, I urge you to require NDC to withdraw its Direction to Cease and Desist; Notice of Sub-lease Termination, delivered to the Co-op on April 16, 2021. The unsubstantiated claims of the NDS and its Direction are improper, and will cause unfair harm to the Co-op's operation.

I urge you to find a development partner for Takoma Junction that will keep in mind the interests of small businesses like the Co-op - the Council must listen to the voices of TP community members who are clearly speaking out strongly against this recent NDC action.

Thank you,

Karin Chambless

Claudine Schweber of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I am appalled and furious that the City Council has allowed the developer to run the City's property as it wants! Breaking an agreement re food deliveries???? Remember, this is a 99 year lease--!! the developer doesn't care about our community. So--why doesn't the City Council care?

TPK Council--please act as members of this community and support the co-op; a local business , like others in the area. I am very worried. STOP this now.

Elise Bryant of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I am a member of the TPSS Co-op for over 25 years. I choose to shop at the Co-op instead of Whole Foods because I believe in the principles of co-operative organizations and unionized workplaces. I shop at the Co-op because I also want whole, organic fruits, vegetables and other products and to support a local business. The city of Takoma Park has a jewel of a local business that needs access to the parking lot that allows deliveries to done in a safe and secure way.

I implore the TP city council to do everything in your power to honor the lease and keep the adjacent parking lot.

Matthew Ott of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Speaking up as a shopper at the co-op for 10 years. It's time for the City to end its relationship with NDC, remove the City Manager from the development review process, and restore the Co-op's access to the parking lot for deliveries and parking that serves the whole community.

Thanks for considering my comment.

Matt Ott

Takoma/Silver Spring

Monica Robbins of Takoma park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Please do allow the eviction of the coop

PHYLLIS GOLDFARB of TAKOMA PARK, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I wish that I didn't feel compelled to write this comment. I wish that the value of the Co-op as a responsible citizen and excellent employer in this community--never more evident than during the pandemic--were being adequately recognized by the city. I wish that the city had insisted on working with a developer who treated the Co-op as a flagship business for the Junction and designed its vision around the Co-op. I wish that the city prioritized the Co-op's protection--a status the Co-op has earned--rather than dismissing too readily the risks that the development process has posed to the Co-op's continued operation. I wish that the scale of the development hadn't grown over time. I wish that all city officials consistently spoke about the development plan with scrupulous attention to facts. I wish that the city had learned from experience with the pandemic the increasing importance of outdoor space and the decreasing importance of office space. While I haven't been able to follow every step of the process, what I have been able to follow has left me deeply disappointed by the nature and substance of what has transpired. Regardless of prior steps and missteps, considerations and oversights, it seems that the writing is now on the wall. The development process has devolved in a way that is no longer consistent with the stated values of the Takoma Park community. As challenging as it may be, it seems it's time to begin again.

April Harry of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

The co-op is integral to Takoma Park and needs to stay. NDC can go elsewhere. Please keep the co-op and parking lot. Local businesses are essential in this community, especially for those like me who only shop local.

paul ruther of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I am a 23-year Takoma Park resident and I am a long-time shopper at the Takoma Food Coop. I am very alarmed by the notion that NDC will evict the Co-op on May 16 and has asked the Co-op to cease accepting deliveries as of April 26. I was shocked to learn that after 20 years of approving the co-ops' subleasing of the parking lot off Carroll Avenue is now deemed to be unsafe and that the Co-op is the cause of its danger. I wanted to review the fact sheet describing how the lot was unsafe and saw that it has been removed.

The polemics that I've heard from both sides about issues of race, class, Co-op prices, the city's history of activism, legacy of Sammy Abbott etc. aren't of interest to me. No one voice speaks for Takoma Park and people can disagree. But it is unethical and immoral to evict a community business whose only crime has been to try and survive when NDC has constantly made proposals that are meant to put it out of business.

I ask you to reconsider the city's relationship with NDC. The stories I've read about its treatment of the community in the Deanwood neighborhood of NE have caused me to believe they are not a good partner for the city of Takoma Park. I hope you will consider wiping the slate clean and starting over again with the Co-op. I know it will be hard, but if the Co-op is forced to close, the wounds will take years to heal. I can't believe you want a 40-year plus community business to be shut down because of the inaction of the City Council and the malevolence of NDC.

This is a bad deal gone wrong. I hope you can see your way to changing course. There are 50 employees at the Coop and thousands of shoppers who will applaud your decision. Sure some will go to Whole Foods, or Yes Natural Gourmet if the rumours are true that it will open at the old 7-11, but many will never forget that a community owned business was shut down not because it failed, but because you and the city council failed.

Sincerely,

Paul Ruther

Sherry Beamer of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

NDC's redevelopment actions especially with the Co-op seem in conflict with the philosophy of the Takoma Park community. I am dismayed.

Peter Johnson of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I live in Ward 6 and this is my first input on the Takoma Junction Redevelopment. Up until now, I have assumed that the City (Mayor, City Manager, City Council) would be able to find a sustainable solution for the redevelopment that safeguards the vitality of the COOP, as well as current businesses that are part of Takoma Junction. The recent surprise move by NDC to terminate the COOP's parking lease & the false information posted on the Takoma Park city website regarding Maryland traffic regulations used to support such a move (that has now apparently been removed for "review") causes me to re-think my confidence in the City's choice of NDC. I am not against sustainable redevelopment, but after also reading the SHA letter that was sent to NDC and the city, I do not know how NDC can continue with its for-profit plans without jeopardizing the non-profit COOP's future to remain in Takoma Park. I urge the Mayor and the Council members to seriously consider if you want as your potential legacy a for-profit building (that likely will have one or more vacant business spaces), along with a Takoma Park that no longer has a COOP. It is time to stand up for SMART redevelopment and that includes development that does NOT make traffic and pedestrian safety worse (like the SHA report proves would have happened with NDC), nor does it risk the viability of all Takoma Junction businesses that have given decades of hard work to Takoma Park citizens and many others. Thank you for listening. I am not even a frequent shopper at the COOP but I know an injustice when I see it.

Laura Steiner of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

As a renter living within walking distance to the co-op for over a decade, the co-op has been a dependable

and charming part of my life. It is not just a business; it is an integral part of our community and should be protected by our government. If new development forces it to shut down, I will be very disappointed.

Tetiana Dzekon of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

The TPSS Co-op is a crucial part of the Takoma Park community. Terminating their lease on the parking lot will essentially give them nowhere to do pickups/deliveries and will create a lack of parking for customers. I urge the city to reconsider the Takoma Park Junction Redevelopment project and terminate their relationship with NDC.

Ann Hobbs of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I have lived in the area and been a member of the Takoma Park-Silver Spring Co-op for more than 30 years. The Co-op is a treasure that draws business not only to itself, but to other local businesses. It is part of the charm of Takoma Park. Now more than ever, small grocers offering healthful foods are needed. Please do not allow the Co-op to be forced out by short-sighted business policies.

Catherine Tunis of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I urge Council to dump NDC as a Junction development partner. They have been dishonest from the start, promising features that evaporated once the Council signed an agreement with them. They knew SHA was going to reject the lay-by, but spoke the night before as if everything was A-OK. But their latest action to evict the Co-op from the parking lot is clear evidence that they do not have the integrity and character to be any sort of partner with the City of Takoma Park.

Please end the City's relationship with NDC now. Please save our community from further corruption of our values.

Lena Reed of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

It has come to my attention the severity of the situation in regards to the new development at the Junction and NDC's plans to restrict the Co-op's ability to receive deliveries or utilize the public lot.

The Co-op is a staple to our community. It not only provides a convenient way for people within Takoma Park to buy groceries but it also helps to support other local businesses; like local farmers and whole sale businesses. If the city aims to move forward with this relationship with NDC, and they insist on continuing on with their plan to halt deliveries to the Co-op, then the city needs to find an alternative solution to ensure that the Co-op is able to still receive deliveries from its suppliers.

If the Co-op closes, we will not only be losing a fixture to our town, but the staff members would be without a job and we will also be financially impacting the small business owners who rely on the Co-op to sell their produce and merchandise.

We as a city, as a town, pride ourselves on being a community and our neighborly ways. However, I fear that this will only push us more towards the gentrified streets in the surrounding area that have been barren of the small businesses that once housed their buildings, only to be replaced by larger franchises. I hope that I am

wrong and that the city is able to find an adequate solution to this major issue.

Roger Wilke of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I live close to the Co-op on Sycamore Avenue and have been a member and shopped there several times a week for two decades. The Co-op needs the use of the large lot for customer parking and truck deliveries. Due to NDC's untrustworthy behaviors and clear profit motives rather than the needs and well being of the community, the Co-op and its customers, the City's agreement with NDC should be terminated. In addition, the City Manager having put out a false "fact sheet" (with undocumented claims of safety concerns) should be fired. The traffic problems at the junction would clearly be exacerbated by the current plan. If there's development at the Junction in the future, it should be done with the benefit of a developer and City Manager who are motivated by the interests of the community.

Erik Dussere of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Dear Takoma Park City Council,

This is the first time that I have written anything to you (or anyone) about the proposed development at Takoma Junction. I'm writing now because I was dismayed to see that NDC had taken this most recent action—trying to block the TPSS Co-op from using the parking lot next to it for deliveries. It seems to me that NDC has done questionable things in the past, but this latest one crosses a line. It seems clear now that NDC is an unreliable partner, that it has no interest in the life or livelihood of Takoma Park and its residents, and that it is apparently willing to act in ways that are petty and bullying in order to get the residents, businesses, and elected representatives of Takoma Park to do what it wants them to do.

Maybe this was obvious to you or to others already, and I was slow to take notice. But it is obvious to me now, so I am writing to ask you to do whatever is necessary to protect the interests of the co-op, to resist the pressure from NDC, and if necessary to cease working with NDC. The co-op has been absolutely central to my experience of Takoma Park; it is one of the things I love about the city and the community. I am not at all opposed to development, but I am now absolutely opposed to NDC's practices and their attempt to undermine and damage the co-op.

Thanks for listening,

Erik Dussere

Colleen Cordes of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

No Compromise with a Power-Abusing Landlord: Sever Ties with NDC

Dear Mayor Stewart and Members of the City Council,

Your silence is disturbing.

NDC's sudden, brutal order last week to its tenant, the Co-op, to "immediately halt loading and unloading operations" far exceeded any reasonable pretense of justification. If NDC's intent was to end the particular deliveries at the City lot that the company and the City Manager have suddenly (and conveniently) begun arguing are dangerous, why did NDC not stop there: Only forbid deliveries by large trucks, and deliveries that

cross a double yellow line? It did indeed nix such deliveries. But the terms of its "cease and desist" letter went far beyond any reasonable response to its stated concerns. Apologists for NDC -- and our own Mayor and Council -- cannot excuse the following:

* NDC also immediately banned ALL loading and unloading on the City's lot as well. That means no trash removal, no small truck deliveries willing to enter and exit without crossing a double yellow line, no deliveries in hatchback cars or minivans from small local producers of specialty products -- probably even a ban on shoppers loading their own bags of groceries into their cars!

* Equally outrageous: NDC declared it was terminating the Co-op's whole lease in 30 days. That means the Co-op will no longer be able to offer free parking for its own employees and customers -- and for the employees and customers of all other Junction businesses, as it does now. Is NDC now seriously arguing that even parking cars in this City-owned parking lot is unsafe?

NDC's lame explanation for such a sudden, sweeping, drastic disruption of its tenant's business would be laughable, if the consequences weren't so harmful. We could all make educated guesses as to what the motivation of NDC, as a landlord, actually is. But neither the Mayor nor the Council need to determine that. All that's required is: To recognize abusive behavior by a landlord as such, make it very clear the City of Takoma Park will not be party to such behavior -- nor risk teaming up for the next 90-plus years with a company willing to indulge in such disruptive tactics -- and then immediately sever all ties with NDC.

Are we or are we not a City that protects tenants from the whims of powerful landlords? Does this, or does this not, amount to an unfair eviction in the midst of a pandemic, harming the entire community that relies on the Co-op as a main food source? The Mayor and Council must not inflict a company that keeps a move like that in its playbook on any other Junction businesses -- and certainly not for the next 90-plus years.

Sincerely,
Colleen Cordes
Ward One

Karen Elrich of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Read all these comments and do the right thing.

Gary Stern of TAKOMA PARK, MD
Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

When the SHA rejected the layby last week, it confirmed what seemed so clear to so many of us for so long, that it posed serious dangers and traffic problems. These and the related concerns about storm water, noise, trees, and, of course, the COOP, all stem from the same core issue — the current NDC plan is simply too big.

But the good news is that all these problems can be resolved by simply making the project smaller, which is all that we have been asking for so very long. Moreover, a plan already exists that the city can endorse, developed by local architect Byrne Kelly in 2018, and still available at this link:
<https://cvtakomajunction.com/2018/05/21/how-to-get-unstuck-at-the-junction/>

We are all now counting on the City Council to do the right thing and bring the entire city together in support of a right-sized development for the junction.

Sincerely,
Gary Stern

David Kaplan of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I am very upset by the cease and desist letter that NDC recently sent to the CO-OP, and perhaps more so by the City Council's and Manager's role in the letter's precipitating events. I support the CO-OP and the services and jobs it provides our community. Among other problems, the planned development at the Takoma Junction site fails to provide adequate (if any) parking for existing business, let alone adequate parking for the new development proposed by NDC. NDC's cease and desist letter to the CO-Op is a nasty ruse.

In the end, the Council's partnership with NDC has not been good for Takoma Park; even if not legally, the partnership has as practical matter locked the Council into bad decisions and limited options. The Takoma Junction site has several real limitations that have not be properly addressed. NDC's development proposal and its tactics do not deserve the City's continued support. I urge the City to take the steps necessary to sever its relationship with the current project proosal. The sooner the Council pivots to an alternative, the sooner we can pursue the type of public/private development Takoma Park wants and that makes sense at this location. And, please, resist the "this-or-nothing" narrative. It is simply not true, and it prevents good decisions and effective leadership.

Anastazia Frueauf of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

We chose to live in Takoma park based in large part on having an amazing community owned grocery that we could walk to. Please support the co-op and put its needs over the desire to develop.

Catherine Pajic of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I am appalled at the way the NDC is attempting to shut down the Co-Op. I am in favor of developing the site, but I have seriuous concerns about the traffic patterns, safety issues, pollution (noise and air), aesthetics, and the impact on our neighborhood.

I'm not sure what the goal is for this development project. Perhaps that's the best place to start - how about something small, community oriented, and revenue generating that does not add more problems than it solves?

Thank you for your time and attention.

Catherine Pajic

Eric Sepler of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

As owner of Kinetic Artistry since 1972. I've owned property and operated a retail space in Takoma Junction for 49 years. Over the decades I've witnessed the many changes to the traffic and to the business district.

The traffic has steadily grown over the years until it has become the difficult snarled mess that it is today. The development, as it is proposed now, will create an even more dangerous and chaotic traffic nightmare. Cars and pedestrians are having an unacceptable amount of trouble navigating the area as it now exists. I'm

continually seeing how much havoc a single car trying to change lanes can cause and this development is proposing adding a lay-by at an already crowded intersection into the mix. The development's proposal does not solve its own delivery and traffic problems, but pushes them off of their property and onto the public streets. The car horns blaring and the frustrated drivers jamming the area is a constant problem that is only over-shadowed by the lack of parking.

The lack of parking in the area has been a growing problem, with customers often having to park illegally just to find a space. When the lot was used for parking, it created the spaces that the customers and businesses needed. Without an equivalent amount of space, not only will the businesses suffer, but the property values will also diminish. The area will never be able to keep the type of businesses that Takoma Park wants let alone attract additional business to the area.

The proposal also doesn't create enough parking for it's own businesses and is planning to push their customers to use the too few parking spots that the current Takoma Junction businesses need so much.

By agreeing to this proposal you are threatening the businesses, like my own, that have been in Takoma Junction for many years. Businesses can not survive without parking. As a business owner and a property owner you will be doubly damaging me. My business can't survive without sufficient parking and the property value will decline without parking.

It's very short sighted to approve building additional space for businesses, while making the business across the street undesirable retail spaces. The traffic problems, that I have watched steadily grow will continue to grow worse with time, not better. This proposal does not solve any of the problems in the Takoma Junction, but will be creating more problems. I implore you to look at the broader picture of the problems and needs of the entire Takoma Junction area. We can not absorb the overflow of parking and traffic problems that this proposal will cause for our area.

Marty Drake of T as Kona Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I heard you're terminating the lease to the parking lot for the Takoma Park Coop. What a shady deal. I object as do and will all residents of Takoma Park once they find out what you've done without ample time for community input. The coop is more than a business or grocery store. It helps bring our community together, which was amply proven throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. The future of Takoma Park is shaped for the better by the Takoma Park Coop. I know you're probably making money on the side from this from the developer, that's politics. Otherwise why the rush? But I can assure you that I and others will do what we can to remove elected members of city leadership come the next election. That's politics too. Please vote against this action.

Anne Perrault of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I appreciate efforts to rethink and improve the Junction. However, I just can't understand why the city is continuing to support an entity and a project that lacks broad support and is strongly opposed by a significant number of community members. In my opinion, such an approach is not healthy for the community, and not likely to succeed. I'm also concerned that key issues, such as traffic, remain outstanding. NDC's recent actions have just confirmed, for me, that this particular project should be abandoned.

Michael Wilpers of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

All I can say to the Mayor and Council about the Coop losing its lease on the parking lot (as outlined below) is,

"What?!" or "What are you thinking?" or "Do you WANT the coop to fail?" I don't know what the full process was that led to this happening, but whatever it was, clearly it was deeply flawed -- or the City was duped by the NDC into an agreement it should never have signed on to.

If the City has any flexibility left, it should be brought to bear to reverse this terrible turn of events.

Background:

I learned today that NDC has terminated the TP Coops lease of the parking lot between the store and the Fire House. The message indicated that NDC demanded in its notice to the Co-op that all deliveries must halt immediately and parking needs to in 30 days. Termination of the lease came two days after the State Highway Department informed NDC that their proposed development plans needed to be revised because they did not meet safety and traffic requirements.

Christine Casullo of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

The tpss coop is the cornerstone of Takoma park. We specifically moved here because of the access to fresh local produce that is not corporate owned that they provide. It is a family that can't be replaced. Termination of the parking lot lease must be reconsidered. The community should have been loudly made aware of this before now. What's next. The pavilion? We need to speak up for the things that make our community unique. No way should the coop loose needed access and essentially be forced out.

Susan and nery Fleck and Duron of Tp, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Council representatives,

I have lived in TP since 1991 and joined the coop the same year I came here. Offering healthy food choices and being a democratic local member organization are unique to the coop. The coop is an organization and a business. The coop pays good wages and gives benefits and charges fair prices and supports the community with donations and employment. It is a member run enterprise. Not a profit seeking enterprise.

I support development that is sustainable. I have been hoping NDC and the city leaders could figure out what to do. It's good to generate more jobs and support local businesses. But a public private partnership has much more responsibility to the public than a private enterprise does. The public has more of a voice. And it appears that city has not been late Inc to that voice. As city leaders you are our democracy. The members of the coop are your constituents. We expect our voices to be represented by your decisions.

The city manager is playing brinksmanship as if the coop is a capitalist entity seeking profits. The NDC and the manager seem to be putting a one-two power squeeze on the coop with their back to back edicts this past week. The two communications threaten to shut down the coop by putting them between a rock and a hard place. They use the lot on sycamore for social distancing. Now they are using it for deliveries. They were respecting neighbors wishes for years by not using the lot and now they must.

NDC is a for profit company. The coop is not. NDC is seeking to make a profit. The coop serves the community. An affront to the coop is an affront to the community.

My recommendations- Break the lease w NDC and pay them back what they have spent. And stop the city manager from accusing the coop of unsafe business practices. While I like the council to be decisive I don't like the city manager's retaliatory-appearing decisiveness accusing the coop of safety violations.

Coop members engage in process and discussion. And believe in fair treatment.

My husband family and I vote to be represented. Assuming you think of your representative role as a responsibility then you should be overseeing the management of the city. We depend on you to be sure the city is doing what the residents envision. Be decisive. Be fair. Be transparent. Be democratic.

Sometimes you have to say no. We hope you say no to the NDC and city bureaucracy retaliation and effort at squeezing the coop politically and economically.

Megan Scribner of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Mayor Stewart and the City Council,

I know you all have spent a great deal of time and energy on the Takoma Junction and so it must be frustrating to have the SHA's decision regarding the layby. Though if you step back for a minute and think about the placement and dimensions of the layby, that could not really have been much of a surprise. Even beyond the issue of the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists, the extra traffic issues that would occur in an already problematic intersection should have raised red flags for you.

In addition, the location of the exit from the parking garage is dangerous (there is almost no visibility from there) and would greatly add to the already difficult traffic situation. For those reasons, and so many others, this development does not make sense for the site.

