

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/23	Paul Mackie	2	<p>I plan to be at the meeting Wednesday night, but I hope the Council will support the long-overdue development of Takoma Junction. I'm worried the anti-development folks have an extremely outsized voice in this debate. I would bet they are a very small percentage of our community. And I also believe they have a bottomless supply of misinformation and just plain strange taking points (not least of which was some of their shocking antics at the Co-op this past weekend). I spoke with one of them about her belief that the co-op is a true "placemaking" ground central. While the co-op might be a part of what we view our Takoma Park's image as being (local products, community owned), the business is also leading the charge in preventing our wonderful communities from having a walkable, vibrant place to congregate. That is the core of any definition of placemaking. I know that most of my friends and neighbors in Forest Park and Spring Park and many of the other areas near Takoma Junction are itching to have more to enjoy at that location.</p> <p>Frankly, the co-op is a bit of a joke amongst all the people I know in Takoma Park. The prices are too high and they don't have that great of a selection. I'm not saying it should go away. It can be very convenient to pick up a few essentials. But their hardening stance and belief that they seem to need a massive non-placemaking parking lot for their 18-wheeler deliveries (aren't massive 18 wheelers the opposite of local fame deliveries?) is unacceptable.</p> <p>Just think how great it would be if the co-op and its handful of NIMBY supporters who envision some sort of 1960s' ideals would listen to the new era of TP residents (many of whom, like me, study exciting new kinds of transportation and urbanity for a living) instead of preventing healthy, fun, and exciting development?</p> <p>I for one would love to regularly take my family and children to improved options at TP. There should be no fear that TP doesn't have enough of a vision of itself to prevent Wal-Marts and CVSs from occupying that space. Those kinds of businesses would never succeed there. But that seems to be a major fear of the anti-development crowd.</p> <p>Happy to discuss further as we can hopefully come together soon as a community and turn that eyesore into something we can be proud of.</p> <p>Thanks for your service, Paul Mackie</p>
4/23	Beth Macnairn	2	<p>I live in Ward 2.</p> <p>I am writing to express my support for the Takoma Junction plan. I attended the pop-up event this past weekend. While I share many concerns about the project with those who oppose it (safety, pollution, etc), I am overall in favor of the plan.</p> <p>Thank you, Beth MacNairn</p>
4/24	Roland Weiss	3	<p>I oppose any vehicle access to the site from Columbia or Sycamore and I believe neighboring residents would as well. The Council has opposed such access in previous development proposals.</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/24	Roger Schlegel	3	<p>Dear Council Members,</p> <p>In thinking about the potential development's interaction with the overall Junction business district, I'm very concerned about a possibility that you could call the "Parking Tipping Point." This scenario could cause a loss of business activity at the Junction due to the combination of doubled commercial space and introduction of neighborhood parking restrictions. My thinking here is based on seven years of closely observing the parking supply and demand at the Junction, including counts of all available spaces in the district and in the surrounding neighborhoods during my time on the Task Force.</p> <p>Here's basically how I imagine that it could happen:</p> <p>"THE PARKING TIPPING POINT":</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Right now, Takoma Junction is operating optimally. Businesses are humming and about to be fully occupied. - Right now, parking is just barely manageable, with lots of overflow parking of customers and employees taking place in the neighborhoods, esp. Manor Circle, Sherman, Grant. - The goodwill and forbearance of residents near the Junction has been crucial to the supply of parking for the businesses. - The new building would DOUBLE the commercial space in the Junction while adding a maximum of 18 more parking spaces. - Subtracting new employees in the new building and any Coop space allocations, we'd have essentially the same supply of off-street parking at the Junction as we have now ... - ... Except that off-street parking would be PAID parking, and it will be inconvenient to get in and out of (because of the proximity to the Philadelphia Avenue light, the smaller spaces, and the longer walking distance). - The parking garage would also be a low-ceilinged, relatively dark place that some drivers might avoid for safety or emotional reasons. - Result: Doubled commercial space at the Junction = increased demand for parking with same supply/less desirable parking at the former City lot. - Then comes the TIPPING POINT: More Junction visitors start looking in the neighborhoods for convenient parking. One by one, starting with Manor Circle, the neighborhoods vote for PERMIT PARKING ONLY. - Employees and customers flood the underground lot, with overflow capacity stealing spots in the Coop lot. - There's no longer enough parking supply at the Junction, so businesses that depend on convenient parking (Bikram Hot Yoga, Richardson School of Music, Takoma Animal Clinic, etc.) decide to move elsewhere. - As businesses leave, the parking demand drops to meet the supply. - We are left with a perhaps-occupied NDC building but with under-occupied properties elsewhere in the Junction. Please give consideration to the possibility that this "Parking Tipping Point" could occur. Thanks for your consideration! <p>Sincerely, Roger</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/24	Roland Weiss	3	<p>I was able to review the charts from the two presentations but I could not attend the meetings or watch the videos (low speed access).</p> <p>Statistical simulation analyses like these come with an associated uncertainty which is usually quantified with confidence intervals, ranges, etc. I believe the Council needs to understand these uncertainties and their impact before making a decision.</p> <p>I infer that all of the 10 simulations assumed the same numbers for the traffic generated by the development site (AM 47 cars in, 12 out, PM 70 in 94 out). It would also be prudent for the Council to understand how sensitive the alternative solutions are to changes in these numbers, including increases over time if the development is successful.</p>
4/24	Mike Ashford	2	<p>I support the development of Takoma Junction as currently envisioned, noting the additional planning that has been noted as necessary to finalization, such as traffic (motorized, bicycle and pedestrian) management. Thank you!</p>
4/24	Erika Carter	2	<p>Dear City Council,</p> <p>I like the Takoma Junction site plan under current consideration. The current plan is much better than the 3 story alternative under review last year and looks like it provides a decent amount of space out front for informal gathering. I could imagine my kids (when they're a bit bigger) planning to meet up with friends there, grab a snack, and hang out.</p> <p>I think the layby is a reasonable solution for deliveries, especially if a no idling rule could be enforced (not sure if that's possible for refrigerated vehicles).</p> <p>A solution for the co-op's (or other tenants') trash does need to be found. Trash out front is not a good option for encouraging pedestrian traffic. Traffic at the junction is clearly a mess and simple solutions don't appear likely. I looked at the slides from the traffic studies and no particularly good option stood out to me... I don't think it's worth postponing redevelopment to deal with the traffic but even if we don't redevelop the junction the traffic is likely to just get worse as NH Ave development proceeds with purple line arrival. You're doing the right thing to be thinking now about what traffic improvements can be proposed.</p> <p>Please vote to accept the site plan. Takoma Park needs to get rid of that parking lot and put the space to beneficial use.</p> <p>Sincerely, Erika Carter (P.S. As an aside, my wish list for the community space would include some greenery (small tree even) and a small water feature - allowing room for some kind of seating.)</p>
