

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/21	Erik Dussere	2	<p>I am writing because NDC’s revised plan for Takoma Junction fails to address critical aspects of the Development Agreement and further endangers the survival of the Co-op.</p> <p>The Development Plan specifies that a primary project goal is “support of independent businesses” and a “retail-tenant mix with high priority for local and regional operators.” Despite the extremely favorable rental terms in its 99-year lease from Takoma Park, NDC does not plan to pass on the benefits to local businesses. To the contrary, high rents will favor chain stores and drive up rents in the area, thus jeopardizing the local businesses we already have.</p> <p>They have already named one figure for the rent the Co-op would pay to be its anchor tenant--and then raised it 50%. Another goal is “encouraging alternate modes of transportation in relation to the property”; I fail to see how eliminating the bus stop and city bikes does that.</p> <p>The Co-op is the business most at risk. Rather than make parking and deliveries easier for the Co-op, the latest plan is actually worse: it requires shoppers and delivery people to traverse the length of the development to go between the Co-op and their vehicles (thus increasing the amount of time trucks are parked, as well).</p> <p>The Co-op is THE Takoma Park business we use and need the most. It reflects our city’s values, contributes to the community, and provides decent jobs. I also really appreciate access to food. I don't want to drive to Safeway or Whole Foods every time I'm out of eggs or need a vegetable for dinner—especially if it means I have to drive through or detour around the Junction. Now it looks like we could lose our Co-op only to gain a development that doesn’t meet the city’s original goals.</p> <p>Throughout this process, I have been mystified by the City Council’s continuing faith in NDC, and its apparent deafness to the community voices expressing concern. NDC has not inspired confidence: they didn’t bother to meet with the Co-op before drafting their initial plan; they assumed that if the gazebo across 410 isn't used, we must not need public space; and they asserted in their Oct 17 letter, "The impact of this development will not materially affect the current traffic issues." Yet the Co-op obviously affects traffic, so how could adding something three times its size not?</p> <p>And we are supposed to entrust the future of the Junction to them?</p> <p>Sincerely, Erik Dussere</p>

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4/21	Walter Malakoff	5	<p>Like many other Takoma Park residents have done, I'm writing to express my deep concerns about the NDC Takoma Junction Site Plan.</p> <p>I agree with the sentiment that "truly progressive communities should aspire to do creative public projects on public lands." But from what I can see, this project does not do this. Instead, Takoma Park, despite our progressive traditions, has basically ceded control of land owned by our City to a private developer which needs to maximize its income. The result has been a traditional development project - a private retail office building with underground parking and a small public gathering space - a project that would look more at home in Bethesda than Takoma Park.</p> <p>Will the project, as it is now configured, lead to the development of small local businesses? Will it only make traffic problems in the immediate area worse? With its higher commercial lease rates, will the project lead to further gentrification and additional financial pressures on existing businesses? And what impact will the project have on the coop?</p> <p>I urge the Council and the Mayor to rethink this project and go back to the drawing boards. I realize how difficult it is for such a project to gain approval in Takoma Park and how difficult your job is, but that's Takoma Park and the input is part of what makes our City so special.</p> <p>I thank you for your continued service to our community.</p> <p>Respectfully, Wally Malakoff</p>
4/21	Alex Perkins	?	<p>I support the Takoma Junction redevelopment. Economically, it will generate tax revenues that will offset the need to raise taxes/pay for social programs that support the most needy among us. Communally, it will create more local spaces for residents to spend time together. And environmentally, the develop of the space will clean up the dump the lot sits on, eliminate a heat island, and offer more walkable retail spaces so folks can avoid driving to shop and eat outside the area.</p> <p>I like the co-op and shop there. But the co-op and the minority of voters who support its views should not be allowed to hold hostage a common sense, thought-through development proposal that will benefit the whole community.</p>
4/21	Ruby Snyder	2	<p>This sounds exactly like what takoma park needs! Thanks for putting together an exciting plan that will become an asset to the community!</p>

*Ward is included if it was provided or can be looked up by address. NR denotes non-Takoma Park resident commenter. Question mark ? denotes not enough information provided. NA denotes that ward is not applicable