Rather than continue on with a development that does not fit the site, does not address the City's priorities or the recommendations of the Takoma Park Junction Task Force, the City should say "no" to NDC and go back to the kind of size and style of development that was at the basis of your initial "yes" to NDC.

The fact that NDC came back with a design that had little in common with their bid design should have made you stop and say: this is not what we agreed to and we will not continue to work with you until you return to something that has the same general size and amenities (i.e. a place for trucks to do deliveries for the Co-op and whatever other businesses in the development) and public spaces we see as priorities for the space. It is another reason why this is not the development for this site and this is not the developer that the City should work with.

On top of all that, on the heels of SHA's decision, NDC suddenly decides to terminate the Co-op's lease of parking. It is hard to see this as anything but a petty retaliation against the SHA's decision and the Co-op. It is a sign of NDC's way of working (with a business that they have a long-standing agreement with, that the Co-op has upheld) - another reason why the City should cease working with them and withdraw any agreement for their use of this space.

That NDC turned to the City's "fact" sheet and its made up "yellow line" issue as justification for this move highlights another difficult issue. Time and again, the City manager, rather than being a tough defender of the City's interests, has been a booster for this project and this developer. By not being tougher and forcing NDC to meet the City's priorities for the space, the recommendations of the Takoma Park Junction Task Force, and later those detailed in your own resolution, the City manager has given NDC the upper hand. They did not need to even try and make a site that worked for the space.

For these and many other reasons, the City should end its relationship with NDC, remove the City Manager from the development review process, and restore the Co-op's access to the parking lot for deliveries and parking that serves the whole community.

Sincerely,
Megan Scribner

Susan Page of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Please say goodbye to NDC now. Acknowledge and respect the Co-op as a strong anchor business which in addition to all the good it does is also a magnet for other small local businesses at the Junction. Hire a new professional City Manager capable of the task. This has gone on too long. Thank you.

Susan Page

Maple Ave

Tax payer since 1981

Steve Cho of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

My family has been doing business here in Takoma Park for over 35 yrs. The parking spaces are essential for the Co-op, small business and customers at the Junction. It's time to end relationship with the NDC to develop at the Junction and move on with someone else. Therefore, I would like to see the mayor, city council members to reconsider the overly scaled project and really work with the small business and community for a realistic resolution.

Sabrina Carter of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

As a Takoma Park resident and Coop shopper I am appalled at the action NDC has taken . This must be stopped. Anyone involved must be held accountable.

Lawrence Wheatley of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

The value of the Coop cannot be over stated. To allow a developer to come in and in anyway threaten it's existence cannot be tolerated. It would have to be considered nothing less than failed leadership. Mayor and council members don't drop the ball!!!

Susan Schreiber of Takoma PRK, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

NDC's CEO Adrian Washington's recent email to a Takoma Park resident contains several wrong or unfounded statements, for instance that the Co-op is an ordinary for-profit business, which it is a "cooperative," which is defined by the State of Maryland as being governed by member owners. (It also operates according to a set of guiding principles for cooperative grocery stores that includes "working for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members".)

And there was the assertion that the Co-op's system for unloading groceries is unsafe, based on unsubstantiated comments made the City Manager and posted on the City website.

But I'm particularly struck by what Mr. Washington says in his last paragraph:

"One last thing - In 2018 NDC and the City executed a 99-year lease for the Takoma Junction site, so we've already been a Takoma Junction business owner for almost three years now. We are the largest black-owned

business at the Junction and, I'm quite sure, one of the largest in all of Takoma Park, so it galls me to no end that opponents of the project have stooped to using 'racial equity' as a reason to try to undermine our efforts."

First of all, NDC may think of itself as a Takoma Park business owner, but in practice it is at this point simply a landlord, with the Co-op as its sole tenant. (Unless I'm wrong, it pays no business tax.)

But more worrying is his dismissive comment about "racial equity." Mr. Washington doesn't seem to be aware of what that phrase means in the context of our City, where just over half of residents are people of color, and where in 2017 the Takoma Park City Council adopted a resolution on racial equity, with a commitment to "apply a racial equity lens in a systematic way in decision-making processes with the goal of continuing to build an inclusive, equitable community for all Takoma Park residents." The fact that NDC was a black-owned business was not enough to keep Black Lives Matter from marching to Adrian Washington's home after the company padlocked the local African American businesses and church in Northeast within 24 hours of taking possession of a property. By the time NDC eventually allowed the businesses to reopen under threat of litigation, the illegal shutdown had cost lasting damage to a small but important commercial center serving residents in a lower-income neighborhood in the District of Columbia.

In the case of the Junction, we have several minority-owned businesses as well as a grocery store with a predominantly minority staff of 50 that draws minority shoppers from across the City and beyond - assets to build on rather than threaten. It would be sadly ironic indeed if the byproduct of the NDC project, once built, resulted in displacement of Junction businesses due to higher rents, the end of our successful cooperative grocery store, and increased property values and thus property taxes - in other words, an engine for gentrification that further widens the gap racial and economic gap in Takoma Park.

But here's my question from reading the words of NDC's CEO: does Adrian Washington, who seems to see "racial equity" only in terms of his own success rather than being about opportunities for residents and local businesses, embody the kind of leadership and community focus we want to see in the owner of a potentially powerful and influential business in a prime location in our City? That's a question I hope you, as the representatives for all of the people in this City, will take seriously as you deliberate about a relationship with the Neighborhood Development Company, now or in the future.

Janiece Kennedy of Hyattsville, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I was a 9 year employee of the Coop. Worked on the board for 4 years and was a store manager for 6. The Coop has been an en-valuable resource over the years to both me and my family. As a single mother the Coop helped me nourish my family making a profound difference in my life. The Coop supports our local farm structure and so much more. I hope the Mayor and council will not let the community down and make sure that this valuable resource is give all the support it needs

Pamela Megna of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

NDC is incapable of addressing the concerns and wishes of the community. Be done with this company. End the contract and find an entity that is capable of envisioning an appropriate development for that space (given the its size limitations, the desire to ensure the stability of the Coop, the desire for a public space with some commercial footage). The limitations of the space were never sufficient for NDC's design. There is not space for a large retail development. That intersection would become a disaster with the plan. City leadership has to stop being greedy about the potential property tax revenues. Stop wasting time and resources. Drop NDC and move on.

Linda Provost of Beltsville, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I am a Coop member and though I currently live in Beltsville I am looking to move back to Takoma Park purchasing a home there. The Coop is a valuable resource. Even though I no longer live in the area I still will shop for many of my needs at the there. I cannot imagine how the City could do anything less than to move full speed a head with protecting the Coop and making sure it is able to thrive. Nothing less is acceptable.

Martha Feldman of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Dear Cindy,

We understand that there's a closed session City Council Meeting tonight and that the Council will be discussing the long lasting NDC saga. We want you to know these two residents of Ward 2's opinion.

We've lived here over 35 years and I've never seen anything as disturbing as this situation. We don't understand why the Council, the Mayor, and the City Manager think we need a few offices, a "balcony" we won't have access to, a couple of stores, a highly polluted sitting area, long lasting negative resident feelings, and traffic problems in exchange for the Coop.

We strongly support ending the City's interactions with NDC. They remind us of Government contractors who offer much and don't deliver on their promises.

Martha Feldman and Bob Davis
Jackson Avenue

inan phillips of takoma park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

This is NOT right. An existing business that serves the community and is a good neighbor should not be forced out of existence for the sake of an unpopular development. City is still the owner of the property and as such, we expect it to do the right thing and help the Co-op to stay in business. As a fellow small business owner in this city, I hope to be able to count on the city to support us. How can the co-op function without deliveries? Or is part of a NDC plan to drive them out of business and acquire a bigger piece of land to expand their project?

Mark Howard of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I have owned Takoma Picture Framers for 20 years and before that my mother, father, and uncle owned since 1970. My wish for parking at the City lot is accessibility to remain open to the general public until groundbreaking happens.

Joan Biren of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

This bully of a developer needs to be fired. Shutting down the Co-op, which is such a valuable addition to the

the whole area, makes no sense. The City Council should also remove the City Manager from the Junction development process. It has been flawed and counter-productive at best.

Nazirahk Amen of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

As a naturopathic doctor and acupuncturist practicing in Takoma Park for the past 20 years, the TPSS Coop has been an incredible resource in our community actively providing access to healthy foods. As a local farmer, TPSS Coop has been an outlet and ally in promoting local foods and community sustainability.

From the chain of events, it appears the latest move by NDC to expel TPSS Coop from the parking lot is a direct result of the SHA assessment. If there is no Coop then there is no need for a layby or so it seems. While this may be an incorrect assumption, NDC bringing up safety issues as the premise for the expulsion is absurd. Where is the history of safety infractions?

In attending previous meetings on this issue, it appeared the council was just going through the motions and minds were already made up concerning this development project. I clearly don't understand the business of government but it did not appear to be in the interest of those expressing concern. I do know there is no safety issue with the parking lot as it is.

I encourage you to do what is necessary to stop this expulsion process and keep TPSS Coop flourishing.

Roger Schlegel of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

As evidence of how inconsistent the March 10 City staff "Fact Sheet" was when characterizing existing delivery conditions at the City lot as unsafe, I can supply a map of a field survey that I did last month, showing at least 59 locations around town -- in Old Town, on Maple Avenue, on the north end of Carroll Avenue, along New Hampshire Avenue, at the south end of Sligo Creek Parkway, etc. -- where a commercial, institutional, or apartment building driveway confronts a double-yellow line. Presumably, trash/recycling trucks as well as other trucks in many cases cross the double-yellow line to enter and/or exit these properties. (I witnessed such instances while doing this field survey.) One such driveway is on Maple Avenue at Piney Branch Elementary School, right next door to City staff offices. At least 13 driveways like this can be found along Flower Avenue between Carroll Ave. and Piney Branch Rd., where the City itself re-striped a double-yellow line just last fall upon the completion of the Green Street project. City staff are not on record as designating any of these other conditions as unsafe, just as they had never been on record as designating the City lot's delivery conditions as unsafe, throughout 23 years of Co-op use arranged with and encouraged by the City. The City Council should immediately bar those staff members involved in the creation of that "Fact Sheet" from any further involvement with anything related to the City-NDC relationship or the review of NDC's site plan.

Joe Ballschneider of Washington, DC

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I wanted to voice my support for the Takoma Park-Silver Spring Co-op, a valued cornerstone of our community. I hope the council recognizes the value of the store and makes sure the NDC development project does not jeopardize the future of the store with unsubstantiated eviction notices.

Rick and Bernita Leonard of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

To Mayor Stewart and the City Council,

You must not allow NDC to threaten the Takoma Park Co-op. You must protect their rights and the rights of all the Takoma Junction Businesses. If you allow this threat to our anchor business in the Junction, we all feel threatened. Do not allow this unscrupulous developer to run roughshod over established businesses.

As Mayor and City Council members you need to listen to the many voices who are opposed to this over-sized development. Who are business owners and residents of the Junction supposed to go to in order to be heard and recognized and protected? Isn't that your job? How many times must you hear of how ill-conceived and detrimental to our community this proposed development is?

You still have time to end this nightmare--end the relationship with NDC! We implore you, do the right thing!

Rick and Bernita Leonard
Heritage Building and Renovation
35 years in business in beautiful, Historic Takoma Park

Jan Westervelt of Silver Spring, MD
Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

The co-op has been a vital part of this community for over 30 years. They are a hub of community activity. Their response to the pandemic was precedent setting. They provide jobs. They provide good healthy food and services to all the people of this community. They should have the full support of the citizens of this community and of the council. I am appalled that they do not have it right now. Please support them! Allow the trucks which bring them deliveries to use the parking lot. To not do so would be short sighted.

E. Wilson of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

As a 17 year resident and homeowner in TP, I have tried to keep an open mind about the Junction development project. However, based on the size/scale of the current plans, the realities of retail/office space post-pandemic, and the traffic nightmare that will result based on this project, I do NOT support it moving forward--especially given the long tenure of the lease.

Shelley Jones of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I have been a member of the Takoma Park Co-op and a resident of Takoma Park for over 30 years and I am appalled at the lack of support given to the Co-op recently by the city government. The Co-op is an institution in Takoma Park and is constantly giving back to the community, whether in the form of food for needy residents, health education and community-building events, to name only a few. It deserves the support of the City.

It is unconscionable that the City is sitting by silently in the face of the threat of NDC to withdraw their agreement with the Co-op and the City to allow deliveries to the Co-op by way of the adjacent lot.

Won't you please stand up for Takoma Park by standing up for the Co-op and end the City's relationship with NDC? Allow the Co-op to thrive and continue to serve this community!

Elli Kerlow of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

City must renounce plans for the current development. NDC not acting in good faith. Plan is out of scale, poorly designed, offers no equity solutions, and is hurting an important and real community resource, the TPSS Coop.

Where was NDC during the pandemic? Arranging for online food ordering, and pick up? Staying open to keep staff working and people fed? Handing out food to people who need it through local food banks?

Another ugly, oversized project putting profits over people. Mayor Kate, wake up and walk away NOW.

Emily Townsen Townsend of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

It is not fair for NDC to prohibit the co-op's use of the parking lot for loading! The co-op has really come through for this community during the pandemic. Please don't let NDC's decision prohibition stand in violation of all the agreements that have been made so far. I want the city council to stand up for the co-op!

Erin Kesler of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I rely on the Takoma Park Coop to get fresh fruits and vegetables. It is an important part of the community in Takoma Park, and a model business during this difficult year with the pandemic. It needs to be protected, not strangled by an inability to accept deliveries.

Judy Treible of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

After hearing that NDC is closing the Takoma Junction parking lot to the TPSS Food Coop and local businesses, I urge the mayor and city council to break the lease for the property with NDC. There is no need for such strong-armed actions. And it seems to indicate that the developer may be taking this extreme action to get out of the deal. I say good riddance.

Simone De Lima of TAKOMA PARK, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

If there is one thing that should have been made clear during this pandemic it has to be the importance of locally, community owned food businesses who -- unlike many large conglomerates-- are able to support small and local food suppliers, value the protection of their workers' and customers' lives and take appropriate measures rather than "covid theater" partner with local food relief initiatives and are able to adapt and continue to provide unionized jobs with access to health care to its workers.

Another lesson that should have been learned in this pandemic is the importance of outdoor/ covered open spaces for the protection from respiratory diseases-- and since this may not be the last pandemic of our lifetime, businesses worldwide are taking notice and adapting.

I strongly oppose NDC's proposal for the area-- high rental units, inaccessible to our current businesses and of dubious value in a post-pandemic economy-- has anyone been downtown and observed the amount of retail space for rent? It also presents us with a design which minimizes outdoor gathering areas, with a concept akin to a storage unit-- in a direction contrary to what a post-pandemic world needs.

Most importantly-- the way the co-op was notified by NDC of the parking lot lease not only threatens co-op

operations and impacts parking for neighboring businesses, it shows a lack of willingness to dialogue that I find incompatible with the continuity of the project. I was also disturbed by the fact that City put up allegations of imminent danger posed by the deliveries that were not substantiated (and in fact contradicted MD's traffic code when it says left turns on solid central yellow lines are illegal, when in fact they are not). Our Co-op is run by caring members of our community who have done an outstanding job during this pandemic. They should not be treated like this. I ask the council to step away from the deal with NDC and look towards community oriented solutions for the junction.

Steve Dubb of Boston, MA

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

To City Council and Mayor Stewart,

So I moved out of state a few years ago, but I did serve on the Takoma Junction Task Force and used to be on the TPSS Co-op Board for a 3-year term from 2010 to 2013. And so I still follow things a little bit. And it saddens me to see that the NDC contract was not dumped years ago. The current situation was foreseeable and I say that for the simple reason that it was, in fact, foreseen. Way back in 2012 before NDC even entered the picture.

When I was on the task force, there were 2 of about 21 people on the task force who were co-op-linked like myself. The majority of the task force had, at best, mixed views on the co-op. Yet the task force ended up endorsing a development plan that would be centered on the expansion of the co-op and the creation of community space. Why?

Very simple, actually. We talked to three developers. All three agreed that the parcel was *not viable* for commercial development. Then we said the co-op was interested in expanding its space and we were basically told, "well, in that case you could partner with the co-op and probably create a small scale project that could work."

In other words, the Task Force wanted a development plan that could work, and that was the reason we came up with the development recommendations that we did. (We also did over 100 community interviews and lots of other work; I believe, as a volunteer member, I participated in more than 20 hours worth of meetings myself).

We had lots of disagreements on other things (like whether or not to have roundabouts), but local Takoma Park developers were unanimous and clear in their views, and we respected them. Unfortunately, the City Council did not respect us.

And, so—for how many years?—there has been debate over a plan that was known to be dubious from the outset. There is not enough acreage on that lot to have a major commercial project, period. There never was.

As for NDC, they have a mixed record, but they are also in a bind. They cannot possibly do what they have promised Takoma Park to do on that small of a parcel of land, even with a 99-year lease and other foolishness. The Council seems unwilling to pay heed to the market and, I emphasize, physical, realities of the limited land, located at what is already a traffic chokehold.

Forcing the co-op off of the Turner lot, of course, would be one way for NDC to expand the acreage for the development and try to square the circle. The cost, of course, would be to lose Takoma Park's leading employer and a major community asset. It's a price no one should want to pay.

I know it must sound good to many to convert a parking lot into a pot of gold that funds city services. But it is a fantasy.

So I beg the Mayor and the Council to please stop pretending that there are four acres of land at the Junction instead of 1.4. And to then proceed accordingly within the actual capacity of the space. If the City does finally pay heed to the market and physical realities of the junction, it will do a few things:

- 1) End the contract with NDC.
- 2) Work with the co-op to finding a developer that is mutually satisfactory to both city and co-op.
- 3) Work toward creating a more modest, physically and commercially manageable project that approximates the original community vision as encapsulated in that Junction Task Force report of so many years ago.

So much time and money and energy could have been saved (and probably the project probably already completed) if only the original community vision as encapsulated in that task force report of years ago had been respected.

Steve Dubb
former member, Takoma Junction Task Force

Jerrold Allen of Falls Church, VA
Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Although a long-time resident of Northern Virginia I have had many occasions to visit Takoma Park and have enjoyed shopping at the Takoma Park Food Co-op when there. I appreciate the quality and variety of what is offered and greatly appreciate the business model the Co-op represents. I wish we had the equivalent in Northern Virginia. I would be saddened to see its loss. There should be a development plan that prioritizes the retention of what is good and valuable and is essential to the character of the community.

Louis Spitzer of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

The co-op has meant so much to so many in this community and the notion that a development that offers so little to the community should replace it is horrifying to me. Please stop this development from moving forward.

Andrea Peterson of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

The Takoma Park CoOP is essential for our community. Please protect it, preserve it and respect it.

Elizabeth Finley of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Dear Mayor Stewart, City Council and City Manager,
I am an almost 40-year resident of Takoma Park, writing to express my outrage at the city's continued support of NDC, the Takoma Junction developer that has shown blatant and persistent disregard for the desires, safety and wellbeing of the citizens of Takoma Park. The recent NDC assault on the rights of the Takoma Park Co-op to use the adjoining city lot for deliveries is an outrage. I am a senior citizen and the Co-op has played a huge part in enabling me and friends in my age group in Takoma Park, Takoma DC and Silver Spring to obtain food safely during this ongoing pandemic. The Coop is a vital part of this community and their recent willingness and ability to meet the needs of the community in this crises has done much to reassure me that I could age in place in Takoma Park.

I am baffled by the persistent failure of the Mayor, the City Council and City Manager to recognize and support

the desires of the citizens of Takoma Park for a reasonable scale and scope of the development at Takoma Junction. The Co-op is a mainstay of the community and is a vital resource for the people of Takoma Park who you allegedly represent. The Co-op should remain the anchor for any development of Takoma Junction, not be driven out of business by NDC. It is time to end the city's relationship with NDC and to support the Co-op and the people of Takoma Park in pursuit of a reasonable plan for the development of Takoma Junction that supports the quality of life in Takoma Park. Enough is enough.

Elizabeth Finley
Westmoreland Ave

Depeswar Doley of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Dear Mayor Kate and City Council members

I would like to lend my support for the Takoma Park Coop to stay in this location and resolve the issues that they are currently encountering.

As a longtime small business owner located at Takoma Junction, I feel that priority should be given to existing small business that have been the backbone of the Junction. This should include the Coop - a store that has been around for a while.

I truly hope the City of Takoma Park, NDC and Takoma Park Coop come to an understanding that will work out for all parties concerned.

Mary Jacksteit of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Having its current too-big plan blocked by the state NDC now seems focused on driving the COOP out of business to get another parcel in violation of agreements with COOP and city. Please block this effort and seriously consider how to end this partnership.

Ian Paiewonsky of Silver Spring, MD
Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I have enjoyed shopping at the Coop for years and it is outrageous to think that city government would not protect this community asset. NDC must go!