4/24	Chrissie Juliano	3	<p>Rather than literally regurgitate the same talking points as my husband, and many of our friends, I would like to second all of these points.</p> <p>Bottom line, it is crucial that the city move forward with developing the junction. As with any issue, the "voices of no" always are louder and the Coop, which feels under threat, has managed to rally their troops to wage what, in many ways, has become a false information campaign. The Council, in my opinion, has done more than enough to work with the Coop to attempt to placate them. Enough! I urge the Council to move forward with the work that NDC has proposed taking into account the traffic study and all the important questions that both of you and other members of the Council have continued to raise throughout this process. At some point, however, this work simply needs to move forward trusting in the process that so many have shepherded through to date and having faith in the selection that was made in partnering with NDC. With a 9 year old and a 5 year old I do hope that the process will move forward quickly enough so that we'll have the opportunity to enjoy a thriving Junction before they go off to college!</p> <p>Thanks for all you do, I hope to be able to join one of these meet/greets soon to discuss this with both of you further.</p> <p>Best - Chrissie Juliano</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/24	Jeffrey Trunzo	3	<p>Folks,</p> <p>Kay was very deeply on my mind yesterday at the presentation of the two traffic studies of Takoma Junction. As you may know, State Highway Administration (SHA) crews were on site this past weekend, FINALLY, connecting the signal infrastructure that has been in place but not activated for a very long period of time.</p> <p>The new signal controls and additional signals have been activated, and SHA crews are on site doing some signal-phasing optimization work. This morning, I delayed my start to work and went through the intersection twice around 7:15 am. The change appears to be a transformation for the better, but please observe for yourself.</p> <p>I also encourage you to watch the repeat presentation of the traffic studies at Council this Wednesday, April 25, starting at an earlier time, 6:30 pm, with child care.</p> <p>Back to Kay, as you may know, she was passionate about so many things, but the Junction held a special place in her heart, and she provided most of the fire and energy to get the new direct cross walk installed and something, anything, done to make the signals work better for both pedestrians and vehicles.</p> <p>Some of Kay's hopes and dreams and passion have been realized this week.</p> <p>We are thankful for her love of Takoma Park and all its residents.</p> <p>Jeff</p>
4/24	Sunny Widmann	4	<p>Comment (Simple statement of support, please include your street name.)</p> <p>I support the development of Takoma Junction as it will bring more vitality to TP. - Sunny Widmann of XXX Mississippi Ave</p>
4/24	Allison Belevire	2	<p>My husband Seydou and I would like to share our opinion for tomorrow night's council meeting on the Takoma Junction development. Unfortunately I have an evening commitment in Baltimore and he will be putting our sons to bed, so we cannot attend in person.</p> <p>We are in support of the City moving forward with the NDC developers. We know many folks have been involved in the development planning and discussion effort over several years, and don't believe the City gains any benefit from continuing to drag out out this process. The NDC proposal offers much improvement over the existing parking lot, and we don't think we should "let the perfect be the enemy of the good."</p> <p>We are Coop members, and do hope the Coop continues to do well; however we feel that the City needs to progress with NDC to create a Takoma Junction for All.</p> <p>Sincerely, Allison & Seydou Belevire, Ward 2</p>
4/24	William Wickert Coulter	3	<p>As a former member of the Takoma Junction Task Force, I was keenly aware of the challenges facing the development of the city lot. I must applaud the Mayor and Council for persevering despite all the complaints coming from the opposition to the current development plan.</p> <p>In the Community Vision group's recent Facebook posts, I've sensed that their agenda is more about protecting the Co-op's interests than serving the needs of the neighborhood. The Co-op had years to present a plan to make this endeavor work for their business and they failed to do so, until it was too late. I hope you will see past the organized detractors' shallow arguments and pursue the NDC development.</p> <p>Regards, Billy Coulter</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/24	Sally Ours Kern	2	<p>I have a few questions about the Traffic Group’s slide presentation as presented on the City web site: https://documents.takomaparkmd.gov/government/city-council/agendas/2018/Takoma-Junction-Redevelopment-Traffic-Study-Presentation-20180423-TheTrafficGroup-rev.pdf</p> <p>1) Councilmember Searcy already raised the question about slide #18 - when Phase 2 is green - it doesn’t indicate how it would allow southbound Carroll Avenue motorists to enter the CO-Op parking lot - Instead it implies that pedestrians are only crossing 410.</p> <p>2) Slide #19 - when phase 3 is green - it doesn’t include green arrows to indicate that eastbound motorists on 410 can turn right onto Sycamore. It implies that the pedestrians only are using the crosswalk crossing Sycamore at that time. Is this the case?</p> <p>3) In Slides 17, 18 & 19 is Grant Avenue closed to incoming traffic from Carrol & Sycamore? Although I see a tiny black arrow indicating one way down Grant, it appears that no large green arrows indicate that that is a motorist option, and at the same time the pedestrian crossing is indicated as happening across Grant during those three slides. I heard the first traffic study recommend to close Grant to traffic, but I didn’t hear The Traffic Group say it.</p> <p>4) If a child is walking to school westbound on 410 towards Sycamore - (from Woodland for example) -it looks as if they would cross the following crosswalks during these light phases: begin when phase 3 slide is green - slide 19, as East bound traffic is traveling East along 410. wait through phase 4 wait through phase 1 during phase 2 cross from in front of Coop parking lot to island while Carrol traffic is heading southbound. Walk across the new island wait through phase 3 phase 4 cross through to Spring Mill and proceed down Grant sidewalk. I would be curious how long this is expected to take?</p> <p>5) These heavily travelled neighborhood crosswalks will have crossing guards to help shepherd pedestrlans during their paid elementary and middle school hours, (not high school right?) But they will not be there when kids return from after school activities & sports. I have concerns about pedestrians crossing at the same time as moving traffic. I imagine that high school kids sprinting down 410 to the HS bus stop at the laundromat will be tempted to exit the north triangular point of the park and skip the new longer trek through the moved crosswalk to Carroll.</p> <p>6) How do any of these new configuration timings affect or relate to the lights & crosswalks at Philadelphia/Carroll - in front of the firehouse?