Paiewonsky

Karen Lovejoy of takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Dear Mayor and Council,

To not understand the importance of the Co-op is to fail in your understanding of what it means to support the people you have been elected to serve. Its loss will be a historic stain on this council's legacy. The Co-op supports close to 100 local businesses and farmers. It provides meaningful employment and it represents our future. Science has made clear that sustainable practices will be found in small family farms and community businesses. To allow a developer to come in and diminish the Co-op in any way is taking us backwards to systems that have created global warming and other issues of universal decline that we are experiencing. This does not represent the history of Takoma Park and I hope it is not the kind of legacy you wish to leave. Takoma Park should be an example the nation can follow for better living NDC has failed on numerous

Takoma Park should be an example the nation can follow for better living. NDC has failed on numerous occasions to honor its agreements with the city. What will it take for you to see that this developer is wrong for our city?

Haresh Laheri of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

As a small business owner I support Takoma Junction development but I can not support developer who do not support exiting businesses. It's difficult to believe that NDC cares about supporting existing businesses in the Junction when it's trying to shut down the Coop, the largest business in the Junction. NDC's behavior must not be tolerated. While I support development of the lot, I do not support continuing With NDC.

Laurie Mazur of Takoma Park, MD, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I am a long-time, conditional supporter of the Junction development. But that support has eroded considerably over the last year, in part because of NDC's failure to come up with a safe, practical design, as well as the project's questionable viability in a post-pandemic economy.

NDC's recent move to bar coop deliveries from the parking lot is, for me, the last straw. Preserving the co-op is a number one priority for me and for many of my neighbors. NDC's recent actions and apparent bad faith are an existential threat to a vital community institution.

I urge you to withdraw your support for the NDC project.

Adam Bodner of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I fully support redevelopment of this site, the sooner the better. I note that if preservation of the Coop, and of its ability to receive 18 wheel deliveries is a requisite goal for the community, and enabling that access restricts the size of the new development to where it is infeasible, then vehicle access to/from Columbia and Sycamore must be the tradeoff. The community can't have it both ways...

David Zirin of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Hello. As a Takoma resident who lives across the street from the co-op, I see what it brings to the table, in terms of resources, jobs, and the practice of equity in hiring. It is a prized resource. I'm utterly disgusted with the development plans that puts the co-op at risk. There is a reason that people protested last weekend. Listen to the people, and protect the co-op!

Dave Zirin

Janet Lee of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I have been a TPSS Coop shopper and member since it was in Ilver Spring. Since the move to Takoma Junction, I have gratefully walked to the Coop from four different Takoma Park residences over the years. The Coop has evolved to serve the community and remain a good and valued neighbor. The development plan in this lengthy period of consideration has never been compatible with the neighborhood or the needs and

wishes of much of Takoma Park. Several years ago, I attended a display and presentation by the developers at the municipal building. When I pointed out that the idealized depictions did not appear to be to scale, the developer rep readily admitted this was so, acknowledging that the depictions were misleading. I continue to value the Coop and regard integration of, and accommodation to, the Coop's needs as a necessary condition of development plans. I would hope Takoma Park will terminate all agreements with this developer and find a solution consistent with the character and needs of Takoma Park and particularly the Takoma Junction area.

Marcelle Fozard of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

The continued confusion regarding the development process at the Takoma Junction needs to be resolved immediately. The Co-op is a valued business and community participant and should not be bullied by the developers, who have also had a difficult time coming to any resolutions regarding the construction, community purpose of the development, and general aesthetics of the new development. The blame for this can be laid squarely at the feet of the City Manager and City employees who are "managing" this project. Being that the current City Manager is retiring, the residents of the City deserve to know what the plan is for going forward with this project, and who the team members are who are managing this project. I also urge the Council and the Mayor to take the time needed to resolve this. This project has become a community divider, and cannot be a part-time job for our elected officials. It is time for all the cards to be put on the table, and for the project managers to come out of the shadows and address and inform the citizens of the City.

Meg Royce of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Thank goodness the SHA did not approve the proposed lay-by because of the danger it poses to community safety. Living so close to the intersection I have never understood how anyone thought the lay-by would work. The intersection is already a dangerous place for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles every time someone tries to pass a stopped bus by driving into oncoming traffic. Perhaps you have never witnessed this but I see it regularly and couldn't imagine adding semi trucks to the mix.

I am writing to express my relief that community safety was prioritized.

I am also writing to express my concern regarding a letter received by the Coop from NDC that they may no longer use the city owned parking lot for deliveries. The Coop is a treasure and our community is lucky to have it. I am opposed to anything that may disrupt business at the Coop.

Please oppose NDC's demands that seem to violate the Coop's lease agreement as well as it's Cooperation Agreement with NDC.

Thank you, Meg Royce

Alys Cohen of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I live within walking distance of the Junction and shop, walk and drive there regularly, usually multiples times per day. For a long time, I have been open to seeing how we can make the NDC plan work with the safety of our community, the goals of our city, and the ongoing business of the Coop in the current location. I can no longer support NDC's plan and request that the City terminate its contract.

I remember when the Coop was on Sligo Avenue. Its move to its current location is a benefit to the entire community, including its employees. NDC's recent actions, combined with the gradual expansion of their plan and failure to find an anchor tenant, demonstrate a bad fit for Takoma Park and more importantly the latest actions appear to be in bad faith. Pushing out the solution is not an appropriate solution to NDC's failure to find a safe approach to traffic at that development.

I strongly support incorporating diversity into this development project AND there are other alternatives to the current one. Moreover, the Coop employs a diverse staff and provides a living wage.

This has been a difficult process and the forces in the community in favor of "development" may be loud and persistent. But withdrawing NDC's contract does not mean there will be no development. It means there is the chance to do it in a way that is safe for children walking to school, people of all ages crossing the streets, and the vendors at the other shops in the Junction and their patrons.

I am open to changing the driving configuration around Morrison Park and putting in a four way light if it can preserve the Coop. I am open to considering other developers with right-sized plans. But NDC's recent actions show they are not operating in a transparent and respectful manner and frankly it looks like breach of contract.

Please be courageous and return the Coop's access to the parking lot and find a better partner for what is a crucial project for Takoma Park.

Thank you,
Alys Cohen
Boyd Avenue

Patricia Taylor of Washington, DC

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Council members and Mayor Stewart, As a 36 year Sycamore Ave. resident and coop member since when it was located on Sligo Ave., I'm confounded by our city's failure to engage with the coop initially when the opportunity to develop this property first came up. I urge you to void the NDC contract to develop and move on with the coop as our partner. Time's up NDC.

Katja Toporski of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I strongly believe that the TP Food Coop is an essential asset to life in Takoma Park, and needs to actively be protected. Giving in to the developer's demands that cuts off food delivery is going to hurt the Coop and the community they serve.

Sue Hoegberg of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 22, 2021

I oppose the proposed development of the Junction as presented. The density is too great for that location. Furthermore I oppose closing access and deliveries to the Co-Op via the city owned parking lot. That lot has served many purposes over time, including as the winter location for the Farmers Market, the Boy Scouts' Christmas tree sale, etc. and there have never been safety concerns over the use of the lot.

Meriwether Jones of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

The recent letter by NDC's attorney demanding that the Co-op stop receiving food deliveries – which, if enforced, would drive it out of business – provides strong evidence for what many of us suspected all along: NDC does not intend to share that lot with the Co-op any longer than necessary to secure final approval for its development. That NDC would reveal its true colors this early in the process speak volumes.

So my fear is that the City will come up with a Band-Aid solution to the delivery problem, enabling the project to stumble to the finish line for approval. And that once it receives final approval, NDC will find some other pretext to shut down the Co-op. I don't see how any reasonable observer who has read that letter could presume otherwise. When you go into business with another party, there's only so much that can be covered by contractual language. Ultimately, what matters is motivation and character.

The fundamental problem here is that this development is far too large for that lot. So why are we not talking about going back to the scale originally envisioned by the City and originally proposed by NDC? Why are we instead jumping through endless hoops to try to make something work that is so clearly not workable, or at least not without so much sacrifice?

The City didn't ask NDC to dramatically increase the scale of the development. We merely failed to object when it did so in pursuit of its own goals. Everything that's happened since has stemmed from that failure of oversight. This development is out of proportion to the space available, at what is already the most frustrating traffic intersection in our community.

At this point, I don't see how NDC could ever be trusted to manage a major development at such a key location while keeping Takoma Park's best interests in mind. I would walk away from the relationship immediately and use what we've learned from it to jump-start work with a new partner.

But if it has to be NDC, can we at least rectify our original failure of allowing them to swap in such an out-of-scale development? That is what's driving all these obstacles and all this conflict within our community. Conflict that will continue to spiral out for the next decade, at least.

Rebecca Carter of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

Dear Mayor Kate, Kacy and Council,

A few years ago, we gave up being global nomads to settle in Takoma Park. I thought we would be in the DC area only temporarily; none of the neighborhoods we visited felt like they could possibly become home. Then we found Takoma Park, and were embraced by both those tall, tall trees, and the neighborliness of a community whose values were so well aligned with ours. We learned about Takoma Park's history and values, the tree ordinance, the economic development plans that call for both equitable economic development while protecting the environment...we found home.

Since then, the Takoma Junction development plans have shifted from "a modest development at the top of the hill" into something that makes a mockery of the values this city says it stands for, and that drew us here. Resolution 2018-11 has been left in the dust by NDC. NDC presented a "forest conservation plan" that is, in fact, a forest destruction plan. It applied smoke and mirrors to make it appear that the entire Columbia side of the development would still look like the forest it is now, when in reality 100-year old oaks would be jeopardized in favor of an ugly concrete façade. The plan relies on variance after variance to take out trees that would otherwise be protected – in other words, sanctioned rule-breaking. And then there is what truly I hope will be the final straw: the utter nastiness of NDC's blocking of deliveries to the Co-op in order to shut it down – nothing more than a petty act of revenge for not getting to break SHA's rules regarding the layby.

Please, please, please let this be enough to end this nonsense. Please drop NDC and allow us to move on to collaboratively develop a plan more of us can live with – not "no development," just not THAT development, and not THAT company. Please don't sacrifice this community and the values it holds dear in favor of a tiny fraction of the city's potential revenues. Please stand up for us.

Taylor Dibbert of Washington, DC

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

This development project is utterly inappropriate for Takoma Park -- for a host of reasons. With NDC's recent aggressive and highly combative behavior towards the Co-op, it's never been more clear that the project is a terrible idea.

I sincerely hope that the mayor and the city council do the right thing. Takoma Park is a truly special place and the stakes could not be higher.

Fran Burwell of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

I have lived on Sycamore since the mid-80s and can honestly say that the Coop moving into the Junction was key to its revitalization. I never understood why the Coop wasn't given the option to develop the parking lot, as it has been an outstanding neighborhood asset. Since NDC became the developer, it has repeatedly failed to live up to the requirements set by the city, it has failed to find and anchor tenant, and it has insisted on a layby that the SHA finds unacceptable. I favor some development of the site, but we do not need a massive building with consequences for the surrounding neighborhood. It is time for the city to cease its relationship with NDC and restart the development process in line with what its citizens want.

Gertrud Mergner of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

To the Mayor and all Council Members of Takoma Park:

We received an email from the CEO of NDC. He dared to criticize the Food-COOP for making a modest profit. I assume the 50 employees of the Food-COOP are paid adequately since so many have been there for years and know us customers. They are a diverse representation of many nations and colors. The peak of the affront by the CEO is mentioning that he is African-American. What does this have to do with a failed project of the Takoma Junction?

Kristen Moeller of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

Takoma Park should hear its people and develop the areas as an enhanced parking lot. Trees, parking, useful stuff. the coop is the most important business in Takoma. The Coop helped many of us through this covid year. we dont need what you designed. you have not listened to the people. we dont need this monstrosity for its tax revenue. we would likely pay not to have it! we need the coop we need safety; we need to be able to navigate through the intersection.

ps your demographic question are fairly invasive

Cynthia Mariel of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

I urge you to vote to drop NDC as a development partner; develop a new lease between the City and the Co-op for deliveries and parking in the Junction parking lot; and remove the City Manager from the Junction development process.

---NDC has shown it does not have the interest of Takoma Park as a priority.

---The Co-op is a community institution and partner, business with a regional reach, fair employer, source of

healthy and environmentally sound options for shoppers, model of local ownership and democratic engagement, a prime example of racial diversity, and importantly, a community center where people look up from their phones to greet and engage neighbors.

---The City Manager has demonstrated she is no longer willing and able to be a neutral party in service to Takoma Park residents.

What exactly does the Council think the Co-op needs that "re-development" will offer?

Junction Redevelopment must not equate to the demise of existing businesses.

Dump NDC. It is not the partner we need or deserve.

William Wheeler of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

The semi trucks making deliveries do need to follow traffic laws. I recently witnessed one stopped in Carroll Ave and unloading.

Roland Weiss of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

It's difficult to believe that NDC cares about supporting existing businesses in the Junction when it's trying to shut down the Coop, the largest business in the Junction. NDC's behavior must not be tolerated. While I support development of the lot, I do not support continuing with NDC.

Roland Weiss of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

The NDC Junction Justification Statement discusses at length how the development fits with the surrounding commercial area on Carroll Ave. There is no discussion of how the development will maintain the residential character of the neighborhood to the rear of the development, and the Historic District Commission has not reviewed the plans for the rear. The proposed plan will negatively impact this area.

https://eplans.montgomeryplanning.org/UFS/19017/61411/01-SOJ-120190150-001.pdf/01-SOJ-120190150-001.pdf_V7/01-SOJ-120190150-001.pdf

Roland Weiss of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

Contrary to City Staff's conclusion, adequate screening of the rear of the development is not provided as illustrated in NDC viewgraphs and as required by zoning ordinance.

Resolution 2018-11: line 439 states "To design the rear of the building to minimally impact the residential neighborhood and wooded area behind it....."

City staff comments states "The majority of the trees in this area are to remain and therefore there will not be much exposure to visual elements of the rear of the building.." and this supported by this NDC document, which is a viewgraph:

https://www.google.com/url?q=https://eplans.montgomeryplanning.org/UFS/19078/61603/09_ARCH_820190090-010.pdf/09-ARCH-820190090-010.pdf_V3/09-ARCH-820190090-010.pdf&sa=D&source=editors&ust=1619029790144000&usg=AFQjCNGJct22f0fsB_kRMgskCc9FPdBaSw

Other NDC viewgraphs show mature trees providing screening of the rear of the development at year one:

https://eplans.montgomeryplanning.org/UFS/19078/61603/09-ARCH-820190090-012.pdf/09-ARCH-820190090-012.pdf_V3/09-ARCH-820190090-012.pdf

https://eplans.montgomeryplanning.org/UFS/19078/61603/09-ARCH-820190090-015.pdf/09-ARCH-820190090-015.pdf_V2/09-ARCH-820190090-015.pdf

The documents that should be reviewed are the Tree Variance Request documents (VAR) and the Forest Conservation Plans (FCP), which do not support the viewgraphs or the staff conclusion. While a small number of trees will be removed from the Forest Conservation areas, all trees will be removed from the On Site Forest Removal Area, which constitutes 33% of the area of wooded lot.

Given the steep slope of the hillside, trees in the Removal Area provide much to all of the screening to the residential neighborhood depending on your vantage point. The trees being in the Forest Conservation areas are 1.5"-2" in diameter and are planted further down the slope. They will not provide the screening shown in the viewgraphs and required by zoning ordinance.

https://eplans.montgomeryplanning.org/UFS/19078/61603/10-FCP-820190090-001.pdf/10-FCP-820190090-001.pdf_V6/10-FCP-820190090-001.pdf

George/Marcie French/Stickle of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

Peter, Kate, This is outrageous and so unethical. Please support [defend] the Co-op from this blatant attempt to destroy this superb community business and institution.

George French & Marcie Stickle, Friday, April 16, 2021

The minute we received notification from the Co-op about this issue and situation we immediately wrote to Peter & Kate.

We did receive responses that they would look into it.

Lynne d'Eustachio of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

A week after my first child was born 34 years ago, I popped him in his snuggly and walked the several miles from my house on Allegheny to the Coop's old location on Sligo Avenue. We kept this up on a weekly basis and he grew and thrived on fresh and healthy Coop food. When my son's sister arrived two years later, my little boy walked the nearly 4 miles roundtrip so his sister could use the stroller. How thrilled I was when they moved into Takoma Park and were not such a hike anymore - our favorite grocery store right nearby. What a treasure it has been to our family through the years and how many neighborhoods would so love to have such an asset. As I am into my 60s now it is a treasure for a different reason. I have been carfree ten years now, by choice. I hope to be able to stay within my current home and walkability to a grocery store is a critical part of that choice. Our City which spouts plenty of rhetoric about the evils of climate change would be wise to observe how those of us who don't just talk the talk but actually walk the walk live our lives. Save our Coop - it makes us a community. We need our grocery store. Lord knows we have enough alcohol stores already.

Elias Vlanton of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

Events in the last week have shown that NDC is not the right business to develop Takoma Junction. Their April 14 presentation showed a building more appropriate than previous designs, but there are simply too many unanswered questions: What effect will paid parking have on other Junction businesses? Will increased bicycling and walking occur when trucks are unloading and taking out garbage next to the sidewalk and bike lanes?

These questions preceded the decision by NDC days later demanding an end to co-op deliveries on the city lot and an end of right of all Junction businesses to use that lot for customer parking. The city certainly bears some responsibility for this because it falsely raised safety issues which were posted on the city website.

NDC's actions show a developer willing to advance their economic agenda at the expense of the other businesses and the citizens who use the Junction daily. Now it is clearer than ever that this is the time to terminate the city's relationship with the Neighborhood Development Corporation.

Jane Silver
Elias Vlanton
319 Elm Avenue

Tracy Duvall of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers:

NDC's recent strong-arming of the Co-op is part of a pattern. For example, NDC has practically ignored your Resolution 2018-41 in its plans, apparently in the hope that you will 'blink.'

If you choose to continue working with NDC, I foresee more of the same for decades to come. We certainly cannot trust their verbal assurances about, for example, the use of the Columbia side. But how bound do they feel even to their written ones? Will they simply bulldoze over (literally and figuratively) features in their proposal that they don't like? For the first time, I doubt that the plan they've submitted and described is what they will build. And I doubt even more that they will work in good faith with neighbors and nearby businesses to address problems that arise over the years.

This particular developer has shown itself to be a bad partner. Even if you want a large development at the Junction, please drop NDC.

Jenny Apostol DiPaul of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

I consider myself extremely fortunate that there's a food Co-op at the end of my street. The store sells some of my favorite foods, some available only there. When the pandemic hit, we stopped frequenting the store daily for one or two ingredients, and started to shop online, or shopped in person once or twice a month. It gave me comfort to know that staff health and safety were being prioritized, and by extension, those protocols were making me, my family, and the food we purchase safe as well. I also liked receiving the clear written communications about evolving strategy from manager Mike Huston. We ordered from Whole Foods and Giant only once early on. I nearly broke down when I waved at the delivery drivers to thank them. I did not feel comfortable sending other people to risk their health and safety because I was too afraid to shop in a large store without strict enforcement of social distance, etc. This is no judgement on anyone else who may use shopping services this year or at any time. Not at all. I am speaking solely from my own experience. We have

since made occasional forays into other stores, of course. But I remain grateful to Co op management and staff for their consistency and pragmatism in the face of Covid, and for the diversity on offer from local suppliers and producers. I am also very glad that our Co-op through community partnerships, supports people in need food assistance, and to those organizations and all the people who volunteer with those distribution efforts. It is enlightening, and not a little heart-breaking, to see people line up to receive boxes of fresh food each week. In this current, bizarre atmosphere, I feel compelled to express my support for the TP SS Co-op at this challenging time, and for the sensible leadership of Mike Houston and his staff. Everyone should be as lucky as we feel to rely on such a basic provision resource so close to home, and that serves such a wide community.

Peter Kramer of Washington, DC

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

I am a DC citizen, but I am tied into the Takoma Park MD community socially and economically. The major reason for my and my family's affinity to Takoma Park MD is the existence of the Takoma Park CO-OP. And I know that we are not alone: Many DC neighbors close to Takoma Park are CO-OP customers and are dismayed by apparent efforts by the developer of the Takoma Junction to strangle the CO-OP. Forcing the CO-OP to close would empoverage Takoma Park MD, - socially, culturally and economically. The City Council must do whatever is in its power to ensure the triving of that institution and that business.

Kathryn Desmond of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

Mayor Stewart and City Council - we are waiting for your bold and creative leadership! When former MoCo Executive Doug Duncan in 1996 decisively cancelled the controversial American Dream project in downtown Silver Spring after a protracted period, the entire community was able to move forward to welcome a vibrant new project that we still enjoy today. I urge you to embrace the same kind of visionary leadership here in Takoma Park. The "iterative process" has worn itself out, as the fundamental problems remain with a bulging building that would occupy every square foot of the lot and push loading, deliveries, and trash removal into a busy and congested intersection. Don't look at the SHA comments as "D#@*%T!, another obstacle to overcome!" Look at them as "Thank God, they've saved us from making a huge mistake." If NDC cannot come up with a workable plan, and it seems they cannot, part ways. It's never too late to do the right thing. You will be remembered for the mark you make at Takoma Junction. Let's work together to make yours a lasting legacy of good design and good judgment.

SASHA OLINICK of TAKOMA PARK, MD

Commented on: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

The city of Takoma Park must stand by the CO-OP!

This act of aggression on the part of NDC is a clear violation of the agreement between the city, the CO-OP and NDC; I urge the city council to act now to protect this cherished community business.

Angela Gabriel of takoma prk, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

It was hard to follow all NDS threads. However, this development issue has become way too controversial and too hurtful to have a good life here in Takoma Park, in my opinion, and doesn't need to be pushed. I personally would prefer NDS project to be recalled, and more socially and community sustainable projects to be realized.

Lisa Beaudet of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

NDC's recent 30-day notice to the COOP of their parking lot lease termination appears to be a thinly veiled attempt to either drive the COOP away from its location at the Junction, or to strong-arm the COOP (and its supporters) into backing a longer and wider layby lane. Unfortunately, I don't think NDC ever bothered to listen to those of us who live, drive and walk in and around the Junction on a regular basis, as we have repeatedly and consistently said "NO" to the very idea of a layby in the Junction, citing some of the very same concerns that were outlined in the SHA's recent letter to NDC! To reiterate what many of us have said from the outset: Ideally, NDC should go back to the drawing board and design a more appropriately-sized project for this site. But, putting aside the rose-colored glasses, please entertain the following observations, comments and suggestions.

NDC's complaints about the safety of loading and unloading operations in the Takoma Junction parking lot sound like a lot of trumped-up nonsense. Consider for a moment that such loading and unloading has been going on essentially the same way for 20 years, and the SHA comments do not mention these operations as problematic. Furthermore, it's very likely that NDC's construction activities and deliveries throughout the project will require many of the same (if not more obstructive) vehicular maneuvers for which NDC is currently chastising the COOP. It sounds to me like they want an early termination of the parking lot sublease, and they wouldn't shed tears if COOP operations can't withstand that.

Per SHA's comments, the most serious safety issues of the layby design involve pedestrians and cyclists. As such (barring a full project redesign), sacrificing a bit of square footage by setting the building a bit further back from the curb to accommodate a wider swath of sidewalk might be reasonable to address some of the issues – If (and that's a big IF) a safe layby can be designed in this location which appropriately addresses all of the SHA's objections.

Nonetheless, from the SHA's comments about large trucks, I personally suspect that an effective layby design requires somewhat more real estate than NDC has to play with. I also suspect they really don't want to go back to the drawing board to redesign the whole project. In the 30-day notice of sublease termination, Mr. Bonder writes to the COOP, "We will be happy to work with you going forward to design and gain approval for a layby lane that will ensure the safety of the residents of Takoma Park while providing you with a reasonable accommodation for your loading and unloading activities." That the 30-day notice occurs prior to any such layby redesign process sheds some doubt upon the sincerity of such a statement.

At this point, as a long-time COOP member, if NDC can still be trusted to adhere to the promises it previously made in its agreement with the COOP (re: dedicated elevator access, garage parking, space for shopping carts, and the like) I would strongly urge the COOP to also seriously consider other creative, independent solutions to its delivery needs, in cooperation with the City and its other immediate neighbors, for which it does not necessarily need to rely upon NDC during the construction phase. While a redesigned layby might be possible and might be fairly expedient, it also puts the COOP at the mercy of NDC, especially because layby construction probably won't be completed within the 30-day timeframe.

Please consider that wholly eliminating the layby from the plan would certainly be a positive step in the overall scheme of things, albeit one that might be more difficult for the COOP to endure in the interim. But let us not forget that the COOP has already survived through the past year with very limited in-person access. The COOP is resourceful and resilient, and to some degree, groundwork (such as website improvements, online ordering and curbside delivery) has been laid to withstand additional challenges. Nonetheless, the COOP should maintain a reasonable degree of self-determination through this process and not be unduly manipulated by this developer.

As someone who regularly volunteers with Small Things Matter, I have witnessed large trucks successfully delivering pallets of produce in the small parking lot on the Sycamore side of the COOP, and occasionally

curbside on Sycamore Avenue. Is there nothing that can be done both structurally and functionally to make COOP deliveries temporarily possible on the Sycamore side of the building? Portable loading docks and ramps, as well as hydraulic lifts are certainly available. These could perhaps be configured to allow inventory to easily enter the COOP through a reconfigured "side porch" and/or through the basement entrance. The space at the back of the building probably could accommodate some storage, if not quite as much as is possible currently. Also, as a resident of Sycamore Avenue, I would be willing to entertain limiting access to Sycamore and/or Columbia, at least during the construction phase, if that would facilitate COOP deliveries and allow the COOP to stay the course in its current location. Please, let's be good neighbors and help our beloved COOP to weather this storm!

Katherine Katzin of Takoma Park,, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Please end the deal with NDC and remove the City Manager from any further involvement with the Junction development process. NDC is trying to shut down the Co-Op by telling them they can no longer use the city lot for deliveries. This is unreasonable and is a breach of agreement between the city and the Co-Op. The Co-Op is a valued and successful Takoma Park business that provides good-paying jobs with benefits and serves the community as a grocery store and a visionary model of community involvement and environmental and social justice. NDC does not care about Takoma Park, its local businesses, or maintaining our sense of community. Please support the small local Junction businesses and the spirit of Takoma Park and end the deal with NDC.

Patrick Smith of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Why is NDC being allowed to crush the COOP? The fact the County did not approve their plan does not give them the right to tear down another business. One that has been serving our community for decades. Mayor Stewart and Members of the Council it is time to end this relationship with NDC. It's hard to go back to the drawing board but it is time. Lives are being threatened by a company that has locked out businesses before. Why is our City Manage complicit with NDC? Do the right thing. Ban NDC - NOW.

Judith Appelbaum of TAKOMA PARK, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

1. Do not allow NDC to get away with its attempt to shut down the Coop by cancelling the sublease for the parking lot and ordering the Coop to immediately cease using the lot for loading and unloading. The Coop is an important institution in our community, and the City must not allow NDC to jeopardize its continued presence here. The purported reasons NDC have given for its drastic action, i.e., allegedly "unsafe" loading/unloading practices in the lot, are contested by the Coop and have not been substantiated. The City should never have posted on its website the "factsheet" on which NDC relies, and whoever is responsible for doing that should be held accountable and barred from any future involvement in the Junction development.

2. NDC's development plan cannot go forward without a major overhaul. The reasons include: the layby safety issue identified by the SHA; the unwieldy scale of the design; and the traffic pattern that the design would produce, which would be dangerous to drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists (there is simply no way, for example, for cars to safely exit the proposed garage onto Carroll Ave. into the flow of traffic there, especially if turning left). But NDC has not taken these concerns seriously. It's time to cut the cord with NDC.

Betty Krier of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

The TPSS Coop substantially contributes to the quality of neighborhood life. It is the only nonchain grocery in the area and stocks to meet neighborhood needs. It also reliably anchors economic activity in Takoma Junction. Any developer who is resistant to accommodating Coop needs will not be able to serve the neighborhood's needs. It is past time for Takoma Park mayor and city council to hear neighborhood residents on this issue! Drop NDC!

AJ Campbell of TAKOMA PARK, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

I am so sick of hearing about all the drama of this project. It has become an embarrassment to Takoma Park. We don't need this huge expensive development. I firmly stand with the coop and against the development.

ENOUGH ALREADY.

Cherie Schultz of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Kate and Kacy,

We're writing to add our voices to those asking you to take appropriate steps to protect the COOP from NCD's recent assault. We know that not everyone is a fan of the COOP - we do happen to be people who really value their presence in the community - but we're hearing even from friends who were supporters of the Junction project that NDC's current ugly tactics are changing their views. We very much hope that is the case with both of you as well.

Sincerely,

Cherie Schultz and David McGranahan, 406 Elm Avenue

Eleanor Sharp of takoma park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

I grew up going to the co-op. I used to toddle after my mom while she went shopping. I'd pull on her leg and say "Mom, can we get some bagels pleeease." She'd smile and take me over to the bagels display, pull one out and hand it to me. I always struggled not to bite into it before we paid.

Sometimes I go up there now to shop for my mom. It's an easy chore, gets me good exercise, and takes a weight off her shoulders. Sometimes I'll get a bagel too.

The co-op is part of this community. I'm sure other people have stories like this one. Little moments that mean a lot to them. We need to keep those little moments, for us, and for the children growing up right now.

Stephanie Jones of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Dear Mayor Stewart and the Takoma Park Council Members,

The Takoma Park Silver Spring Coop is vital to our community and as a member I find it a necessity! Please don't base your decisions on the COOP's future because you are more interested in gentrification and greed.

Your job is to listen and serve the community members!

Rick Weiss of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

(with apologies to Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Dr. Seuss)

Takoma Junction Development Plan, how do I not love thee? Let me count the ways.

I do not love thee to the depth and breadth and height

I do not love 18-wheelers in my line of site.

Thy depth promised parking for more than thine self,

'Twas written: "for other local businesses too".

Now thou seekest a waiver to offer not enough parking even for you!

I do not love thee for thy pitiful lack of public space—so spare.

My soles must navigate each cumbersome stair

And how dare

You say there's plenty of green

When what little is up on the roof, unseen.

And then there's the rear, now shady and treed

But to feed somebody's ugly and cavernous greed

That slope's to be shorn for an HVAC blast

Oh Columbia neighbors, you are rightly aghast.

I especially don't love thee for thy layby, a dis-grace

Blocking bikes, busses, cars—and now you face

The reality, hooray, that you've even been shunned by the SHA.

I do not love thee to the level of every day's

Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.

Why pick this fight?

I'd rather see picnic tables, a place to feed

With friends to be fed, in a town that is led

By leaders, who lovingly lead.

I would love thee freely but not your high rents

Such a waste of the taxpayer dollars we've spent.

I do not love thee purely, or with a rooster's breath of praise.

But let me further count the ways.

I do not love thee for the lost opportunity to use

This old parking lot for something where love would not lose.

A place to pull all Takoma together.

I do not love this plan's forecast of more stormy weather.

Which reminds me, one thing I love even fewer:

All that runoff that's poised for Poplar's storm sewer.

In my old griefs, dear Council, and with my childhood's trust

I count on you Kate to do what you must

And admit this white elephant's gone pachyderm bust.

Hear me lost saints, hear the love in my breath

We'll but love this disaster, but after its death.

Peg O'Brien of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Think about what NDCs interests are. They seemingly don't represent the city citizens, nor the best interests of the city, its citizens and the city's small businesses. NDCs interests are limited to their own sole

advancement and the cease and desist step taken by NDC is an effort to intimidate and goes against the way we in Takoma Park choose to live.

Karen Leu of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

I'm writing to express deep concern over NDC's letter to the Coop. That NDC is demanding the Coop to immediately cease use of the City lot for deliveries is not only unreasonable, it is a direct violation of the mediation agreement from 2018. To comply with the demand would mean ceasing an essential and critical operation for the Coop.

I wish for the City for terminate the relationship with NDC given this bad behavior. Short of that, at the very least, please insist that NDC withdraw its demands of the Coop so the Coop can continue with its operations and continue serving our city.

Ted Jacobson of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Sever the agreement with NDC immediately! Their interests are not sufficiently aligned with the interests of Takoma Park. That has been clear for a long time, but with their latest action toward the Coop's use of the lot, even those who wished to believe otherwise cannot remain blind.

On the broader issue of the Junction development, the Council and Mayor began with good intentions, and still hold them, but due to a lack of skills, spine, and vision, they have allowed the process to drift very far from the original goals. The City has undertaken a process gone terribly wrong, from the viewpoint of priorities of Takoma Park citizens, as well as from the viewpoint of several crucial practical, financial, and business factors. I urge the City to immediately terminate the relationship with NDC, review the goals and why the process went sour, and start over!

Susan Lee of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Please be sure to tell those development folks that I will not support them under any circumstances if they continue this attack upon the Co-op. This asshattery should be shut down immediately.

I think their plans suck, but this attack on the beloved co-op is outrageous.

Thomas Kaufman of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

There are 2 reasons why the City should terminate its contract with NDC.

1. NDC's decision to kick the Coop off the lot reflects poor judgement, not to mention a flagrant break of the contract between NDC and the City.
2. Mr Washington;s comment about parking seemed specious. The current lot has 55 parking spaces. The new construction would have the same number of spaces, but more places to shop. There is no way on earth 55 spaces will be enough. Often I see every space on the empty lot filled. If you live on a nearby street like me, you might worry about increased traffic and shoppers taking away spaces which may already be in short supply. parking. I do not believe NDC when it says there's enough parking.

Last, I want to say that the Coop has proven their value to the community time and time again. I'd rather see the lot stay as it is than see the Coop close.

Best Wishes,

Robin Katcher of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Please ensure that TPSS Coop can stay open and has adequate parking to survive. They employ around 50 people and provide a vital service to our community. They are local and their health and wellness section sells things I can not access elsewhere. Please keep our local business community thriving and keep the coop open.

Marianne Ross of Bethesda, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Even though i live on the other side of montgomery county, I make the trip to shop at the coop. That food market, and indeed all of Takoma park, are part of my ecosystem. If you destroy the coop you have killed community.

Jay Levy of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

As a 46-year resident of the city I demand that the co-op's future must be paramount when considering any proposal whatsoever involving development of Takoma Junction.

Paul Marth of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Please allow the COOP to remain and serve the people in our area. It has proven to be a valuable asset to our community! The site was once a Safeway store and the COOP is filling the void left after the Safeway departed.

Thom Wolf of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

For 30 years, since Bruce Williams the city government of Takoma Park has hated the Coop and has been trying to kill it. Instead of embracing a valuable business where there was decay previously the City has wanted to show up the Coop and develop the parking lot. Grow up and help the Coop, the parking lot is one of the few open pieces of land in TP. Make the parking lot for the Coop and develop some green spaces. Listen to the people of TP instead of the City Manager who doesn't even live here.

Martha Anderson of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

My mother used to say, "The first time a dog bites you, it's his fault. The second time he bites you, it's your fault."

NDC has already "bitten" the city more than once. Get rid of NDC and start fresh.

Margaret Morehouse of takoma park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

I want to be clear that I am supportive of plans to develop the junction and related space. I am also deeply disturbed by the way the process has unfolded, the apparent limited concern with arriving at a design that meets all parties' needs and the most recent move by NDC to deny the Coop access to the parking lot.

Given the way things have progressed to date and the apparent inability or unwillingness of the Contractor to address community complaints, I urge the City to seriously reconsider its relationship with NDC and to make the changes necessary to improve its engagement with and oversight of the process going forward.

Laurie McGilvray of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Over the last few years, I have registered my concerns about the scope and scale of the proposed NDC development and the degree to which the design does not meet many elements of the City's own requirements and vision for the site. Now, however, is a critical decision point for our city. Not only does the proposed NDC development fail to meet SHA safety requirements for cars, bikes and pedestrians; Vision Zero principals; parking space requirements for its tenants and Junction users; stormwater management and tree retention guidelines; and City requirements for public space at the site, but NDC itself is trying to drive the Coop, a local business that has been a cornerstone of the community since I moved here in 1984, out of business. I was astonished to learn of the communication timeline between SHA, NDC, and the City Manager, and which apparently drove NDC's sudden cease and desist letter to the Coop. Both the substance and manner of these interactions are extremely worrisome for transparency and unbiased decision-making by the city. These actions also threaten the viability of the Coop, a business we all agreed must be retained in whatever development was done on the city lot. I urge you to terminate the agreement and lease with NDC immediately.

Megan Waters of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Dear Mayor Stewart and Members of the City Council,

I am writing to say how entirely disappointed I have grown with the Takoma Junction Development. I welcome development of the space and was initially a supporter of this project.

It pains me to see how short each of the designs (so far) has fallen of what could be. I believe that the right course of action is to serve ties with the current developer, take a breath, and start over.

Sure, this will cost money, but not so much more as to make it the wrong course of action.

The chaos of the past three years has cost money, and moving forward with a modified version of the current plan will cost money. The key difference is that in what I am proposing there is a chance that the end result will be a good investment, returning many times over on the initial outlay in terms of joy, connection, satisfaction and, yes, also in the money it brings to the community.

No city of the size and wealth of ours in this day and age should be building a new building without putting serious effort into making it have as light a carbon footprint as possible. The current plan is way less green than it could be. It is way less green than it should be.

Mayor Stewart, I understand the environment to be a priority of yours in general and climate to be a concern in particular. We have a huge opportunity here to lead by example. Let's do so.

It is nothing short of embarrassing that Takoma Park put forward plans with so little green space that the county kicked the plans back to us. We should be innovating and leading not failing to meet county approval.

As I understand it, a fair number of my citizens saw this as a problem, pointed it out, saw the City and the development send plans that failed to address this issue on to the county, and then, finally, found relief when had the county make the same points. This speaks to a process in which there seems to have been too much pig-headed determination to go forward with flawed plans and too little interest in listening to valid input from community members.

The same thing happened with the layby. Just as citizens pointed out that the building was too large for the property and that there was too little green space, many pointed out that the layby design was dangerous.

And just as with the desirability of reducing the buildings footprint and increasing green space, there are many good solutions that do not involve a layby.

I'm interested in a fresh start. I do not believe it can be had with the current development company. Its unwillingness to make substantive changes in response to community feedback, its lack of creativity in design, and its churlish, nasty actions against the co-op combine to making me view it as an unsuitable partner.

As for the future, let's do something great. This is one of the few remaining pieces of city owned land and the only one situated as well as it is in the midst of a vibrant section of town. Let's build something beautiful and green and innovative and multi-purpose for the community to enjoy.

Let there be green space, outdoor art, indoor art, a butterfly garden, and bees on the roof.

Whatever it is, let it be something that attracts new people to move to our community, makes those who live here happy and feel like part of the community, and makes people from around DC want to visit our town and shop in our shops and marvel at the thoughtfulness of a civic project done well - a building worthy of and emblematic of the best of what Takoma Park aspires to be.

Let's build something that unites our community and offers gathering places for us. Due to another round of poor planning, the city building on Maple does not contain the gym it was intended to contain. Perhaps in starting from scratch we could explore having the space contain a basketball court. Or some other gathering spaces which attract and bring together people from a large swath of our community.

Whatever it is, let it be a source of pride and something that inspires other communities to put their best foot forward.

It is not finances that are holding us back. It is lack of vision, passion, and purpose. Good taste, good sense, and good intention are all free. We have plenty of all three. Let's work together to put them to work for the good of our community.

We can dream bigger than this and deliver more for our community on the same level of budget, and if needed, we can expand the budget slightly in the wisdom that something done well will bring much greater returns than something done cheaply and poorly.

We have a lot of great commercial space in Takoma Park, and we are fortunate enough to have a lot great businesses in them. I'm a big patron of the stores and eateries in Takoma Park. I'm all for helping them - including the Co-Op - survive and thrive. I'm also all for the development at Takoma Junction having some commercial enterprises in it - shops and cafes are great. I think they are likely to add to its vibrancy and dynamism, but I think the question really has to be asked whether the current planned use of the building (and the land) is really the best we can do. I believe the answer is a resounding no. It is completely uninspiring and lackluster.

Let's build something better.

Thank you very much for your time, the consideration you are giving to my letter and those of other, and for your dedication to public service.

Yours,
Megan

Judy Kirpich of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Like my neighbors I am appalled at NDC's conduct and support the Coop. However, my opposition to this particular project has deeper roots.

I have lived at the corner of Poplar and Columbia for 42 years, and if I have my choice I will live there another 42 years.

My opposition is not to development- Indeed Takoma Park has benefited from development and is a far cry from the storefront church, discount tile store, Electric Maid restaurant and auto parts supply store that occupied downtown. It is far better than the Dawes dump truck lot, Stickler Service and Electric parts store that was in the Junction. I support smart development but have been opposed to the NDC project from the start. Here is a brief list of my reasons:

1. Every study that I have read has given our Junction traffic a failing rating and that is before adding the NDC development and the new school/church at the corner of Elm and Poplar which is predicted to generate traffic in the area. Trying to get out of our neighborhood is difficult at best and NO study adequately looked at the effects of cut through traffic for cars, trucks and buses trying to avoid the Junction and coursing down Poplar to get to New Hampshire. I have photos of a bus marooned on the storm water basin, a semi stuck on the hill at Columbia and traffic piling up down Poplar, or the many cars careening through the stop sign as they go up and down Columbia trying to avoid the Junction mess. That will only get worse.

2. The layby solution is untenable. There has not been one elevation that actually shows what the Junction will look like with trucks constantly parked in front of the Coop and development. The "streetscape" will be the side of a semi. And anyone who has been at the Junction can witness cars passing buses stopped at the bus stop on the left and can envision cars passing the trucks on the left and heading into each other. The SHA mercifully gave a thumbs down to this solution.