</p> <p>7) On slide #30 - Bus Stop Locations - I do not understand why they do not acknowledge that there is an existing Bus Bay (F4) in front of the "SITE" which will be relocated. Similarly, on slide #31 - there is no yellow star to indicate an existing bus stop in front of the site. I see that they propose moving that bus stop in front of the Co-OP</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/24	Sally Ours Kern (cont'd)		<p>8) In slides #11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 & 20 I notice that blue arrows indicate entry and exit from the new development garage access but no arrows are indicated to the Co-Op parking lot. Perhaps having the Co-Op parking lot delineated would help make sure that all roads could continue to access it.</p> <p>9) Today I was across from the firehouse waiting to cross the crosswalk walking East across Philadelphia. I pushed the walk button, but with the new SHA timing I received a pedestrian walk signal indicating to cross. As I was crossing the street a bus turned down into my path almost hitting me. I realized that the new traffic pattern allows the westbound traffic on Carroll a green light while the pedestrian crosswalk light indicates to walk. Was this an error is this the new normal? In other words, in theory, are motorists buses, etc. expected to yield right of way to pedestrians in crosswalks? If this is the case the city may want to appoint another crossing guard at that intersection for school children crossing.</p> <p>10) I have heard public testimony from bus riders that they would appreciate a covered bus stop at the stop in front of the development site which will be relocated. I see that in slide #31 that The Traffic Group recommends repositioning that bus stop in front of the Co-Op where the bike racks are. I see that in slide #22 the exiting tractor trailers will be very close to that recommended bus stop.</p> <p>11) I would think it might be valuable information to consider the traffic impact on buses traveling westbound and eastbound along 410 from New Hampshire that residents in ward 6 would take to reach and return from the Metro, and how that timing is expected to worsen in the next few years when the new residential developments are expected.</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/24	Sally Ours Kern (cont'd)		<p>12) I heard a Councilmember (maybe CM Kostiuck?) ask if there were to be a new traffic island couldn't more of it be apportioned to widen and enhance the sidewalk for the Carroll Avenue storefronts? I believe TTG's answer indicated that the island serves dual functions: to decrease the length of the pedestrian crosswalks, and also separating the southbound traffic on Carroll. Couldn't this also be achieved by shaving off a parallel amount of the new island triangle and giving that to the Carroll stores while still retaining TTG's concept, shape, crosswalk lengths & lane widths? I would imagine that having tables outside the Spring Mill Bakery & the new Seoul Food would further the Junction Re-development goals of "improving the aesthetic appeal of the district" and "act as a stimulus to the commercial district and locally-owned, independent businesses." I would also think it would be good given that those businesses will be losing the four parking spaces currently in the B.Y. Morrison park.</p> <p>13) Why is there a double tiny white arrow in the southbound lane on Carroll headed to Sycamore instead of a single arrow? Is this just an error or am I missing something?</p> <p>14) If the bike racks are to be relocated to the island perhaps that should be an added icon in the plans? Where is the relocated Art Deco Gas Station facade to be moved?</p> <p>15) I did not see any indications in either of the junction impact neighborhood studies that indicated the current problem that residents on Woodland have exiting from the top of Woodland and turning left - as motorists queuing at the junction light ignore the break in the double yellow line, and ignore the egress sign. I have often lobbied for a white line indicator to be marked for Westbound 410 traffic showing where to allow egress for Woodland traffic. It would not slow traffic as a stop sign or light would. Further, traffic often backs up past Jackson. I wasn't sure if the lengthy queuing up to and past Jackson was reflected in the traffic measurements. In other words - how far back on 410 - did they set up their traffic cameras? Did they fully take the full line of traffic into consideration?</p> <p>16) On the AMT Traffic study - The narrow definition of cut through traffic did not make sense to me. Slide 4 mentioned that Task 1 was to study cut-through traffic through 8 intersections in the neighborhood including for example, number 7) - 410 at Woodland Avenue among others. But the Engineer's explanation seemed to indicate that they only counted the cars which took one specific by pass route marked in yellow through the neighborhood. It has been my experience as a Woodland Avenue resident that Westbound commuters along 410 bypass the junction light by turning down Woodland, turning again on Beech to go up Sycamore, or to go down to Elm and take a right to access another of the neighborhood streets, and not go through the long wait at the Sycamore light and then "cut through" to Sycamore. The study seemed to disqualify the other neighborhood and surrounding streets as "cut through traffic." One can even tell by the many DC license plates of the cars that they are not of neighborhood origin.</p> <p>Thank you, Sally Ours Kern</p>
4/24	Elizabeth Keyes	3	<p>Dear Council:</p> <p>I am writing in support of the junction redevelopment. Overall, I am thrilled that we will putting the ugly parking lot to better use, in an environmentally thoughtful way. I also think the Co-op will benefit from increased foot traffic. I like the size and style of the proposal, and I hope it can move forward quickly.</p> <p>My biggest concern is for traffic, but I also believe that the impact will be relatively small at the junction itself, mostly because the junction is already terrible during morning and evening rush hour.</p> <p>If it gets marginally worse, I don't think we will notice (but please see my tangential note below re neighborhood speeding).</p> <p>Please note, this is so important to me that I am taking time to write even while arranging for a secondary opinion regarding cancer treatment that requires travel to a Texas specialty hospital. The voices against this proposal are loud, but many of us quieter voices care deeply too.</p> <p>Thank you so much for your time and attention.</p> <p>Liz Keyes</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/24	Bernardo Kleiner	?	<p>Hello, As a Takoma Park resident for over 12 years, with children in elementary school (heading soon to middle), I want to let you know that my family would very much like to see the city move forward with the Takoma Junction project. I write this to implore you to please vote in support of the plan. This is a good move for the community! Thank you, Bernardo Callaway Kleiner</p>
4/24	Margaret McDonnell	?	<p>My name is Margaret McDonnell. I've lived in the beloved "between the creeks" neighborhood on Trescott Avenue since 2010 and have grown my family of five here over the last 8+ years. I'm not able to attend the hearing tomorrow night because of a long-standing work obligation but I wanted to weigh in with my support for the Takoma Junction Redevelopment Plan. I'd love to see a LEED-certified, community/family-friendly area that provides new jobs and small businesses for Takoma Park residents. It would take better advantage of the property/space, is closer and more convenient for "between the creeks" and nearby neighborhoods, and would provide more options for all residents. I often shop at the Co-op and appreciate their contribution to the community but feel like many of their concerns have been considered and incorporated into the plan and at this stage, it seems like they are holding progress hostage and playing off fear/providing misinformation to Takoma Park residents, which is unfortunate. Thank you for listening to constituents and for doing what's right for all of Takoma Park. I'd love to see your support behind the Takoma Junction Redevelopment Plan. Best, Margaret</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/24	Kelly O'Keefe	?	<p>Thank you for all you are doing for us in Takoma Park.</p> <p>I wanted to write to you about the proposed development of the Junction. I was involved in the discussions very early on in the process and haven't been able to dedicate as much time to it as I would like lately. I shared my thoughts with Tim Male when he represented us and I'd like to share my thoughts now with you:</p> <p>1.) I support development of the Junction</p> <p>2.) Two years ago and now my biggest concern is traffic. I think traffic studies will be done and really do hope that great efforts will be made to reduce traffic, particularly given that Centro Nia is coming to the area. It means more traffic, undoubtedly, but that intersection is such a mess that I'm hopeful some changes can be made to reduce the impact of traffic.</p> <p>3.) The co-op is a for profit business. Full Stop. And I think - from my limited view - that the developer and Takoma Park have bent over backwards to try to make it work and the co-op either hasn't had the business acumen to negotiate (or know when to take a deal) or it just has acted in bad faith. I'm not too sure which but I do know that everyone needs to remember that it is a for-profit business.</p> <p>4.) The co-op serves a very limited number of people in our community. It is great to have it there but let's do away with the notion that those in our schools on free and reduced lunch (36% of all students !!!) have parents shopping at the co-op. The co-op is a place of privilege so it is really not true to say it serves the whole community any more so than any other business coming into the new space. So, then, let's develop the space and allow businesses to come in and thrive.</p> <p>Thanks for listening. Kelly</p>
4/24	Jennifer Oliva	3	<p>I live on Carroll Ave right near the Junction and Co-op. I am also a member of the Co-op and I support the development of the city lot for a few reasons. 1) I believe it will be good for the community bringing in jobs and new businesses. 2) The parking lot is an eyesore, not environmentally friendly, and a waste of space. 3) It will also bring business for the Co-op. While I support the development, I do think the issue of deliveries for the Co-op and other businesses that may go in could be problematic. I don't believe this decision should be unfairly influenced by a loud dissenting group, while they are loud I do not believe they represent the view of a majority of citizens.</p>
4/24	Andrea A. Wells	2	<p>My husband and I were happy to see you at Sunday's pop-up event. We saw that you were busily engaged speaking with other folks who turned out for the event. We did want to follow-up, as this was an issue of importance to us when we voted for you, that we are in support of this development project and look forward to the energy and resources that it will bring to our community. We are members of the Co-Op and will continue to support them in the new configuration, however, we disagree with the perspective that some residents share about endangering the Co-Op. We believe there have been ample efforts made on the part of the City and NDC to address, negotiate with, and include the Co-Op throughout this process.</p> <p>We appreciate your representation of Ward 2.</p> <p>Kind regards, Andrea and Matthew Wells</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Anand Parik	?	<p>I write to urge you to at least push for significantly more open and public space than described in the recent rendering of the Takoma Junction site plan presented to the Council.</p> <p>While I've learned to be suspicious of anything the leaders of the "A Junction for All" neighbors state, I am also not on Board with all the points from the Community Vision team.</p> <p>It would be good to know</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) can the Council nix the currently discussed Junction plan? 2) if it can, how much money would be lost? 3) how much can NDC be pushed to continue to decrease the size of the building without it backing out? 4) what has and what can the City do to cap commercial rent costs in Old Takoma and Takoma Junction - which I wonder may drive many of our local, eclectic, traditionally Takoma Park businesses out? And, what effect would NDC's plan do to commercial rent space at the Junction? <p>This point is moot, but I like the gritty-ness of the Takoma Park I moved to 15 years ago - with Taliano's, the old Savory, Summer Delights, TJ's, Bruce and Nas's computer repair shop, and I like the convenience of the parking lot at the Junction. I can pull over on my daily commute home from work for a quick drop off/pick-up at the dry cleaners, drop a UPS return off at the Business Center, pick up a few things from the Co-Op. I am much more less likely to do so if I have to snake around/under the proposed building.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p> <p>- Anand</p>
4/25	Angi Rivera	NR	<p>I realize the decision has already been made for the development to exclude any residential, but I wanted to express that find it incredibly disappointing that there has been such resistance to this development from the Takoma Park community and the Co-op. There is barely enough demand to keep the retail strip across the street open, let alone more retail without providing additional patrons. The office space will, of course, provide limited additional demand during the day, but the incorporation of a residential component would have been extremely beneficial for the area, particularly for-sale condos. The Takoma Park area is starving for transitional housing between for-rent apartments and expensive single family homes. Providing increased diversity to the housing stock in the area would provide significant benefits. An increased stock of condominiumlike units, in which residents can permanently invest would not only increase the patronage of our main street retail units but also provide a greater diversity in demographics (age, economic, race, etc.). It is a shame that so many residents in what is supposed to be a progressive and openminded community are so incredibly short-sighted and resistant to change. As a sustainability consultant, I find this completely contradictory to all of the environmental, social and economic sustainability values that are touted by Takoma Park residents. Unfortunately it appears to be just lip service. I sincerely hope that future development proposals on other sights do not meet such resistance so they may better contribute to the responsible, healthy and sustainable growth of the area that is rightfully a priority of the City.</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Roger Schlegel	3	<p>Dear Council Members,</p> <p>It's fascinating to see how this site plan, even as it has been revised, appears to go through contortions to reach a semblance of meeting all of the objectives expressed by the Council and the community. By now, we've heard so many comments, but just to take a step back and think about this ...</p> <p>The objective was to leave the wooded area preserved, but the site plan has to push out into the wooded area by 4600 square feet for the building footprint and some unspecified additional amount (at least 1500 square feet) for bio-retention.