3. Every study has recommended changing the intersection which of course no one has offered to pay for including NDC. So yet another debacle paid for by our tax dollars.

4. Storm water. Come have a seat on my porch any time it rains and you can see water coursing down Columbia from both directions and pouring down Poplar. I have worked with the DPW to get the catchment basin to work, but the intakes are too small and are often clogged with debris. And so the new storm water "solution" will simply pass the buck down to my neighbors at the end of Poplar and Elm who routinely get swamped despite years of improvements made not by the city but by homeowners.

5. Poplar and Columbia are residential neighborhoods in the historic district, yet we are to be treated to light pollution from the garage, noise pollution from the exhaust fans from the building and the garage, air pollution from the fumes from the cars at the garage, visual pollution from the bleak rear elevation of the building that will give us three stories (including the garage) of concrete to look at instead of our buffer of trees. We will be treated (according to the last NDC presentation which has changed with every presentation) to tenants gathering on the outside roof deck despite promises that there would be no outside deck facing the residential area.

6. Loss of our urban greenspace. I have a masters in landscape architecture and was very familiar with presentation drawing that show lovely renderings of trees that were 25 years old. We would never show the two or three inch trees that fit into the landscaping budget, because we knew it was going to look bleak for the first 10,15,20 years. The current drawings of the forestscape are misleading and show mature trees that are blocking the view of the offending building and garage. But that is not the view that my neighbors and I will have.

The City promised to preserve that green area many years ago when it was proposed the lot be turned into a regional post office. That was another plan that over-promised and was eventually killed. But the City told us then, that the green area would remain undisturbed. Keep that promise please.

I could keep on going, and I can fill up binders of letters and comments from myself and my neighbors on their opposition to this project. We have sat through tons of neighborhood meetings, council meetings, Montgomery County Historic Commission meetings, Takoma Park council meetings and yet no one has heard our comments or answered our questions. We keep being told that answers are coming... but nothing, I listen to staff and City manager presentations that skirt the issues over and over again.

At the last laughable breakout sessions, 20 minutes were allotted to discuss three topics. Twenty minutes was a ridiculously inadequate amount of time to give to this important issue. And even there, NDC's representatives could not answer the questions. Even their traffic specialist was unable to give a coherent argument. At this late date, this is inexcusable.

The latest stunt by NDC to limit deliveries is just one of many inadequate reactions. And yet our mayor and my ward representative tell me they are still evaluating information.

I come from the Sammy Abbot generation. And like many of us, I have fought over issues that are important to our community. This fight has me exhausted and for the first time in 42 years questioning how this could possibly be the same Takoma Park governance that I have known and loved: How citizen's voices are ignored, how concerns are belittled, how issues are swept under the rug hoping we will not see.

Please act with conscience. End this project now and investigate development that is right sized for the space and developed by a partner that understands our community's spirit and needs.

Enrica Detragiache of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Dear Mayor and Council,
as many other of asked you, please act decisively to make sure the Coop can continue to operate and thrive. As the only grocery store with walking distance to old town, it is an important resource to our community. It is not credible to argue that their loading operations are an imminent danger after they have been operating safely for some 20 years.
Respectfully,

Enrica Detragiache

anicca jansen of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

The recent action by NDC to try to bring down a local loyal employer/business is abhorrent. There should be no misunderstanding that this is also the city government bringing down a local business, because the city has recklessly and irresponsibly empowered NDC. This primarily in the hands of an incompetent city manager

who does not even pay taxes in our community. But the Mayor and City Council have stood by and let this happen, and also are responsible. The city manager should be stripped of any more power in this area, and the mayor and city council need to step up. The city should immediately end the NDC relationship and pull the plug on this ill-conceived development, found inappropriate by both Montgomery County Parks and Planning and the State Highway department, not to mention the taxpayers of this community. The Coop should be protected and defended and encouraged to continue using the city-owned lot. Keep in mind that that lot was set up as a contact free delivery site in the early days of the pandemic. The Coop worked quickly in the early days of the pandemic to switch to on-line ordering, keeping its staff employed and the people of this community served. What a stellar example of a business serving a community. How rotten of the city to turn on a long time local employer/business. It's time to send NDC on its way and for the city to do what is right.

Indigo Sharp of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

I've lived in Takoma Park since I was less than 5 years old, and the Co-op and the people in it have always been so important to my family. In making it much harder for deliveries to get to the Co-op, the junction development would hinder the Co-ops ability to provide for the community in all the many ways it does. I'm scared that younger children might not have the same experience with the Co-op as a community hub as I did growing up.

CAROLLYN JAMES of TAKOMA PARK, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Sally Ours Kern's comments and research about the inadequacies of the NDC/City plan reflect the full thoughts of our community. I concur with all that she stated.

Tonya Katcher of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Keep the Co-op open! Dump the NDC!

Esther Siegel of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

I am haunted by Mayor Kate's July 23, 2018 words from her website.

"The Co-op. From the time I joined the Council until now I have worked to ensure the Co-op's needs are front and center in our discussions and decision making. I worked on the Development Agreement with others to ensure 1) accommodations will be made for the Co-op's deliveries, trash and recycling, 2) that their parking needs will be met, and 3) that they will be able to continue to operate through construction. In addition, we have restricted the tenants that can be in the project so that no other grocery store can rent space. If the project moves forward, it will also have an additional elevator for Co-op customers."

kathie and laird hart of takoma park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

I urge the city government to end the seemingly endless relationship with the developer who plans to put an outsized building with none of the promised public space on the current parking lot next to the co-op. I shop at the co-op at least 2 - 3 times a week and having a store like that in walking distance to my home is

one of the best things about our neighborhood.

Please do not let the need to continue with this misguided plan rob our neighborhood of one of its best assets. Thanks for taking the time to read and consider these comments.

Ann Lafferty of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Please save the co-op! It's a unique place, and I rely on it for so many items, on a weekly basis, and have done so for decades. And please take note that the co-op made an excellent and ingenious pivot during the pandemic, that many of my neighbors relied on (as I did myself).

Sridhar Hannenhalli of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

The Co-op was one of the prime attractions for us to choose to move to this community 11 years ago. Coop has been a mainstay of our life. It goes well beyond just the convenience of shopping. It stands for a philosophy of life, which is becomes very rare, but which is essential for a sustainable future against mindless commercialization.

What is wrong with status quo? Without that 'sustainability' is just an empty word. Must we develop that space? And if do, can't we reduce the scope of development to let Coop exist? It doesn't have to be all or nothing, and it doesn't have to be all about profits.

It will be huge blow to TP if Coop were to close. I strongly urge the city to make coop sustainability a prerequisite for any development.

Jane Hsiao of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Our family shops at the Co-op at least once a week. They are a terrific source of healthy, often local, food. We don't mind paying a bit more for some organic and eco-friendly groceries because it's good for the planet. We'd be lost without the Co-op since we try to avoid Whole Foods. The people who work there have been so friendly and helpful, especially during the pandemic. Please support the Co-op so the store can remain open. Thank you.

Susanne Lowen of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

P.S. Thank you for creating this online comment format. I hope you will continue to solicit input from residents in this way. It helps us to feel heard and suggests some degree of transparency that many of us feel has been lacking.

Susanne Lowen of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Surely it is now abundantly clear that NDC is not the right partner for Takoma Park. Please act in the best interests of the community and 1) end the lease agreement with NDC; 2) hold Ms. Ludlow accountable for repeatedly misleading the City Council; 3) revamp the City processes that lead Council to be deaf to the input of residents; 4) let Junction development be guided by the values of a visionary city, rather than ever-

expanding City government and its budget.

Hugh Taft-Morales of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

It's time our TP elected officials end the relation with NDC, assure the Co-op's future, and work with residents in good faith to develop the junction in a way that maintains the small town charm of our city. From the start NDC has not reflected the spirit of our community in their planning. Over the last couple of years they seem to take pride in disparaging the community in public and ignoring citizen concerns.

John Rogers of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

I am a taxpayer and voter in Takoma Park.

I have yet to find compelling arguments in support of the existing NDC project at the Junction. NDC's recent actions against the COOP jeopardize access to a basic healthy food source for many of Takoma Park's residents.

I am requesting the Mayor and City Council insist NDC change their design, and/or reopen new RFPs, as the current design is not feasible.

Bea Zuluaga of TAKOMA PARK, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

The Co-op is a need for our community!!

Edwin Welles of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Dear Mayor and Council,

NDC has proven they are not a partner with Takoma Park. They have demonstrated they are simply an aggressive developer.

The lack of cooperation Mr. Washington has demonstrated with his current approach is a lesson we should take to heart.

Mr. Washington will take aggressive legal action again and again and again. He has demonstrated he is not trustworthy.

We need to step away from NDC.

Sincerely
Edwin Welles

Sally Ours Kern of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

The Takoma Junction project does not align with Vision Zero principals adopted by MoCo & State which advocates to anticipate, and plan for human error in transportation design, and prioritize safety to humans in planning new infrastructure. This plan is triggered by a lease of 99-years, which will outlive even our children, and shouldn't be grandfathered in with outdated planning. This project squeezes a super-sized box development into a nexus of two state highways that already experiences heavy traffic and queuing. The compressed transportation uses across its frontage would demand precision vehicular movements from residents, as well as impatient crosstown commuters unfamiliar with our neighborhood. The site plan presents inadequate sight lines and risk to pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users, effectively throwing safety "under the bus."

The development splits the street frontage into two separated levels, reducing circulation and mobility. It does not conform to today's inclusive "Universal Design" standard which embraces diversity and promotes equity, to consider all users, regardless of age, size, or ability in planning and shaping space and environments. The plan instead, treats those with impaired mobility as an afterthought, forcing wheelchair, walker, stroller, and grocery cart users to share a 4-ft ramp with loading & unloading dollies, as well as refuse, recycling & compost bins wheeled to & from the project's cafe, restaurant and retail tenants, as well as the TPSS Co-Op.

People with mobility impairment, moving westward on the sidewalk from Sycamore, wanting to access the site's Eastern ramp would be forced to make a sharp 45-degree backward turn upon passing through an inadequately-sized nexus of side walk/loading zone/ramped queuing area — for the Grant Ave Crosswalk, a direct Safe-Route-To-School crosswalk used by over 200 school children walking to three neighborhood schools.

The project removes the optimally placed F4 bus stop and repositions it in a sandwich between the underground parking garage egress and the lay-by. MoCo's Bus Improvement project would require a bus shelter and ramped access from the curb to the street, right in the path of the right-turn-only underground parking egress. The bus shelter, buses, delivery, recycling, compost, and garbage trucks would all obscure sight lines to the Grant Ave Crosswalk and the master-planned bike lanes across the entire frontage of the site.

The Fire Chief spoke about his concern with sight lines along the frontage and that it would eliminate city lot parking that the TP Fire Dept relies on. Were Fire Department staff insight's, expertise, and needs of emergency vehicles incorporated into the site plan's design? NDC's traffic consultants suggest recalibration of the signalization at the intersection, presumedly to promote greater flow, which would most likely come at the expense of safety to humans moving through crosswalks. Their traffic study refers to cars hitting people as "vehicular pedestrian insults."

The Bikeshare's optimal location is jettisoned, the city proposing inferior options which would cannibalize essential junction business parking on Carroll, Grant or in Morrison Park, or alternatively the bus indent.

The layby is illegal, as it is a fire lane, and would require a waiver as an exception to county rules. Its narrowness would present a hazard of opening and closing doors of vehicles parked in the layby into the adjacent bicycle lane, posing a hazard to cyclists using the bicycle lanes. The layby would force delivery trucks to circulate through our neighborhood streets to achieve a west-east orientation and for queuing when the layby is occupied, as kids are walking to school, waiting for other school buses, and would most likely force trucks to pass in front of Piney Branch School on Maple Avenue, which is also a street with many apartment buildings, and criss-crossed with many crosswalks for kids walking to and from Piney Branch Elementary, Takoma Park Elementary and Takoma Park Middle School. The right-turn-only egress of the underground parking garage would also force more cut-through traffic to circle back through neighborhood streets.

The project requires a parking waiver, as it proposes to build a development too large for the site's maximum allowed footprint to adequately provide the estimated parking its own tenants would require - let alone any for other junction businesses. Instead, NDC suggests "there's adequate off street parking in the neighborhood", a

falsehood.

NDC has committed to no more than one parking space for other junction businesses, specifically one for the TPSS. It would retain the right to give preferential rates to tenants, and could charge inflated rates to other junction businesses. There is no estimate as to how much they would charge for public parking.

NDC is taking very aggressive action that threatens our neighborhood grocery store that was recruited to its current location 23 years ago by the City, and for which the city lot was purchased. TPSS has rented the city lot for years, and now pays NDC to lease the lot, and allows the public to park there for free. TPSS employs a diverse workforce including 50 union employees with full health benefits. TPSS has a diverse customer base. It sells prepared food made in the community kitchen, and supports over 200 local vendors. They supply local fresh organic produce that many of us have relied on even more during the pandemic. TPSS hosted biweekly food banks, and created food delivery systems which became a life saver for so the community, particularly those over 65. It allows residents to “Eat Local & Shop Local” which aligns with Takoma Park’s Climate Emergency Resolution.

NDC’s answer to residents’s request for open public space on our city owned lot —is to count planters, steps, door swings, and outdoor restaurant table space as “public gathering space.” NDC has shown that they don’t really fit in with the community, they don’t share the values we have, and don’t respect other members of our community, or the existing businesses in the community.

The site plan adds over 8000 square feet of new impervious space over and beyond the existing impervious parking lot. It will remove 62% of the existing forested space. It will pipe stormwater overflow directly to the over capacity stormwater system on Columbia which often results in overflows so egregious that down hill residents experience sewage overflow on their properties. Has WSSC been consulted about capacity? The stormwater management plan relies on outdated rules that allow plans designated “redevelopment” to treat stormwater water quality treatment for only 50% of the impervious space, as opposed to 100% which Prince George’s County adopted into their SWM code over two years ago. Because Takoma Park has stormwater oversight of itself, and its the development partner, the city should require the developer to meet this higher standard to protect downhill residents and the Chesapeake Bay. Doing so would align with our Climate Change Emergency Declaration.

The project fails to meet an unmet need, one creatively aligned with our progressive values for which Takoma Park could be thought of as a thought leader. Transformative visionary development like the Community Kitchen, or another development not chosen after the RFP - The Ability Project would have provided a progressive transformative project - providing housing, workspace, training for adults with autism, as well as retail. The rents proposed in the Junction plan would be double those across the street, and thus the tenants would be used mostly by those with higher incomes. There is no affordable housing component, only a promise of “trickle-down economics” with some portion of future proceeds from this sweetheart of a deal for the developer.

Roger Allen of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Unless someone else gets in ahead of me, this will be the 101st comment posted regarding the Takoma Junction situation. I just went through the first 100 comments -- and exactly three of them were in favor of NDC and/or its current plans and policies. (All were posted on April 18 if someone wants to scroll through and find them.) I am frankly surprised there were that many. One or two comments were ambiguous, but that leaves something on the order of 95% opposition to NDC. Plainly the tactic of bullying the Co-op was the last straw for lots of people.

It comes down to the proposed building being much too large for the site. There is no room for deliveries, trash removal, adequate usable public space (as opposed to unconnected scraps and patches being counted

as public space) and so on and so on. NDC needs all the space there is, and has sought to push such functions as delivery and trash removal out into public land and roadways.

NDC's incendiary lawyer letter (which, for whatever reason, was plainly written with the goal of infuriating people) accuses the Co-op of "endangering pedestrians (including school children) and bicycle travelers" among other sins -- all things that the SHA letter flagged as dangers posed by NDC's planned lay-by. Psychologists call this sort of thing "projection." Another descriptor would be "disingenuous" but that is probably too diplomatic. However, NDC's lawyer letter does at least serve the useful purpose of demonstrating they can't be trusted and will fight dirty when it suits them.

The one consistent refrain I have heard from pretty much every portion of the city government is "I/we can't say anything until I/we have heard from somebody else." Sometimes that somebody is a subject-matter expert, sometimes it is county or state government, and sometimes it is the lawyers. And here we have it again. At what point does reserving judgment until everyone else speaks become absurd? I would suggest that, if we weren't there already, we are there now.

This time, in effect, our Council Members have told us they can't talk until they hear from the lawyers. (So far as I am aware -- and apologies if I missed something -- the Mayor has not said even that much.) I don't think there ever was a time when such reticence was appropriate, but if so, that time is long past. The lawyers didn't run for election. They don't get a vote. So Madame Mayor, and Council Members all: the time has come. Don't tell us you don't have anything to say. Tell us what you think, and what you're going to do.

Carin Brown of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

It is high time for Takoma Park to end its contract with NDC. Besides NDC's lack of good faith in regards to the Co-op, a valued city asset, it has consistently ignored the unique traffic and safety concerns that the Junction presents. The few changes that it has proposed have been inadequate - mere band aids to placate rather than serious solutions. While I understand a lot of time and money has been put into trying to making this partnership work good governance by the City Council at this time would be to end this partnership with NDC rather than to continue with something that is not working. Not all that time and money has been a waste. The council now has the traffic studies, and a better understanding of the unique problems that the Junction presents and hopefully a more realistic understanding of the size of a development that that lot can support.

Erik Lichtenberg of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

I urge you to cancel the City's contract with NDC for development of the City-owned property at Takoma Junction.

When this process began, I was in favor of moving ahead with development. I thought that NDC's plans were reasonable. And I felt that the Co-op's desires shouldn't stand in the way. I no longer hold any of those beliefs.

I've seen what a valuable resource the Co-op has been for the community during the pandemic and I think it's essential to do what we can to keep it viable.

I've seen hopeful signs of new businesses moving into the Carroll Avenue strip in the Junction. I know that adequate parking is essential to give them a chance to be commercial successes.

And NDC's recent behavior leads me to believe that they will not be good neighbors.

My understanding is that NDC has not met its commitments under its contract with the City. It has not secured

an anchor tenant for its planned development. Its plan for a layby to accommodate delivery trucks was rejected by the State Highway Administration. Its planned footprint has been problematic throughout the process. It has failed to meet County building codes numerous times. And, to reiterate, NDC's behavior indicates that they will not be good partners--and could even be an impediment--in helping foster development in the broader Junction area.

I think it's past time to pull the plug on NDC.

One final point: It seems to me that posting material in support of NDC's claims about the dangers of delivery trucks in the Junction parking lot on the City's website was unwarranted and inexcusable. I hope that the Council will take action to ensure that such things do not happen again.

Michael Blau of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

The city of Takoma Park needs to end their relationship with NDC. The poorly planned and ill-conceived development needs to cease immediately.

Our city can do better. We can have a right-sized, site-proportional development that protects the Co-op and allows for its continued use of the city-owned lot, provides more public space, protects the existing trees, allows for safe transit through the area for all (bikes, pedestrians, and drivers) and doesn't cause a storm water nightmare for the residents of Columbia Avenue. Suzanne Ludlow, the City Manager should NOT have any further involvement with the development process.

Jacqueline Moore of TAKOMA PARK, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

The city of Takoma Park needs to end their relationship with NDC relationship. The poorly planned and ill-conceived development needs to be halted immediately.

We can do better. We can have a right-sized development that protects the Co-op and allows for its continued use of the city-owned lot, provides more public space, protects the existing trees, and doesn't cause a storm water nightmare. Suzanne Ludlow, the City Manager should NOT have any further involvement with the development process.

Joan Clement of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Please resolve the parking lot issue so the Coop will remain open now, and during any future construction.

Please look critically at the performance of NDC, our City Manager, our City attorney, and anyone else advising you on the Junction project, and take appropriate action, which could include making new assignments.

Please see the forest from the trees, and don't get lost in the details.

Please see past people's behaviors and misunderstandings and look for a common vision that we all share. Thank you.

Jaime Koppel of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

I am asking that our city manager and our elected officials take action immediately to ensure a reversal of NDC's letter terminating the Coop's use of the parking lot for on-site deliveries - which I found to be beyond inappropriate. More is needed but I'll settle for the first next step being taken without further delay.

Joanne Lastort of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Please end the current relationship with NDC. They spurn our community's values and are now threatening one of our oldest local businesses. They have taken care of our community for years. TPSS was one of the first stores to provide online ordering and contact-less pickup at the beginning of the pandemic.

I am not against development, but I think the community should have more input. The whole process involving NDC was not transparent and seems to have been pushed through against any objections, even such as losing a significant number of trees, a huge increase in traffic through surrounding neighborhoods, and requests for waivers for not providing enough parking and only addressing a fraction of storm water management (something the city has spent a lot of money on already). I assume they will also be requesting a waiver for the ADA violations, since the only way for someone using a wheelchair to access the proposed building or the "public" space is to share a ramp with deliveries and other pedestrian traffic.

laura costas of mount rainier, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

I am writing today in support of the TPSS Co-op. I'm baffled and disappointed by the City's consistently rough treatment of this valuable resource in the TP community!