</p> <p>The objective was to maintain sufficient parking to serve the needs of the business district, but the site plan doubles the commercial square footage of the district while adding only a handful of spaces, once we account for employees of the new businesses.</p> <p>The objective was to promote bikeability, but the plan doesn't provide for a bikeshare dock and includes only space for locking about four bikes. It also forces cyclists to squeeze between traffic and delivery trucks.</p> <p>The objective was to increase walkability, but the plan doesn't provide soil for large street trees, increases the hazards to pedestrians, relocates the bus stop to an undetermined place, and under one proposed traffic alternative, could require the relocation of the main crosswalk to the very far end of the block.</p> <p>The objective was to provide attractive retail amenities for the district, but the plan requires high rent that is likely to lead to businesses that aren't accessible for a large segment of our community.</p> <p>The objective was to harmonize with the architecture of the historic district, but the plan calls for a building ranging from 38 to 45 feet high which can be rendered as a classic piece of architecture but actually has a ridiculous 20 foot high awning and might be the tallest two-story building in our metropolitan area. It also would block our sunshine for many hours of the day.</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Roger Schlegel (cont'd)		<p>The objective was to create a meaningful, welcoming public gathering space, but the plan provides only a small amount (possibly 1200 square feet) of a public space zone right beside the roadway, and this space includes planters and is also mysteriously drawn about 5 feet out into the current roadway. Look at the overhead views and you will see this is true.</p> <p>The objective was to respond to challenging traffic conditions, but the plan places the driveway such that as soon as three cars are stopped at the Philadelphia Avenue signal, there's no way for drivers to turn left in or left out of the parking garage.</p> <p>The objective was to help the Coop maintain or enhance its operations, but the plan requires the use of a truck lay-by, locates the garage elevator as far as possible from the Coop, and doesn't clarify parking availability for Coop's customers.</p> <p>Those last three points are interlinked. Because NDC apparently sees it as unaffordable to set aside space for a standard loading dock, the truck lay-by becomes their proposed solution. This in turn pushes the driveway for the garage to the far end of the building, which in turn squeezes the public space zone down to what looks to be 1200 square feet.</p> <p>(But we can't be so sure: note that NDC's overhead diagrams show the public space pushing about 5 feet out into the existing roadway! Also, note that the painted lines drawn for the pop-up event make the lay-by lane about 2 feet narrower than it should be and move the building front a few feet back from where it should be along much of its length. This makes the sidewalk and public space zone appear wider/deeper than they actually would be.)</p> <p>Having considered, measured, and observed this site and its situation very closely for the past eight years, I'm not certain I can point the finger at NDC for the shortcomings in the site plan. In fact, it may be that we shouldn't blame any "side" in this controversy; we should blame the SITE and its SITUATION. This is just a really, really hard site to work with, especially given that we wanted it to do all of the things I've mentioned -- and given how it fits into the context of the Junction as a whole and the surrounding commuter routes and neighborhoods. Perhaps -- and I think it is up to the Council and staff to determine this -- perhaps there's really no way for a private company, even with generous lease terms, to meet all of those objectives and still make a reasonable profit.</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Roger Schlegel (cont'd)		<p>If that is the case -- if NDC has reached the limit of how well it can approach the City's objectives for the site -- then this has been a valuable four-year exploratory process to see what a private developer, working in good conscience and with favorable lease terms, could do with the site. And what would follow is that, if we really want to achieve all of those objectives, we need to consider how much public money we want to put into the development, alongside NDC and perhaps even the Coop. At other critical places in town, we've been willing to invest public money to accomplish things that would benefit and enhance our community: the Civic Center, the Library, Public Works, the Recreation Center, and Flower Avenue Green Street, to name a few big projects. I would like to ask the Council to pause and consider whether this site, and its situation, are calling for a justifiable public investment to properly develop this public land in the heart of our community.</p> <p>The place to start would be with a decision about the parking. The City has provided most of the parking for the Junction for many years. How much can, or should, the City pay to keep providing that parking in a developed site? How much parking should there be? Should it be on the surface or underground? How should it be priced? Will this parking assume residential parking restrictions in surrounding neighborhoods? These are important questions, and the City should answer them with an eye to present needs as well as to future desired travel patterns. If the City pitched in a significant amount to address underground parking -- or simply reserved a necessary amount of surface space for parking -- this could lay the groundwork for right-sized development and revitalization.</p> <p>Assuming that underground parking is determined to be a need on the site, a rough breakdown of how the surface area might be allocated -- at least as a starting point for discussion -- might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10% for deliveries and (if needed) underground parking access. 20% for continuous public park space, with frontage on Carroll and access to the woods as well. 30% for potential Coop expansion (with NDC and the Coop perhaps partnering in this aspect). 40% for NDC development of retail and office space. <p>Creative options for overlapping or interlocking the above uses could be considered.</p>
4/25	Roger Schlegel (cont'd)		<p>I'd like to emphasize again that my number one concern with this revitalization effort is that it be equitable. That is to say, whatever development we have at the Junction should actively work to undermine -- not reproduce or exacerbate -- patterns of unequal access and participation in our community. In my observation, Old Takoma, especially the two nodes within Takoma Park proper, does not offer a sufficient range of shopping and dining options for people with low or moderate incomes; and in my observation, these shopping nodes are white-dominated spaces in a community that is only about 50% white. We must change these conditions, and we must use an opportunity to redevelop our public land to help bring about those changes by creating affordable businesses, safe street crossings, easy access to transit and other alternative modes of transportation, and a large, welcoming, and beautiful public space that can be used for all kinds of events and activities.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration of this possible way forward, and thank you for all of your careful listening and deliberation in this process.</p> <p>Sincerely, Roger Schlegel</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Daniel Hutton	2	Please move forward with the planned development of the junction. I understand that there are drawbacks such as increased traffic and challenges for the coop. I feel that the benefits will by far outweigh the drawbacks.
4/25	Linda Carlson	1	<p>I'm writing to express my very strong hope that the Council will reject the latest NDC site plan. I've read Resolution 2017-53 and believe the proposed plan fails to meet most of its requirements. One that seems to me to be a show stopper, along with related safety issues, is the item that requires "Accommodation of delivery, trash and recycling vehicles in a manner that does not cause traffic problems, optimizes public enjoyment of the site, addresses the needs of on-site tenants, and provides reasonable accommodation to the TPSS Co-op."</p> <p>In an October 25, 2017 letter to the City Manager, the TPSS Co-op Interim Manager provides some detailed data on truck deliveries to the Co-op, describing a typical week (Oct. 16-22, 2017), when there were daily deliveries as follows: Monday (18), Tuesday (13), Wednesday (4), Thursday (20), Friday (21), Saturday (10), and Sunday (5). On two occasions, two 18-wheelers overlapped. The proposed lay-by is 130 feet long, too short to accommodate two 18-wheelers at 73.5 feet each. According to the letter from the Co-op manager, it can take an hour to unload an 18-wheeler. That figure is likely to be higher in a scenario requiring the truck driver to wheel pallets one-by-one from the lay-by, due to the longer distance to the Co-op delivery area. Delivery trucks can't show up, leave if there's no place to park, and come back later, as they have other stops to make. They will be tempted to double park, exacerbating an already dangerous traffic situation. If the development houses a restaurant or café, presumably its delivery trucks would need the lay-by as well, competing for space with the Co-op. I noticed that in the NDC traffic study slides, the data on truck deliveries to the Co-op refers to just one day, a Wednesday. If the week of Oct, 16-22 was a typical one, Wednesday is by far the lightest day.</p> <p>The presence of so many delivery trucks and their proximity to the small public space in the NDC drawing isn't likely to help to "optimize public enjoyment of the site." People sitting in that outside area will be subject not only to the fumes and noise of existing traffic, but also to the noise created by delivery trucks (described in the Oct. 25, 2017 letter from the Co-op to the City Manager).</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Linda Carlson (cont'd)		<p>As many of you did, I attended the meeting on April 5 where State Highway Authority representatives listened for close to 2 hours to dozens of residents as they shared stories of serious dangers to pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles in the Junction. I thought one of the most compelling speakers was a man (Ed Muller?) who drives a delivery truck (not even one of the biggest ones, according to someone who knows him and attended the meeting), who stated that from the cab of a truck, it's not possible to see children or short people. (He also confirmed the likelihood that truckers will double park to save time). I spent an hour at the Junction during morning rush hour recently and witnessed case after case of dangerous situations, and many children crossing Ethan Allen and Carroll Avenues on their way to school. On school days, they have crossing guards to help protect them before and after school. On weekends and outside school hours, children old enough to be on their own are more vulnerable. If they live in neighborhoods east of Carroll Ave., they need to safely navigate Takoma Junction to get to and from the library, sports fields, afterschool activities, etc. The dangers are real; last Fall a pedestrian was hit while legally crossing Carroll Ave. near Ace Hardware, when a car tried to pass one of Ace Hardware's delivery trucks on the left.</p> <p>Another safety issue is the extremely poor visibility for those exiting the proposed parking garage, whether turning left or right on Carroll, an issue driven home at the pop-up at the Junction on Sunday, April 22. I asked a city staff person if there could be a light there, and she said no. I also overheard someone saying that placement of the entrance/exit as proposed would be in violation of state law. Unfortunately, I didn't get his name or the exact details of the law or regulation, but this seems worth investigating. At the meeting with the SHA, the Fire Chief cited the existing problems with traffic and the effect on the ability of the Fire Dept. to respond to emergencies as quickly as possible. He expressed concern that, in situations where seconds can make a difference, the proposed development will make it even harder for them to react as quickly as needed.</p> <p>Finally, I just learned of an alternative proposal that would seem to satisfy people on most sides of this issue and address many of the concerns that have been raised. It's the idea of a "designated area next to the Co-op that would be used for off-street deliveries and trash/recycling pickup in the morning, and converted to public use for the rest of the day. It would be large enough to host public events, concerts, food trucks and other functions. But it would require a smaller building than the one currently under consideration" (quoting from an email from Bruce Kozarsky of Willow Ave.). It's possible this could be achieved with a building similar in size to the one NDC originally proposed to the City. I know it will be painful to start over, but that pain will be temporary. The benefits to the community of rejecting this plan, or requiring NDC to dramatically revise it, will be long-lasting.</p> <p>With appreciation for all the time and energy being invested in this important issue, Linda Carlson</p>
4/25	Sara Hayden	1	<p>I am writing to express my overall support for the Takoma Junction Development, and to encourage the City Council to continue to move the process forward with NDC.</p> <p>I also support the City and NDC working with the SHA to evaluate alternative designs to the 410 and Carroll Avenue intersections to alleviate the current congestion as much as possible. Any alternative should be mindful of the historic Pavilion, but I support its relocation if it means an overall better design that is more efficient and pedestrian-friendly.</p> <p>Thank you for taking my comments into consideration, and thank you for all of your work!</p> <p>Kind regards, Sara Hayden</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Linda Kolko	3	<p>Dear City Council of Takoma Park:</p> <p>As per my letter of October 9, 2017 below, I would like to reiterate my support for the redevelopment of Takoma Junction as proposed by NDC. I have been very impressed by the plans they have submitted and enjoyed visiting the Pop Up on Sunday to get a better feel for how the new development will look. I have lived on Sherman Ave in Takoma Park for 32 years and joined the Co-Op when they moved to the Junction.</p> <p>I support the points below stated by the Junction for All group (A Junction for All.):</p> <p>First: The Council has afforded everyone multiple opportunities to speak at meetings, talk directly to Council members and write comments. The process has continued through two mayors, three elections, and a clutch of new members. The city government is doing its job, moving at a slow, deliberate pace. It is difficult to imagine a more democratic process.