I've been a member of the Co-op for decades. They provide a unique service, they are stable and clean, they add to the "walkability" that makes the community valuable to residents new and old, and they are consonant with the tone and flavor of the City.

I no longer live in the immediate area, but I continue to shop weekly at the Co-op because I feel so identified with its mission and its friendly, helpful employees, and because they offer goods that no one else in the area has. I like supporting the Takoma Park community, and the Co-op *is* Takoma Park.

Please resolve to keep them here in the community. We need to respect this community institution and help them succeed by maintaining space for them alongside the newer developments and attitudes.

Susan Gleason of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

As one of many volunteers with Food Justice DMV, each Thursday morning I help pack and distribute food among some of the neediest families in our region. We assemble in the parking lot adjacent to the Co-op and Johnny's Auto Parts, to unpack donated produce, beans and rice (that other volunteers have painstakingly re-packaged from 50-lb sacks), sanitary supplies, diapers, and other essentials. Then, we distribute them directly to people's apartments, houses, and other distribution sites. I might add that we're careful to leave the lot as clean and free of debris as we had found it. The recipients are almost all immigrants, many undocumented, and most are really struggling to simply feed their families and pay their rent. So perhaps you can imagine my shock upon reading the "cease and desist notice" concerning use of the parking lot that is vital for our operation! I'm sure that this "colateral damage", as it were, was never anticipated, but on the other hand, I am deeply hopeful that now that you are all aware of how severely many people's lives would be affected, you will find a way to prevent the end of our efforts to feed our neighbors. All we are asking for is space to unload a

few deliveries, repackage them, and send volunteers off to deliver them each Thursday morning. Please find a way for us to continue our mission!

Thank you,
Susan Gleason

Ashley Flory of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

I would like the city of Takoma Park to:

- end the relationship with NDC immediately.
- remove the city manager from all matters concerning the Takoma Junction development. She has shown bias in this matter
- protect the Co-op and its ability to conduct its business. Maintain Co-op access to deliveries through the parking lot

Alison Baker of takoma park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Please end the push for excessive development of the Takoma Junction area. Save the Co op and allow the empty space next to it to become a community gathering area. Keep Takoma Park a community oriented town,

Karen Collins of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

I am very concerned about NDC's terminating the COOP's use of the parking lot for deliveries and parking, which would cripple the coop and could possibly put it out of business. I am also troubled that NDC writes that they are still planning to go forward with a plan for a layby even though SHA wrote that the proposed layby was unsafe and refused to approve it. Thinking that you can modify the lay misses the point that loading/unloading from the street is not going to be safe. Time has come to cut our losses with NDC and figure out some other plan for the Junction.

Samantha Shofar of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

I lived just down the street from the coop for 20 years, until moving to Silver Spring in July of 2020. The Coop is an incredibly important part of the Takoma Park community for so many reasons! I miss being able to just run up the street to get a missing ingredient for a recipe, but I am still a member and shop there. The Coop must be able to fully function as a business and must receive support from the City to stay in its current location. If that means terminating the agreement with NDC (who isn't acting in good faith under the agreement), then so be it. The Coop IS Takoma Park. There will be another developer...

Fredie Adelman of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Given NDC's most recent unreasonable restriction on the Takoma Park Co-op's business, it is time for the mayor and council members to take back the city and end this ill-conceived, undesirable, and harmful relationship.

Dorothy Dykers of Silver Spring, MD
Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Protect our co--op from aggressive moves by the NDC!!! The co-op is a heartbeat of our community, supporting shoppers, staff and many small business.

Robert Goo of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Mayor Stewart and Takoma Park City Council,

I am very concerned about the new development regarding NDC's termination of the COOP's parking lease that I understand was part of a cooperation agreement between NDC and the COOP. Although I do not know the details that catalyzed this turn of events, I think that NDC's action appears to be punitive and vindictive. From my perspective on the sideline, it appears to me that NDC has not operated in an upfront and transparent manner and NDC has repeatedly submitted plans that were not consistent with council requirements for the development, e.g., public space with appropriate access, and in other instances, the plans contained modifications that were provided in a timeframe that gave the council inadequate time to evaluate the proposals before hearings or other decision points. I understand that both of you think that the NDC project will benefit the city and improve the quality of life for TKPK citizens and I appreciate your desire to use this space to enhance the city. I think that given how NDC has operated over the course of this process, it would be immoral to continue to work with NDC. I understand that the city included a clause in the development agreement that allows the city to vote to stop the project at any time. I urge you to call a vote and encourage the rest of the council to vote to stop the project and terminate the agreement with NDC. Although the city has invested a lot of time and funding on this project, I think it is time for the city to return to the drawing board and seek a development partner that is trustworthy, that truly takes the totality of TKPK citizens' interests into account, that preserves the ability of the COOP to support numerous employees and generate revenues and taxes that benefit the city and one that the city can work with in good faith.

Robert Goo

Charlotte Schoeneman of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

The NDC Junction project has been flawed, divisive and inflammatory from the start. If NDC is going to use its leverage as temporary owner of the site to harm the co-op, that is an obvious indication they are not the sort of community-minded team player we need to work with here.

Now is the perfect time to kick NDC to the curb and start fresh. We need to have community input as to what usage we want to see on the Junction site. We need a design charette to facilitate creative brainstorming. And then we need to invite developers who are interested realizing community goals.

Let's take the opportunity to get out of our unfortunate contractual agreement with NDC. Let's learn from these several years of missteps and strife. And let's use this experience and knowledge to build a new community hub at the Junction.

Marianne McNeil of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

I have been watching and hearing the process of this development project from the sidelines and increasingly feeling that NDC is not trustworthy and is proposing a development that is out of touch and unhealthy for this community. I am not privy to any details of the agreements and have heard only through word of mouth and social media so my concerns arise from these sources but I know I am not alone in this community with my growing frustration.

The rejection of the layby plan by the SHA was a relief. It always seemed dangerous for pedestrians and a traffic nightmare, but now we have a situation with the termination of the city parking lot lease, that impacts the future functioning of the COOP.

The NDC proposed development plan focused on retail and commercial space also feels out of tune with the current economic impacts of the pandemic.

NDC will make their money and get out. They don't appear to care about the viability of the COOP, the welfare of the COOP employees and the impact of their development on this community.

Gus May of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

The NDC project is a disaster for everyone (I would imagine NDC thinks so too and regrets ever getting involved). The co-op is a local treasure and should be protected by any means necessary. If the co-op's ability to operate is threatened by not having access to the city owned lot, then kill the NDC project, plain and simple. The city manager shouldn't be involved - this should come down to the will of the people of Takoma Park and the type of community development we want to have. Don't let a developer bully the city into killing one of the institutions (the co-op) that makes this a special place to live.

Marcia Diehl of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Dear Mayor and City Council

The time has come to dump NDC. KEEP THE COOP in business. They have been an integral part of this community for many years and have served us well during the pandemic by adapting safe retail practices.

Mary Hart of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

I am writing to oppose the City of Takoma Park continuing its partnership with NDC to develop the parking lot next to the CO-op. I am extremely concerned that this project and its developer are undermining the future of the Co-op.

The aggressive tactic to stop deliveries to the Co-op shows that NDC does not have the best interest of the community at heart. The TkPk Coop is a place that brings a diverse group of people together and supports many community members with good wages and important work.

There is clear evidence that the future of the Coop is being threatened and I expect our elected officials to revisit the "deal" on the table and withdrawal support from working with NDC.

There are alternative ways to develop this site which better serve the community and can work in cooperation with the Co-op.

Sincerely Mary Hart

Robin Broad of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

This has gone on for long enough, with neither NDC, nor the City Manager, nor most of our elected reps stepping up to do what is in the "common good." NDC has not done what it was chosen to do in terms of design & commitments. Now is absolutely the time to: 1)End the relationship with NDC and end this version of a so-called development project; 2)End the City Manager's role in this project; and 3)Allow the Coop to continue to use the City-owned lot.

I write the above as a professor of development -- who has seen such "white elephant" projects all over the world. Stop throwing our good money after bad with this ill-conceived project.

randy gibson of takoma park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Randy Gibson from Takoma Park.

Time for leadership and defense of key values. Quoting from environmentalist David Roberts, "the ingredients of resilience are overlapping social and civic circles, filled with people who, living in close proximity and sharing common spaces, known take care of each other." Do the right thing!

Judy Rosenthal of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Please seriously consider the current information and activities related to what NDC is doing and not doing, and hasn't done and has erroneously reported. There are many of us in the community who WANT something developed, that is reasonable, sustainable and community oriented as well as embraces the coop, and that development is NOT the NDC plan. Please walk away from it and start over, there are many good people and good ideas in this community, please use them.

Nadine Bloch of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Council and Mayor:

You have been given the gift of a potential business partner showing their inappropriate and vindictive character (yet again!) while you still have the option to end the deal.

Drop NDC.

Stop wasting your time, and our money and our time, on this proposed oversized corporate development on public land.

Time to sanction the City Manager for her role in this mess, and if the City Lawyer approved the inaccurate statements and/or plan of action, sever ties with them immediately as well.

Looking forward to moving on to more appropriate development -- with public land for public benefit.

Onward,
NB

Betsy Taylor of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Five years ago over 1,000 people signed a petition urging you to protect the TPSS Co-op and raising concerns about the traffic and safety concerns related to a proposed lay-by. Now, five years later, the evidence is in. The lay-by will not work. Please end this deal with NDC now. It is shameful that the City Manager and NDC have colluded to raise bogus safety concerns about current Co-op operations. It's time to stop spending huge amounts of taxpayer money and staff time on this failed project. And it's time to remove the City Manager from any involvement with the ongoing process. Protect the Co-op and other businesses and pull the plug on NDC. The City's silence is deafening.

Reid Cramer of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

I am writing to oppose the City of Takoma Park continuing its partnership with NDC to develop the parking lot next to the CO-op. I am extremely concerned that this project and its developer are undermining the future of the Co-op.

The aggressive tactic to stop deliveries to the Co-op is upsetting to me because it is designed to negatively impact one of the most vital institutions in Takoma Park. I've been a member of the Co-op since 1999 and have been impressed by how it serves, supports, and reflects values that I would like to think are priorities for the City. It is a place that brings a diverse group of people together and I am impressed with how it supports its workforce with health care. I have heard our elected officials express support for the Co-op throughout the process of considering a development next door. Now, we have evidence that that future is being threatened and I expect our elected officials to revisit the "deal" on the table and withdrawal support from working with NDC.

There are alternative ways to develop this site which better serve the community and can work in cooperation with the Co-op.

Respectfully,

Reid Cramer
403 Elm Ave

Hannah Baldwin of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

The Junction developer, NDC, has sent the Co-op a "cease and desist" letter telling them they can no longer use the City lot for deliveries, breaking agreements with the City and Co-op.

It is time for Takoma Park to end their agreement with this developer! The Co-op plays an important role in our community, and their support for the voluntary assistance provided for our neighbors in need is essential!

The council must end our agreement with NDC!

Sharon Gervasoni of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

The Co-op's motto- "For People, Not Profit"—would be an excellent watchword for the City as well. The Co-op provides access to good food to many many people, and employs around 50 people. The Co-op was instrumental in keeping me safe through this past year, as a person with multiple risk factors for COVID, by being an early adopter of a curbside pickup system. This allowed me to avoid having to enter a grocery store for the past year.

I do not support, and urge you in the strongest terms to reject, any development plan that causes the demise of the Co-op (directly, or sneakily by, for example, making it impossible for deliveries to occur). The Co-op provides a much more important service to the community than anything that could be built in its place. Remember who you are sworn to serve.

Esther Siegel of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Dear Council members,

We have heard from you over and over again how you support the co-op and will protect the co-op in the development process. Mayor Kate, in July 23, 2018 wrote on on her website:

"The Co-op. From the time I joined the Council until now I have worked to ensure the Co-op's needs are front and center in our discussions and decision making. I worked on the Development Agreement with others to ensure 1) accommodations will be made for the Co-op's deliveries, trash and recycling, 2) that their parking needs will be met, and 3) that they will be able to continue to operate through construction. In addition, we have restricted the tenants that can be in the project so that no other grocery store can rent space. If the project moves forward, it will also have an additional elevator for Co-op customers."

In NDC's recent letter, it states, "While the Co-op does many fine things for the community, it is, at the core, a highly successful for-profit company. According to its own website it typically grosses over \$10 million dollars per year, and prior to the pandemic its annual profits were typically several hundred thousand per year. At the end of its most recent fiscal year, it had over \$4 million in assets (most of which was cash) and only about \$400k in debt."

One would think a city would want to keep such a successful business in their community and not treat the "While the Co-op does many fine things for the community" as insignificant to our community.

And, as NDC also writes, "Let me be clear - it's not the "NDC Project", it's the Takoma Junction Project, a public private partnership between our firm and your duly elected City Government. If that were so, why are most of the concerns, requests by the community totally ignored.

You represent the residents of Takoma Park that prides itself on a set of values that the recent action by NDC and the City Manager do not reflect. I refer to the lie perpetrated by the City Manager about the new found danger of a delivery system that has been in effect since 1998 and never questioned, and NDC's vindictive, abrupt punitive demand to cease deliveries through the parking lot just after the SHA decision.

In the Parking Lot Sublease Agreement, September 2018, an agreement was reached between NDC, the City's development partner, and the TPSS Co-op regarding a sub-lease of the parking lot at Takoma Junction. Per the agreement, the Co-op assumed operational control of the parking lot when the Ground Lease between the City and NDC commenced on September 1, 2018.

I would like a real and specific response available city-wide to the following questions from each of you:

1. Did you have any part in the cease and desist decision and if so, to make your position public with an

explanation of how you can agree to in effect paralyze the Co-op and yet uphold your commitment to preserving and protecting the Co-op.

2. If the pronouncement came as a surprise, should you not demand of the City Manager to retract her letter and demonstrate to your constituents that this was a mistake, not sanctioned by the Council and ask the same of NDC. Again, a reminder that you support the Co-op and that support requires action.

NDC has proven time and again it will manipulate you and has drastically moved away the original plan that included a loading dock in the back, and a smaller building with real public, open space, in order to reach their real goal - not in terms of how much the project would cost to build, but how much they can profit from it. That necessitates using more square footage, and you all let them increase and increase until you find yourselves in so deep - but it is not too late. You can walk away without penalty.

3. Given what we've learned from the pandemic - why on earth would anyone in their right mind be building new office space when thousands of buildings are and probably will remain empty as companies are realizing they don't need as much rental space as before the pandemic.

The pandemic has also illuminated the need for public open safe gathering spaces, and companies everywhere are learning they do not need as much indoor retail space as they have had. Lawyers are inundated with clients who want to get out of their multi-year leases.

Yet, you support building new office space! The "modernization" and energy efficiency argument could better be applied to support the upgrade to existing businesses if modernization is such a concern and you say you are committed to existing businesses.

What business would trust investing in Takoma Park when its leadership thinks nothing of supporting an outside developer whose motive is their own profit over long time supportive businesses?

4. The developer suggests the office space could house non-profit tenants who would provide services to TP residents. Is it realistic to assume service non-profit would or could pay \$45 sq.ft. (that will really end up being more after inevitable cost overruns to the development). Or is this part of what the developer knows we'd want to hear, but the reality is quite different by the time it's too late.

You have an opportunity to end this and finally recognize that NDC is just not the right fit for Takoma Park. The technical flaws are so numerous, the use not in line with TP values, and now NDC has shown itself to be a vindictive, self-serving company. The Co-op, despite attacks and slander has worked hard to hold up its end, but your City Manager has betrayed our community, and if you go along with this, so will you.

I pray you do the right thing, end this disaster with NDC, show the Co-op, our local businesses and community, you do stand behind them over a self-serving developer. Let's take a step back, and regroup to re-imagine from within the community, the best use for that space, and find a developer willing to bring our visions to life.

The community and I look forward to your thoughtful responses.

Esther Siegel on Erie

Roger Schlegel of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

For whatever reason, NDC has not shown an ability to fulfill the City's requirements for the partnership. After four years of revisions, NDC's final site plan takes out 62% of the site's forested area, provides no guaranteed parking for area businesses, and cooks the numbers to claim a good-sized public area while providing no meaningful public gathering space other than 6 or 7 separated small nodes along the building front some of

meaningful public gathering space other than 6 or 7 separated small nodes along the building front, some of which are intended to be converted to private dining area, per Josh Sloan of NDC at the recent workshops. The frontage design is inconvenient and introduces numerous conflicts and safety risks, particularly with respect to the shared ADA and loading ramp as well as the shared sidewalk/loading aisle. NDC's most recent move to break the lease with the Coop is just part of a pattern of not meeting the requirements, let alone the values, of this partnership. After five years, it is time to terminate the arrangement. It is evident that given the constraints of the site and the City's desires, NDC can't figure out how to make something work for their business model.

julia jarvis of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

We have been a Co-op member for over 30 years. They aren't perfect. No business is. And they have served the surrounding communities for decades. Green development is fine as long as it doesn't come at a cost to local businesses and local people. NDC does not hold Takoma Park's best interest in their pockets. I do hope that our city council and other leaders will look deep into their own values as leaders and make the right decision for us all. Get rid of NDC, save the Co-op and small businesses around the Co-op and do the right thing.

David Navari of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

I support the idea of developing the lot but the support was always contingent on ensuring a neighborhood grocery store stays and can continue business operations. NDC doesn't seem to be interested in honoring that condition. There's plenty of time to find another developer and get a development that'll work in the space, meets state safety requirements and won't put the grocery store out of business.

Lorraine Pearsall of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

The emperor has no clothes! Like a ray of sunlight piercing dense fog, the shockingly aggressive actions of the Neighborhood Development Company against a neighborhood business resonate across our community. It is now nakedly apparent that NDC's promises are empty...for what greater promise is there than a signed cooperation agreement? Yet NDC, together with the City Manager, put our community in peril because they could inexplicably think of no better way of proceeding. It is now clear that all of our small businesses in the Junction are at risk with respect to many serious, unresolved development issues, whose solutions have been allowed to remain as empty as NDC's promises at this late stage. After NDC's current maneuver, I do not see how trust can be restored.

We are responsible for the actions we take in life, and they are character-defining. With the knowledge we now have, we must wisely use the insight from NDC's actions to find a new developer that will be consistent with Takoma Park's values. I also ask that the City Manager be given early retirement or recused from working on this project.

Risa Shaw of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Dear Council and Mayor and City employees,

I know you have worked for years on getting development on the City lot at the Junction. I am in favor of development there. I have been quiet (until recently) on the development planned and worked on over the

development there. I have been quiet (until recently) on the development planned and worked on over the years.

Now I am very distressed, infuriated, and afraid that the Co-op is about to be forced to close. YOU are the ones that will make the decision and your decision will either allow the Co-op to remain open or your decision will force the Co-op to close. PLEASE decide to keep the Co-op open, support it with every ounce of your being, and do what it takes (financially, politically, ethically, morally) to make this happen.

I realize that there are legal issues and financial issues. Creating these issues for the City and the Co-op is nothing less than a tactic by the developer, who has deep pockets and skilled legal assistance.

This developer has done this before, and will continue to do this. I'm glad that they did what they did now so that YOU have an opportunity to see clearly what it means to Takoma Park, our small businesses (all of those at the Junction will be negatively affected if the city lot is closed to parking for them and if the Co-op is closed). If the developer wins this fight, it is just an example of what they will do to the City and other businesses going forward.

PLEASE SAVE OUR CO-OP and other small businesses at the Junction.

Yes, as a tax paying resident whose money may be used to get us out of this mess and SAVE the Co-op, I am in favor of eating the money already spend (my calculation from what is on the City website is that it is under \$200,000), the time and energy and salaries that have gone into this, etc. Pick a new developer who has integrity and honesty.

Again, PLEASE SAVE OUR CO-OP and other small businesses at the Junction.

Joanne Royce of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Dear Mayor and Council Members;

I write to urge you to require NDC to withdraw its Direction to Cease and Desist; Notice of Sub-lease Termination, delivered to the SSTP Co-op on April 16, 2021. NDC's cease and desist order strongly suggests retaliation against and/or extortion of the SSTP Co-op for unfair business benefits that are as yet unclear.

As Sally Ours Kern points out, the timing of communication between the City, NDC and the SSTP Co-op indicate that NDC's cease and desist order was proximately caused by SHA's rejection of NDC's layby plan. Other aspects of these communications likewise provide circumstantial evidence of bad faith by NDC and possibly the City Manager. For example, the March 2021 "Fact Sheet" or "City Report" attributed to the City Manager is unsubstantiated. If in fact the City possesses studies from prior years that cite unsafe delivery operations by the Co-op in the city lot, please share those studies with our community. But even if such studies exist, NDC's recent actions beg the question of why those studies haven't been acted on until now.

As you must know, cessation of the loading/unloading activities and cancelation of SSPT Co-op's use of the Takoma Junction Parking lot will adversely affect operation of the SSTP Co-op. This is unacceptable to me and many of my family, friends and neighbors. This recent action by NDC, in what appears to be coordination with the City Manager, has fortified my resolve to advocate for rejection of NDC's current development plan for Takoma Junction, if not disqualification of NDC as a city partner altogether.