</p> <p>Second: We have an attractive proposal for a site plan from the Neighborhood Development Company, which has done its fair share of listening to the Council, and input from citizens. Can more be done to improve the plan? Of course, that's why the Council is engaged.</p> <p>Third: Should we look carefully at the impact on traffic? Of course. The Council will be digesting data from not one but two traffic studies, prior to making a decision. The key question isn't whether traffic will grow -- because we know it will no matter what we do. It's whether we can handle the incremental change that the revitalization would bring.</p> <p>Fourth: Does the Co-op have a chance to thrive? Yes, it does. A development that brings more people to the area -- diners, shoppers, strollers. That can hardly be bad for a specialty grocery store. Imaginative thinking can solve problems like delivery and trash haulage, if the Co-op seizes the moment.</p> <p>Above all, let's take a cool look at what's being proposed, try to improve it and continue to move forward.</p> <p>Thank you Mayor Stewart and City Councilmembers for allowing the many voices and ideas of Takoma Park residents to be heard and supporting such a democratic process to incorporate many of the suggestions. However, now is the time to move forward with the redevelopment of Takoma Junction.</p> <p>Thank you. Linda Borst Kolko</p>
4/25	Linda Kolko	3	<p>I wrote you on October 9, 2017 expressing my support for the redevelopment of the Takoma Park Junction. I am disappointed that some of my neighbors are again trying to delay and even stop the process moving forward. I want to reiterate that I have been a resident of Sherman Ave for over 31 years. I joined the TP-SS Co-op when it moved to the Takoma Junction and shop there often. I look forward to the redevelopment of Takoma Junction.</p> <p>I am confident that we will find a way to ensure that the Co-op remains viable while allowing other small businesses to thrive in a new reconfiguration of the space. I support the vision of our Mayor Kate Stewart who has carefully and thoroughly laid out the issues related to the future of Takoma Junction in her letter below.</p> <p>We have tried for many years to turn Takoma Junction into a viable commercial and community space—let's move forward and work with NDC on its concept plan to redevelop Takoma Junction as our Mayor has so eloquently envisioned in her letter below. Also, the City of Takoma Park cannot continue to expend so much valuable energy and resources on going beyond reasonable efforts to accommodate the vocal few who want no development at the Junction, which is totally unacceptable to me and many residents. The City Council needs to have time to focus on other critical issues affecting our community.</p> <p>Thanks for all the time and effort you have expended on the Takoma Junction redevelopment I wish you the best tonight and look forward to the City of Takoma Park moving forward on the Takoma Junction redevelopment.</p> <p>Linda Borst Kolko</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Chris Simpson John Lorenz	1	<p>After reviewing documents, plans, and posts about the proposed Takoma Junction development, we conclude that the site plan submitted by NDC is still seriously flawed and urge you to oppose it.</p> <p>By and large, we find Michael Shuman's economic review of March 13 to reflect our thinking: There is a deficit of public benefit in the current plan and a surplus of potential hazards.</p> <p>The two concerns that stand out most to us are (1) the planned development does not reflect the "community and character" of Takoma Park, and (2) the lack of adequate and appropriately sited access for deliveries and trash removal, for both the Co-op and the new businesses, is fatally detrimental in ways that have been well documented.</p> <p>Both of these problems would be partly addressed by having a smaller scale development, one that allowed more public space in front, and which relocated deliveries and trash removal to the rear, away from a busy public thoroughfare.</p> <p>Moreover, on the "community and character" question, new businesses should be required to be locally owned, as Mr. Shuman argues.</p> <p>Finally, a word on the Co-op. To have an independent grocery store in our community is a very precious thing. We are long-time members of the Co-op, but our support is not so much for that institution per se, but rather for the amenity of a walkable grocery store. The best way to realize this is to preserve and support the one we already have.</p> <p>This space belongs to us, the citizens of Takoma Park, and our first priority should be to see that it is developed for our benefit. Compromising these benefits for promises of financial return is a short-sighted way to manage development. In the long run, financial benefits will find their way to the treasury as our community becomes more and more attractive, driven by uncompromising adherence to our home-grown vision and values.</p> <p>Chris Simpson John Lorenz</p>
4/25	Eric Lundgren	3	<p>I support the Takoma Junction redevelopment</p>
4/25	Kari McDonough	2	<p>I just ask, as you consider development options, that you consider pedestrian safety, especially those of young children that walk by that space on their way to/from school. There are things we can do, regardless of development option, to make things safer from the coop-Woodland Avenue stretch, to include: reflector polls or other types of barriers, cleaner and wider sidewalks.</p> <p>Thanks for your consideration</p>
4/25	Kelly Mills	3	<p>I cannot attend the meeting tonight because I have a 6 month old and her bedtime conflicts with the evening meeting. However, I would like to express in writing that our family supports the development at the junction. We live on Sherman and are eager and enthusiastic about the prospect of a desolate parking lot being replaced with a wonderful gathering place for the community.</p> <p>Thanks, Kelly Mills</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Jumana Musa	6	<p>Dear Mayor Stewart and Council members,</p> <p>I am aware you received a communication from Jaime Koppel regarding the increase in budget to hire additional police officers to enhance “community policing” and rather than recycle her points in different language I want to endorse them. I would like to add my concerns about the use of police technologies in Takoma Park, their impact on the community and the budget.</p> <p>I am not clear on whether or not there is a place to find a full accounting of the surveillance tools and technologies in use by the department. From my review of the police website it is clear that they police department uses body worn cameras and automated license plate readers, but I am unclear what models and to what ends they are being used. I have reviewed the policies and found them to be deficient, which can be the topic of a future email, but what I was unable to discover is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is this the totality of surveillance tools and technologies used by the department? 