While I continue to strongly support development of Takoma Junction, I urge you to continue your efforts to assure that any such development serves the public interest, ensures public safety, protects the Co-op and other existing small businesses, and gives citizens multi-functional public gathering space at Takoma Junction.

Thank you,

Joanne Royce
Ward 2

Peter McGarvey Menchu Martinez of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Our Family has generally supported redevelopment of the junction through the years. However that support was always with the provision that it in no way harm the COOP which is more beneficial to the neighborhood than any other tenant could be in the proposed development.

Anne Glusker of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

NDC has not acted in good faith, nor has it acted as a respectful prospective neighbor. The termination of the Co-op's use of the adjacent parking lot is outrageous. I urge the Council the extricate the City of Takoma Park from its arrangement with NDC. NDC is not a suitable developer or partner for our city.

Tracy Duvall of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Dear Mayor and Council:

NDC is apparently trying to force you to decide between preserving the Co-op and backing some unknown new proposal that they would devise for Takoma Junction. Please follow your own resolution and the many reassurances given by City officials and protect the Co-op by terminating the agreement with NDC.

This should finally be proof enough that NDC is a cut-throat developer rather than a community-oriented partner. Perhaps you believe the additional revenues would justify continuing to work with them. However, by the City's own (probably bloated) estimate, NDC's existing proposal would bring in less than 1/300 of the City's annual revenues. Is losing the City's most beloved institution (and its revenues) worth this?

NDC's existing proposal also ignored and violated your Resolution 2018-41 in a host of other ways. Now is the time to recognize that NDC is not right for the Junction. Please terminate the City's agreement with them immediately.

Ken Langer of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

My wife and I strongly oppose the development as conceived. It will create total traffic chaos and endanger pedestrians.

Bruce Kozarsky of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Apologies for making a second comment, but I cannot emphasize this strongly enough: The entire premise underlying NDC's brazen power play to evict the Co-op from the City-owned lot is based on a lie.

That lie is City Manager Suzanne Ludlow's "fact sheet" alleging that current Co-op deliveries present a safety problem. It is the municipal equivalent of George W. Bush's WMD lie as a justification for invading Iraq.

The City Manager's "fact sheet" has zero basis in fact and zero evidence to back it up. The Co-op has been receiving deliveries through the City-owned lot for 23 years (and paying rent for the privilege) with no apparent safety problems and no show of concern by the City until now.

Just as with WMDs, the City Manager made up a lie to justify a policy outcome she was determined to achieve by any means necessary. Everything that subsequently transpired to reach this point has flowed from that fraudulent document.

The Mayor and Council should immediately and summarily fire the City Manager and any city staff who collaborated with her on the "fact sheet" for this grotesque breach of ethics. They should not use the the excuse that she's retiring in July to let her off the hook because there is enormous additional damage she can do in the next three months and because it would set a regrettable precedent.

Dio Cramer of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

This project is not in the best interest of the people that live in Takoma Park, or the community that will live here in the future. Listen to the people!

Christine Ruf of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

I am writing to urge the City Council and Mayor to step in immediately and cancel the arrangement the city has with NDC. It has been clear since the start that this developer is only interested in financial gain, and has zero interest in any of the goals of Takoma Park, supporting the coop, and addressing the concerns of the immediate neighborhood about parking, noise, increased traffic, etc. When the Coop first opened nearly 30 years ago, it was with the understanding that the parking lot on the Sycamore Ave side would NEVER BE USED FOR DELIVERIES because of the disruption, safety and traffic issues of getting huge delivery trucks in and out of a small neighborhood street. The City agreed that the Coop could use the side parking lot directly off of 410. I am appalled that after all this time that this continues to be an issue and that the City has chosen this Developer who clearly has NOTHING of value to add to Takoma other than making a huge amount of money. The Coop is one of the shining businesses of Takoma Park and has been so for decades. The Mayor and the Council should do everything in their power to support low development and support the Coop.

Mary Altevogt of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Remove the CITY MANAGER and the DEVELOPER. LISTEN TO THE RESIDENTS OF TAKOMA PARK!!!
This is your job! This is why you were elected!

Rob Valente of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

I believe that most people in Takoma Park want the parking lot at Takoma Junction to be developed--BUT the people want RIGHT-sized development, NOT large development. NDC came into the competitive process saying that they understood this, but they have used each step of the process to push for larger and more

invasive development. They are threatening the forest area on Columbia Avenue, and their design is completely out of scale with the neighborhood (especially the rear elevation in a residential neighborhood). They have ignored safety and parking concerns. Every step of the way, NDC has dismissed the importance of the Co-op as the anchor of the Junction and its importance as a community-scale source of healthy and local food. Their most recent action--denying the Co-op access to the lot for deliveries on the basis of a made-up story about traffic safety--is the ultimate expression of their scorn for the community's needs. The City needs to terminate the contract with NDC now and begin the search (with input from the community) for a more respectful developer willing to work on a more appropriate scale.

Elizabeth Perwin of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

It is outrageous that NDC's plan for Takoma Junction is willing to annihilate a treasured local resource, the Co-op. It is plainly a political move, and the fact that the City of Takoma Park may allow this to happen, is deeply troubling. Please protect the Co-op, and find a plan for the Junction that is in harmony with our values and the nature of our community.

Mary Reardon of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

the co-op is an important place to Takoma Park residents of course. But it also belongs to people like me in Silver Spring and to many residents of DC. People admire its management and its excellent products and service, including local produce. It's unthinkable that a beloved business can be so attacked (almost maligned) by NDC. Hopefully the council and city government will do whatever it takes to make an agreement that is livable and allows the co-op to function.

Elizabeth Wallace of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

If the prevention of the use of the parking lot by the coop is a breach Of contract, as I understand it to be, then why would the city want to grant a 99 year lease to an organization who does so even before the plan is approved?

That's like going ahead and marrying someone for better or worse who cheats on you before the bridal shower.

Joseph Gilday of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

There is no point in pursuing a land "development" plan if, in the process, it poisons a viable, productive, and positive element that has been contributing to this community for years: the Takoma Park Co Op Grocery.

The developer hired by this city to create a plan for the Takoma Junction parking lot must be fired for breaking it's agreement with the city and the Co Op. There is no excuse for their aggressive demand that the CoOp cease using the parking lot for deliveries.

The CoOp is an independent, locally owned employer that provides good jobs for the community. It must be respected. And I expect our city leaders to demand that their agreements are respected by any contractors for hire that the choose to engage.

Daniel Butrymowicz of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

Although I support developing the Takoma Junction lot, I am extremely dismayed by NDC's aggressive tactics and I feel strongly that the City needs to stand by its commitment to protect the Co-op. The Co-op is not regular for-profit business. It is a unique, community-owned resource that cannot easily be replaced.

When the City sought community input during the initial selection process, I and many others supported NDC's proposal over the other candidates because it was the only one that allowed the Co-op to continue to accept deliveries behind the development. The others proposed lay-bys. I was frustrated when NDC quickly eliminated that aspect of its proposal, and frustrated that the City did not push back on it doing so.

It is completely possible to develop the Junction lot and protect the Co-op as a community resource. But NDC has no interest in doing so. So it is up to the city to either force NDC to do so, or sever the relationship.

If the end result of this is that we lose the Co-op, we will regret it.

Richard Vitullo of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

After all this time has passed, NDC has shown its hand: the Coop is in the way of their development. Well, maybe NDC then doesn't get to develop it. That should be Takoma Park's bottom line.

Sue Miller of TAKOMA PARK, MD

Commented on: Monday, April 19, 2021

This developer is not a good neighbor. They could have tried to have relationships with the small local Junction businesses, but never did. They do not seem to understand our community, and have disparaged the community in public. In their plans, they refer to "Silver Springs" and call Healy (Auto) Surgeons a "medical building." They do not seem to care about the fact that the Co-op is an outlet for over 100 small local vendor businesses: bakers, brewers, farmers, chefs. The safety concerns about the layby were first voiced in 2015 when council chose NDC in part because it did NOT depict a layby in their concept drawing. It was a bait-and-switch to maximize rentable space. It is past time to end the relationship with NDC and start to heal our community. And it is past time to call to account the staff who misled Council and residents to promote this project.

Elizabeth Baer of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 18, 2021

I'm writing in support of the Takoma Junction redevelopment project, as currently proposed by NDC. The modest building proposed for the site aims to accomplish a number of objectives for the City and I look forward to seeing what businesses are drawn to the site,.

I am also a member of the Co-op and greatly appreciate having them in the community. However, they are a for-profit business that, in my view, needs to figure out how to operate successfully within the bounds of the space they occupy and pay for.

The Junction project seems to have made accommodations for the Co-op well beyond what is necessary. The Co-op now needs to make it work. It is shocking to me how much time and money has been wasted in the

back and forth over what seems a modest and very reasonable development (and obvious improvement over a parking lot).

Dan Trachtman of Takoma park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 18, 2021

I have reviewed the plans for the project and think they are thorough and address the most important concerns. I fully support developing Takoma Junction as planned and think it will be a great asset to Takoma Park.

Tom Gagliardo of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 18, 2021

What is the response to Community Vision's critique re developer's (NDC) failure to meet City Council's criteria for the project?

Ashley Brookshier of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 18, 2021

I am looking forward to the parking lot becoming a building. I value the coop, but to continue to let this process drag on so the city continues to lose out on potential tax revenue from businesses on the Junction site is an enormous waste. Please do whatever needs to be done to break ground and get something, anything built already. This has taken decades and we need to stop wasting so much time and energy on a single project in a rich part of town. Let's get this done and move on to other issues!

Carol Mermey of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 18, 2021

I am concerned that NDC has not lived up to the goals set forward in the Takoma Junction Development Agreement. It has:

- not secured an anchor tenant
- has failed to include expansion of community use of public space
- has failed to come up with a plan to support the ongoing business operations of the Takoma Park Silver Spring Coop and surrounding businesses
- has not developed a plan to ensure automobile, bus, bicycle, and pedestrian safety as well as improve traffic flow at Takoma Junction.

On the other hand, the Coop is an ongoing community-based business that has:

- consistently provided 50 or so jobs that include good wages and working conditions
- has provided a nation-wide model of how a local grocery store could transition during the pandemic to continue to provide high quality food and grocery products safely to the community
- has provided strong concrete support to many in our community experiencing heightened food insecurity
- has lived up to its part of the agreement with NDC and the City of Takoma Park to use the adjacent parking lot in question.

I think it is time to move on, cut the losses, and terminate the relationship with NDC so we can look to solutions that allow the Coop and other local businesses to grow and flourish.

Dana Haden of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Sunday April 18 2021

I am once again appalled and really angry at the continued bullying tactics of NDC and general disregard for who and what Takoma Park is as a community. While I am thrilled about the idea of developing the junction, I have always thought NDC ignored our wishes and objectives, ignored other businesses, ignored safety, all for the sake of the almighty dollar.

This latest stunt of theirs follows their obnoxious patterns of the past and confirms they know nothing about community building. In fact... I think their true name should be

Neighborhood Destroyer Corp

Gertrud Mergner of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Sunday, April 18, 2021

After all the tricks and shenanigans by the developer NDC it's time to find a lawyer to sue the Manager of Takoma Park

Brenda Platt of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Sunday, April 18, 2021

Please demonstrate your support for local businesses and our local grocery store by doing everything in your power to keep the co-op's doors open. The developer should not be allowed to prevent the store from operating or to make operational threats against this mission-driven Takoma institution. No matter what happens at the Junction, the co-op should be viewed as the anchor institution and protected in all dealings.

Paul Chrostowski of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Sunday, April 18, 2021

NDC's existential attack on the ability of the TPSS Coop to operate is unconscionable and must immediately be countered. This attack was cloaked under the guise of safety at the Junction and appears to be due to two factors – a statement on the City website that these deliveries are unsafe and the SHA letter that demonstrates NDC's proposed design to be unsafe. The assertion that deliveries at the Junction are currently unsafe is unsupported by evidence and begs the question of why the City has not intervened in the interests of public safety over the 23 years that the Coop has operated in this fashion. The action by NDC, suspiciously similar to their previous behavior in the Deanwood incident, does not bode well for the future of the Junction project. It is obvious to this long-time resident that NDC does not respect Takoma Park's values.

The City should first immediately do everything in its power to prevent NDC from carrying out the actions it plans to take against the Coop. If necessary, this should be accomplished by legal action. Second, the City should work to terminate its relationship with NDC. NDC has shown that it is not worthy of trust and has run roughshod over many provisions of the City's resolutions pertaining to the development. Regardless of all the iterations and time spent on this project, NDC has shown itself incapable of producing a design that is acceptable to both regulators and the community. Third, the City should undertake an investigation by independent counsel regarding the misinformation (ranging from public safety to economics to environmental impact) that has been provided to the public about this project and develop ethical guidelines to prevent this in the future.

I sincerely hope that we can take advantage of the often-painful lessons we have learned from this project to develop something at the Junction that is consistent with Takoma Park's core values of environmental sustainability and community development for an improved and equitable quality of life.

Steve Russell of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Sunday, April 18, 2021

I have been a Takoma Park voter and tax payer for over 15 years.

The Takoma Park Co-Op is one of the main reasons I moved here.

Ever since I have been living in Takoma Park I have needed to address the city government with other Takoma Park voters and tax payers to request that the city stop harassing the Co-Op.

Here I am again.

Please get the NDC to restore the situation with the parking lot and the Co-Op.

I am not going away.

Steve Russell

B Arnold of TAKOMA Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

I am a taxpayer and voter in TAKOMA Park

Thé MD Highway Commision has deemed the DC lay-by unsafe.

This necessitates starting a fresh design for the Public Lot at the Junction.

I am requesting the Mayor and City Council insist NDC change their design, and/or reopen new RFPs, as the current design is not feasible.

The city manager is incorrect - and I request she retract her false statement that deliveries to the COOP are unsafe, and that she allow deliveries to continue at the COoP. There is nothing unsafe about these deliveries. Only the lay-by is unsafe.

The community depends on the COOP for basic healthy food choices, and enjoys the COOP as a local commercial anchor for the neighborhood.

Thé Ciry Manager and the Mayor and the Council should remember they are public servants. . You work for the people.

Do not destroy TAKOMA Park or work against its vision.

I will be following the council's and mayor's decisions.

Thank you

Thank you

B Arnold

Manor Circle

Sent from my iPhone

Nathan Forman of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

With the termination of the parking lot lease and threat of eviction, it's clear that the City of TP has picked a development partner who's actively willing to destroy community institutions like the co-op in order to get their profit. That sort of prioritization is not what I've ever known Takoma Park to be about.

Spend more time stopping landlords from destroying good community organizations and less time stopping people from cutting down trees on their property, please.

Dan Mullaney of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

NDC's recent actions with respect to the parking lot next to the co-op are shocking and unconscionable; contrary to everything Takoma Park stands for. And the purported "facts" on which these actions are based do not appear to have any factual support.

We should not be doing business with this corporation. In a transaction like this, which requires trust and an expectation of good faith that a project will be carried out as promised, NDC has demonstrated by its actions that it is worthy of neither.

And if there are fabrications on the City website about the parking lot, they should be taken down immediately, a formal retraction should be issued, and the citizens should be provided an explanation of how they were permitted to be posted in the first place.

Daniel Hellerstein of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

I have been an active member of TPSS since the 1990s. They are a regional institution. They do NOT deserve to be jerked around by some low honor developer. Don't let them get away with blackmail!

Thank you

Alan Cohen of Silver Spring, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

Save an integral part of the community - KEEP THE COOP

Jan Stovall of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

I'm not sure what more the city needs to see from NDC to understand they don't have Takoma Park's best interests in mind. Their latest move against the coop is vindictive and mean-spirited. Does the city really want to continue a relationship with a business that behaves like a bully? It's past time to sever ties with them. Let's put this behind us and develop something the city can be proud of, not something that was built because you were beholden to a developer's interests.

Lea Chartock of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

I urge the City to immediately terminate the relationship with NDC. NDC has consistently operated in bad faith and has always pushed back against the City's requirements for developing the Junction. Their plan has been flawed from the beginning, and now they are threatening the very existence of the Co-op (how they have any jurisdiction to stop the Co-op from operating is not clear). The City must terminate all association with NDC.

Neal Chalofsky of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

As a founding member of the coop (#7), I have been proud and inspired at how the coop stepped up to serve the community during this hard year. The Coop diversified its practices to meet safety needs while keeping their workers employed. Significantly, they opened up their space and provided resources to help with food security needs. We even got national press for how they went online before other stores saw the need. If nothing else, this year has proven that they stand out as a business we want and need in Takoma Park.

On the other hand, NDC's most recent demands show that they are out for themselves and are not interested in serving the best interests of our community.

We ask you to reconsider supporting NDC's development. We believe that their demands on the TPSS Coop violate the sublease of the city lot and reek of vengeance on the part of NDC because of SHA's determination about the lay-by. Since 2018 the Co-op has complied with the terms of their Cooperation Agreement with NDC, which requires them not to oppose NDC's proposed development. Not allowing the coop to continue to use the lot for deliveries would seriously harm their ability to stay in business.

Additionally, we have another concern that we rarely see discussed. As far as we have heard, NDC has no anchor store and no renters committed to moving to the junction. Aside from the anchor store being part of the agreement with the city, we are concerned that once the development is built, the only stores that will be able to afford to come will be chains and high-end stores and the city may be then further bullied into accepting them as the only option to filling the spaces. For as long as we have lived here (almost 40 years) chain businesses have not been encouraged.

I was on the coop's board of directors when the city invited them to move and establish their primary location at the junction. The coop has become one of the foundational institutions in this city that prides itself on its progressive, service-oriented community values.

it's time to "cut the cord" with NDC.

Thank you

Neal Chalofsky

founding member of the coop (#7), volunteer with Small Things Matter, and member of the TP Police Chief's Advisory Council.

Wilbur Wright of Washington, DC

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

Outragious ! The very idea of even impeding the co-op!

- - - should be creating ways to strengthen and grow the Co-op

The Takoma Park Co-operative provides fantastic service in so many diverse ways to the community, to the people as individuals and to the spiritual life of the region !

James Miller of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

I STRONGLY protest NDC's move against the TPSS Coop. This removal of their delivery space is not at all OK with me, and I call on the City Government to put an end to NDCs attack on the Coop.

Thanks

Elaine Emling of SILVER SPRING, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

I am a Co-op member and have been astounded at the way in which the developer is both planning their project and this current activity of denying the Co-op the right to accept deliveries. This latter move, while I, too, object to 18-wheelers, strikes me as retaliation for the continuing Co-op objections to the project.

For 8 years I was a planner in Loudoun County where there are very good guidelines--in both the Facilities Standards Manual and the Zoning Ordinance--for planning a project such as the one currently proposed next to the Co-op. Despite numerous changes, the project is still very faulty, as pointed out by the State Highway Administration. Even a pedestrian or local resident can tell just by looking at the plans that safety and provision of amenities is not foremost in the developer's plans.

Rather cheeky, and outrageous, that the developer accuses the Co-op of the same vehicular dangers as the dangers presented in their development plan!

Jessica Landman of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

Aided and abetted by false claims by CM Ludlow, NDC has now attempted to shut down coop operations to get via deceit and bullying what they could not or would not get by producing an acceptable development design. How on earth can the City Council enter into a 99 years long arrangement with a business partner whose values and behavior are so at odds with ours? And why on earth do you tolerate such behavior from the city manager? End this development agreement and walk away, which you are free to do under the terms of the agreement. Take action to sanction the city manager for her behavior. Save the co op (and our town's reputation and values!).

Sharon Levy of Takoma park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

My husband and I have been members of the TPCoop since it's inception. The Co-op not only provides a tax base for the city and employs 50 people but maintains a diverse and friendly community space with healthy food options.

The current NDC injunction against food deliveries would be catastrophic for the the Coop's continuation. If a compromise can't be worked out, We would like to see the cancelling of our contract with this vindictive development corporation.

Stephen Brown of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

I think it is time to stop pretending the city is objective about the Takoma Junction development. The Community Vision for Takoma plan is so much more in line with what has been the ethos of Takoma. NDC is clearly a much more commercial group as shown by their underhanded fight with the COOP and their out of place , big design. If we are to spend on commercial space at a time when small businesses are struggling to

survive in town, why are we not working to shore up the diverse small restaurants and stores that have made Takoma their homes? The junction is a rare piece of open land in our town and the last thing we need is to build a large building on it.

Katherine Rurka of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

First, let me state that I am a supporter of smart growth and development. I am gravely concerned about what has transpired at the co-op yesterday. They were pioneers at that current location. They have been an integral part of the Takoma community even before they moved to the current location at the junction. I opened my location as a result of the co-op and its draw from the community. They have been a partner of mine for over 25 years. I am perplexed as to the allegations that they have drawn. They are wonderful neighbors and wonderful for the community. I have never witnessed any issues with traffic or other concerns about deliveries to the co-op.

I am also concerned about the lot closing as that will impact other businesses as well. The impact that the NDC is imposing on the parking will hurt all the businesses at the junction.

We have all suffered and worked hard to stay open and afloat this past year. All these front line employees worked tirelessly to keep these businesses open. We did not have the luxury to work from a zoom or remotely. They came in and wore masks for 10 plus hours, answered the non-stop phone orders, ran product to cars and did it not just to keep the business alive but to keep those customers safe and happy and to support the community during the horrible pandemic. It just seems to add insult to injury to kick someone that is lying on the ground. I am horrified about what this will do to all those employees and businesses that are currently there. PLEASE think about the effects that this is having on all of us. WHERE is kind and decent human spirit? Find solutions to have supportive growth not only future businesses but current ones as well.

Ronit Eisenbach of Takoma park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

I am a resident of Takoma Park since 2002, and a Professor of Architecture at UMD. I am an active member of UMD's National Center for Smart Growth- committed to developing and sustaining quality neighborhoods.

In principle, I am in favor of mixed use development of the parcel adjacent to the coop. I believe it will improve connectivity, walkability, beauty and the economic viability of the existing shops. I also understand the tricky dance of finance, multiple stakeholders, agreeing and adhering to principles, inevitable compromise and the complexities of building and the challenges in creating a quality public realm. I have critiques of the current design, but that is not my focus today.

I am posting because I am quite disturbed by the process. Specifically the reaction of the city manager to the news that SHA has ruled that the layby is an untenable solution.

Our community has made it abundantly clear the value we place on the co-op as a commercial and cultural institution, We have insisted that any new development must provide a solution that enables the coop to continue and flourish.

But here we are - with a promise to sustain the coop, matched with a recent pronouncement by our city manager, that a delivery practice in place since 1998 that is necessary to sustain the coop is now deemed unsafe. If this were to be followed, it would effectively force the coop to close.

If the city managers concern about safety, is truly heartfelt, then I would expect solutions from her. What are your ideas to make this safer? Let's do it!! But solutions are not offered. Rather the timing of the "cease and desist" statement appears connected to the SHA decision that the layby was not a viable solution for coop

deliveries,

Given this, it does not seem the city manager has our safety at heart, nor our agreed upon commitment to sustain the coop, but rather she (and I have to imagine she did not write this without support) is holding the relationship with the developer in higher esteem and is willing to employ hardball tactics in our name.

This is unacceptable and untenable. It violates one of the basic principles of the agreement. The coop is to remain and be sustainable.

So the critique of the layby means one thing- something we architects are quite familiar with- it is time to revisit the priorities and current design proposal. That is the way forward. The way forward is NOT to create conditions that will force the coop to close and make the "problem" disappear. For if this promise is broken in this way, it will inevitably create a new and even bigger problem, increased anger, loss of faith in our leadership and sadly an inability for many to see and enjoy the projects potential benefits.

I appreciate that a lot resources and much effort has gone into this project Thank you for that work. Unfortunately we are not yet there.

Time to go back to the drawing board, think creatively and leave no option off the table- including developing both properties together in a way that includes the coop, and looking for other partners to develop the property if our current partner is not amenable to change.

I believe this is possible, doable and necessary. But it requires an honest commitment to shared principles, a willingness to compromise, and transparent action done in good faith

Art Hondros of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

NDC's safety hazard claim is ridiculous. To compare, just up the street at Ace Hardware, a truck the same size parks in front of Mark's Kitchen twice weekly for offloading and no one seems to thwart that. Meanwhile the parking lot by the co-op is far removed from traffic.

In addition, Ace also gets Blue Rhino truck propane deliveries the same way. C'mon, if it's safe enough to haul propane tanks across that roadway, isn't it okay to bring food directly into the co-op's back door? What's wrong with city officials to let NDC get away with this?

Roger Schlegel of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

It is stunning what NDC has done, in particular because the City Manager, in that Site Conditions and Limitations guidance last month, laid the groundwork for NDC to claim unsafe delivery conditions after 22 years of using that same arrangement with the City's approval. The staff made these claims only after the City Manager had been apprised of MCDOT's dismissal of the lay-by plan and quite possibly with knowledge that SHA was preparing to make a determination that the lay-by plan is unsafe. I've seen no record of any citations to delivery drivers, and similar conditions exist in dozens of places around the City and in the County.

The appearance of all this is that staff and NDC want to render the Coop unable to function so that they break their lease with the Turners, at which point NDC can try to get control of that property. If this is true, it goes against the City's stated goals, the development agreement, the spirit of our community, and basic political wisdom. Staff in my view have surrendered their right to be considered professionally neutral in this process. In fact the situation looks corrupt. The City Council must act now to remove the staff from involvement with the project

Jimmy Daukas of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

To Mayor and Council Members,

I imagine you have been inundated with this issue and likely don't want to say anything official. I am just wondering if you find the NDC letter unhelpful and aggressive as I do. A cease and desist order on parking and loading? It appears to be an ill-thought out reaction to the SHA decision--sort of "if we can't do it, then you can't do it." The section "While the letter did not directly address your current operations, it is clear that SHA's concerns...apply equally, if not more so, to your current operational practices." is simply not true. If it were the key issue, all the efforts over the past several years should have been focused on that.

I so wish we could have development that allows for off-street loading and provides commercial and open space--and maybe even helps address affordable housing. And supports the Co-op as the Junction's anchor tenant commercial establishment. Doesn't seem impossible.

Thank you for working to address this.

Jimmy Daukas
7005 Woodland Avenue

Susan Huffman of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

It is not surprising that NDC has refused the Co-op access to the parking lot. Their vision for the Junction is clearly at odds. Please find a developer willing to downscale and preserve the Co-op, protect our safety, provide public space and protect the area behind.

Ryan McAllister of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

On Thursday April 15, NDC attempted to prevent our food Co-Op from using our city parking lot to receive deliveries.

I would like to see an immediate response from the City of Takoma Park protecting the Co-Op's ability to use the lot, terminating the development agreement with NDC, and a commitment from the City that NDC will never again be considered for any contract with the Takoma Park City government.

Dennis Huffman of TAKOMA PARK, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

The legal action against the Co-op is the last straw. Enough is enough! The City needs to find a partner who will honor the spirit (and the physical realities!) of this community. It's time for NDC to be on the receiving end of a termination notice.

Joan Duncan of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

NDC has to go. Their site plan does not reflect the City's mission in so many aspects, and now this latest action is clearly a vindictive move in order to shut down the Co-op and remove an obstacle to their plan. I implore the Mayor and Council to see this petty move for what it is, sever ties with NDC and move forward with a developer/plan which reflects the City's values.

Sue Miller of TAKOMA PARK, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

#DropNDCNow

Years of polite, earnest, informed argument with facts, figures, history, seem to have had no effect on this developer. Hundreds of urgent pleas from small local businesses, Co-op workers and shoppers and vendors (before the gag order), truck drivers, the Fire Chief, have had no effect. County and State reviewers saying the layby is dangerous have had no effect.

Maybe now, with a direct attack on our Co-op, we can do the right thing.

Drop NDC now.

Thank you.

Joan Samworth of TAKOMA Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

There is still time to a STOP the NDC development. This is not the right partner for Takoma Park!

Mike Lastort of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Saturday, April 17, 2021

With the threats they made in the letter they sent to the Co-Op, NDC had made it clear - they are attempting to shut down the Co-Op. It's time for the city to sever ties with NDC and give them the boot. Find a new developer.

The Co-Op has shown how vital it is to our community during the pandemic. Imagine how many people they've fed over the last 14 months. That's to say nothing of how they've shown again and again that they are one of our city's most important businesses over their entire existence.

By contrast NDC has shown that they are predatory and care nothing for Takoma Park and the values we citizens hold near and dear in our hearts.

Cut ties with them now. NDC must go!!

Julie Boddy of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 16, 2021

Julie Boddy <juliemboddy@gmail.com>
10:38 PM (2 minutes ago)
to Jessie

Dear Mayor and City Council,

Please withdraw or support the incorrect and unsubstantiated claims in the Fact Sheet and forthwith direct the NDC to rescind its April 15, 2021 letter denying use of the City lot adjacent to the Co-op for Co-op deliveries. The Co-op has complied with the terms of the Agreement since 2018, but if NDC fails to rescind the demands in its letter by 5:00 PM Thursday, April 22, the Co-op will pursue its legal remedies as appropriate. City residents, communities, businesses and shoppers don't deserve aggravation of this sort.

Sincerely,
Julie Boddy

Beth Grupp of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 16, 2021

I am outraged by the latest actions of NDC and urge the city to terminate relationships with this bad actor immediately I do support rational development at the junction but we cannot allow aggressive scare tactics to rule our decision making. This has no place in our community and we must not tolerate it

Wynette Yao of TAKOMA PARK, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 16, 2021

I've lived in Takoma Park for over six years, and loved it. I've watched in disbelief as the plans for the Takoma Junction have moved forward without addressing the oft-expressed serious concerns over traffic flow, parking, public green space, and most of all, the continued safe and efficient operation of the Co-op.

I haven't been part of the detailed discussions, so I've had trouble understanding why addressing these concerns was always deferred. It just made no sense, but I kept thinking that NDC couldn't possibly be thinking of just bulldozing its way through.

NDC's latest move would appear to show its true colors--the NDC team truly doesn't care what its legal agreements are, the flaws and illegalities of its plan, or the interests of the residents.

I strongly urge the City Council to drop NDC. I'm not against all development--this project seems nightmarishly out of sync on all fronts.

Sincerely,
Wynette Yao

Robert Anderson of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 16, 2021

The decision of the developer to withdraw the use of the large city lot for Co-op deliveries, and the total eviction of the Co-op from the lot in a month, flies in the face of every comment by the city that the city supports the Co-op. As the city has often said, ndc and the city are partners in the development. Thus, city staff should be held accountable for this unilateral action against the Co-op on the basis of unproven claims made by the city manager. (Contrary to her assertions, IT IS NOT ILLEGAL to make a turn across double yellow lines and I TOLD THE COUNCIL AND CITY MANAGER THAT three weeks ago. The falsehood persisted on the city website.) What the council does going forward will determine if they really support the Co-op and the other businesses in the area, or if they and/or city staff have been misinforming the public in the service of a DC-based developer.

Susan Holliday of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Friday, April 16, 2021

Say Yes to Co-op, No to NDC

NDC's latest action to terminate the TPSS Co-op lease is unconscionable.

The City's action, or lack thereof, sacrifices the co-op, a Takoma Park institution and supportive neighbor, to appease a corporate entity that does not have our residents' best interests at heart.

City leaders must intervene with NDC. Sever the City's relationship with NDC if necessary.

Stand up for your residents and what improves their quality of life, not just the City's coffers.

This is just too much.

April 16, 2021

Michele Puryear of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Friday, April 16, 2021

I have recently learned that the private entity, Neighborhood Development Company [NDC] was made the landlord of the City parking lot. NDC is citing a letter by the soon to be retired City Manager, that the Co-Op must cease using the parking lot for deliveries. Suddenly, after more than 20 years, the use of the parking lot for deliveries is unsafe.

I am concerned that a private developer was given control over City property and is now dictating rules about how the parking lot is being used without community consultation. The City continues to subsidize NDC

By the way, I think the City Manager's letter is in error. I am not an expert, but by my search, the law indicates that a motor vehicle may cross double yellow lines to turn left. Many types of vehicles make that left turn into the parking lot on a daily basis.

"...The only exception is if the driver is crossing the double yellow line to make a left turn, which is permitted "only if it is safe to do so." 21-307(d)."

Please address this issue as soon as possible. Clearly, the whole project needs to be re-conceptualized.
Michele Puryear

Steve & Kathy Breckbill of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Friday, April 16, 2021

Mayor Stewart and Council,

You cannot just close your eyes anymore to the actions of NDC. They have been disregarding their agreements with the city from the beginning. There is a long list of actions they have taken that violate very specific mandates that the city set to make sure that the development fulfills our goals. Now we are in a crisis situation with the future of our Coop as well as the rest of the Junction at stake. You must act to stop NDC from going any further with their destructive agenda. Shut down the process now and let's find a more responsible and accommodating developer for this project.

Steve & Kathy Breckbill

Susan Alexander of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Friday, April 16, 2021

Come on, Takoma Park. Do not reward NDC's bad behavior! The next thing we know they'll be knee-capping the Co-op manager. I understand that, for some reason, City staff are very invested in the NDC plan and are finding it impossible to be objective, but it's clear that there are so many things wrong with the project. But now that we see NDC's true colors, is this really the kind of organization we want to have a special relationship with? Is this kind of hardball bullying consonant with the Takoma Park ethos? We don't need this development. It's time to move on and do something else with the land.

Mark Fisher of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Friday, April 16, 2021

Takoma Park should end its relationship with NDC immediately. They have displayed a horrifying willingness to attack a business that has been a vital part of our city's character and economy for over two decades. This attack took the form of an abrogation of the sublease they agreed to with the Co-Op, allowing the Co-Op to use the parking lot for deliveries in exchange for the Co-Op's neutrality on the matter of CVT's projected development.

They have been materially assisted in this attack by Takoma Park's own city manager, who "discovered," four days after the SHA disallowed the NDC plans for a layby, that the present mode of delivery was unsafe after decades of smooth operation. Since she intends to resign soon, her relationship to TP doesn't matter, as long as she steps down from involvement with the City's relationship with NDC.

Karen Lange of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Friday, April 16, 2021

Please end the city's relationship with NDC. The company has sent a letter to the co-op ordering the co-op not to use a city-owned parking lot for deliveries. The company has also given notice to the co-op that it is ending its sublease of the lot to the co-op. This violates an agreement made with the co-op and promises made to city residents. Given this, the city should end its lease of the lot to NDC.

Linda Rabben of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Friday, April 16, 2021

As a result of NDC's unilateral violation of its agreement with the Takoma Park Coop, the city should end its relationship with NDC. The city manager, who apparently precipitated this crisis by posting an unsubstantiated accusation against the Coop, should recuse herself from all matters pertaining to the Takoma Junction project or resign. The City Council should declare its support either for NDC or the Coop, a flagship business in our community. There is no more time to straddle the fence.

Susan Strasser of Takoma Park, MD
Commented on: Friday, April 16, 2021

TEXT OF MY EMAIL TO PETER KOVAR, MY COUNCIL MEMBER:
Dear Peter,

I've just gotten the letter from the Coop describing the new and awful situation that NDC has created I am

frankly, gobsmacked that this would be NDC's response to the rejection of their plan by the state highway people; I guess I haven't played much hardball in the big world, so things like this surprise me.

Now it's really time to do something, please. The Coop obviously can't survive at the Junction without deliveries. And the Coop is a central institution in our community. This developer is not.

Best wishes,
Susie Strasser

Bruce Kozarsky of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Friday, April 16, 2021

I was shocked and appalled to suddenly learn that NDC is now demanding that the Co-op immediately cease use of the City-owned lot to receive deliveries and issued a 30-day termination notice evicting the Co-op from using the lot.

NDC has no grounds for what appears to be a destructive, petty and possibly unlawful retaliative action against the Co-op after the SHA rejected the proposed layby as unsafe.

As you know, the Co-op accepted the layby as its delivery mechanism in its arbitration with NDC. The Co-op has fully abided by the letter and spirit of that agreement and had nothing -- I repeat NOTHING -- to do with the SHA's decision, which was based solely on the facts and the law. Those of us who have argued for years that the layby was dangerous, unworkable and unacceptable have had to make that argument without the Co-op, whose Board members, leaders and staff have pointedly stayed out of this debate.

I urge you to take two actions immediately:

1) Instruct NDC to withdraw its demands and accept continuing a status quo that has been working well for all sides: The Co-op gets deliveries, Junction businesses get free parking and NDC receives money for doing nothing.

2) Terminate the Junction Development agreement with NDC because:

A) It has proven itself untrustworthy and greedy, and unworthy of being the city's partner;

B) It has now explicitly violated multiple City Council resolutions requiring that the Junction project accommodate the Co-op's needs; and

C) The project will not be viable in the wake of SHA's ruling anyway, unless NDC returns to its original plan, which included off-street loading.

Words cannot do justice to how dismayed and outraged I am at NDC's unprofessional behavior. Please sever all ties, partnerships and agreements with NDC now.

Thank you.

Bruce Kozarsky

Evan Light of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Thursday, April 15, 2021

I have been disappointed and dismayed to watch NDC's plan for Takoma Junction devolve as it has over my

6 years living in TKPK and the City Council's seeming unwillingness to press the developer to hold to its original plan.

The original proposal provided more public space, provided excellent affordances for the Co-Op to continue to thrive, and seemed less likely to be a public nuisance by having less impact on local traffic.

Instead, NDC has slowly transmuted their more modest proposal into structure disproportionately enormous with respect to the surrounding buildings, will offer the residents of the Columbia Ave an unpleasant view, of a wall of concrete, removes even more parking options for nearby local businesses including Co-Op customers, and will undoubtedly increase traffic into an already too busy intersection.

I urge the City Council to reconsider this development plan and reject it.

I also strongly urge the City Council to consider MD SHA's Vision document as a viable option. No, it will not be as profitable. But Takoma Park is a residential community! Let's look to provide a better experience for our residents by offering more spaces that they can use and enjoy! That does not align with buildings, such as the NDC plan's, that ruin the neighborhood feel of the city!

Nancy Segal of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 13, 2021

There are multiple reasons why the junction development proposal shouldn't move forward. It is too big for the space, fails to create any green space for public use, will lead to more flooding of homes are behind the project, will create additional traffic and road safety problems, destroys the trees and old growth and new plantings won't mature for at least 15 years, doesn't provide adequate or safe space for coop deliveries, and more. Please develop a proposal that is appropriate for the space, community needs and reflects Takoma Park's values.

Steven and Stephanie Ney of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 13, 2021

We oppose the proposed development at the junction because of the lack of sufficient public event space, dangerous layby, parking garage environmental issues, other reasons cited by Community Vision.

Please Start over using the study group report as a guide.

Thanks

Steve and Stephanie

Judy Kirpich of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 13, 2021

Regarding storm water management:

The City is required to follow the requirements of the MD Manual for stormwater application review.

https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Water/StormwaterManagementProgram/Pages/stormwater_design.aspx

This manual was originally put together in 2000 and updated in 2009. If I am figuring this correctly, we are following storm water measures that are 11 years old and do not account for any of the effects of climate change.

As a resident living at the corner of Poplar and Columbia, I can attest to the flooded streets we currently have since the amount of water routinely overwhelms the input basin that NDC is proposing to hook into. This is a mess already and a disaster waiting to happen.

" Both these systems will treat rain water that will then be piped though the rear of the lot and join an existing stormwater infrastructure at Columbia Avenue and Poplar Avenue."

Judy Kirpich of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 13, 2021

Has anyone looked at the traffic patterns through the neighborhood now that left turns into and out of the property are not allowed. I can see lots of traffic making a right on Sycamore, a right on Columbia and either heading up to Carrol where they can make a right or left turn. The Carroll Columbia intersection already backs up and Columbia is a very steep windy road that will not accommodate large trucks or buses. Just last year we had a commenter bus try to bypass the Junction by cutting down Columbia and making a right on Poplar. It got hung up on the water filtration area and destroyed the cement and plants. We have also had trucks have to back down Columbia when they realize they can not make the steep curve.

Elliot Rosen of Takoma Park, MD

Commented on: Tuesday, April 13, 2021

Members of the community most directly affected by the proposed development have been asking the same questions and getting either no answers or no truthful answers from the City for about two years. The State has clearly expressed that the proposed lay-by is unsafe yet the City staff keep sweeping it under the rug. Most recently there was what I consider a completely cynical attempt to have public input where the issues that matter most, traffic and safety, were not included in the breakout rooms. The City Manager has been found to be lying on the record about the issues and the Council sits by dumbly doing and saying nothing. The developer has been grossly dishonest from the outset and the City Manager and the Council sit by dumbly doing and saying nothing. The City claims to hold environmental issues as very important yet storm water runoff which is already at crisis proportions down the hill from the Coop that will be made far worse by the development are being swept under the rug while the Council sits by dumbly doing and saying nothing. For two years we have been asking that the property be clearly staked out so we can see the boundaries. Nothing has been done. Homeowners who dare to cut a tree down are harangued and fined by the City; yet, the City turns a blind eye to what the developer wants to do. Why is that?? There is nothing new in the community's questions and concerns. Nothing. Yet the City persists in treating us with disgraceful disregard pretending to be listening, pretending to do more research, pretending to answer questions when the facts are that on the face of it... it looks like someone in the City must be on the take from the developer. That is one of the conclusions that I can come to. The other conclusion is that the Council and City Manager are simply derelict in their responsibilities to care for public resources in a responsible and responsive manner. Allowing the City Manager to persist in lying and obfuscating and covering up for the developer is disgraceful. What will it take for the Council to call it as it is? Its a failed concept being pushed forward because why? I have no idea.