2. What is the cost of these tools / technologies / what percent of the police budget is going towards these tools / technologies? 3. What is the process by which the community is made aware of the cost and intended use of these technologies, and where is the opportunity for community members to have input? 4. Does the council or the city have an audit process whereby they assess the cost of the technology, the utility of the technology, whether there is a more cost effective option and whether the tools and technology are worth the expenditure? <p>As these tools and technologies are gaining prominence they are claiming larger percentages of a department’s budget and they also have serious civil rights concerns. Addressing the use of these tools / technologies and their costs (both financial and human) should be considered before asking residents to provide more funding for the department. Finally I would like to renew my concerns about the junction development. I continue to be concerned by the proposals put forth by NDC. I also reach Michael Shuman’s blog and the memo that I believe he submitted to the council and he raised many issues which I think are ripe for discussion.</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Jumana Musa (cont'd)		<p>My key objection is first, and foremost, the issues that delivery will cause to an already difficult intersection, one that is difficult and at times unsafe now, before development and changes to delivery routes, etc. I cannot see the lay by as a reasonable accommodation for coop deliveries for several reasons. I know that it has been pointed out that ACE hardware uses a similar method of getting deliveries, but I don't think it is a fair comparison. The coop trades in perishable goods, which requires much more frequent deliveries. I find the idea that adding a layby for trucks to deliver food just off the street won't exacerbate traffic and create serious safety concerns totally lacking in credibility. It is a recipe for an already bad intersection to get much more treacherous. I believe it would be irresponsible for the council to move this proposal forward with the layby option as a "solution" to deliveries. I believe it will cause problems and not solve them. I know many people have discussed this in the context of the coops ability to survive, and I am a long time coop member but my overarching concern is the safety of the people and children who walk this intersection every day, and I believe this plan puts them at risk.</p> <p>I also continue to be disappointed in the proposals that are put forth. What was sold as a development that would include public space for the community to gather has become retail space and private use components that will leave a glorified sidewalk as "public space" and a relocated bus stop. As someone who regularly rides the 16 bus and uses the stop it seems like the "public function" of the development is being driven more by private interests than public benefit. It is not reflective of the various plans that we as residents were shown to vote on various scenarios of development. I am not anti development but I am pro safety and pro smart development and community space. I don't believe the plan as presented reflects either a priority on the safety of the community or the accessibility of the space for community members.</p> <p>Thank you for considering my concerns, I will be unable to attend tonight's meeting but I am following both the budget discussion and the development discussion and will be interested in hearing back from you.</p> <p>With Warm Regards, Jumana Musa</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Catherine Tunis	?	<p>I am very concerned with the direction the developer is taking with the proposed development at the Junction. Early on in the process, at one of the open houses, a representative of NDC personally promised me that they would be building an underground garage with room for an 18 wheeler to turn around and make deliveries to the Co-op's basement. This is now not what they are planning. Early on in the process, NDC promised a reasonable rent rate for the Food Co-op. Now this has been raised considerably to a rate unaffordable for the very profitable Co-op.</p> <p>It seems the City is the victim of "bait and switch" marketing by NDC. This is unacceptable. I am dismayed to hear that staff and some Councilmembers think this is OK and want to move ahead with the project. Really? This reminds me of where we were with the building of the new Community Center nearly 20 years ago. At that time the project was to cost \$6 M, with grants that would leave the City with a cost of just \$2 M. How much did we pay? Somewhere between \$15 and \$20 M? I remember a Council meeting where we were told that there wasn't enough money for us to have an elevator installed but the "good news" was that there was enough to build the elevator shaft... The problems with that project were largely blamed on the incompetence of the then City Manager. But we also had failings of a citizen committee who failed to inform the Council and public of problems and staff that were in over their heads. The only thing that got the City out of that mess was when Mayor Williams, the only Councilmember with some construction experience, stepped in to personally manage the project. It seems we are in the same predicament again. I don't see any malice with staff now, but it seems they could be in over their heads. They don't seem capable of saying "no" to NDC and their "bait and switch" tactics. It seems we need a serious adult--one with both construction and contracting experience--to step in and take control on behalf of the City and the public good.</p> <p>I strongly recommend that the Council take action to put a serious and competent adult in charge of this project. If there is no one on Council now with these qualifications, I recommend that Council appoint a citizen, or small group of citizens who collectively can pool expertise, to take charge and serve as special advisors to Council.</p> <p>If Council does not take these strong actions, I fear we will find ourselves in the same situation as we were with the Community Center--we won't get an elevator, but we will get the shaft.</p> <p>Catherine Tunis</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Elena F. Alschuler	2	<p>I would like to express my support for the Junction development.</p> <p>I live on Aspen Ave between Lincoln and Boyd, only three blocks from the Junction site. My husband and I bought our house about a year ago because we fell in love with the quaint small town vibe and diverse liberal culture here. We thought it would be the perfect place to raise our family - and we now have a three month old daughter, so I had to sneak out to come here! For what it's worth, I also have a degree in urban planning from MIT and have worked on neighborhood plans for places ranging from Greensboro NC and Austin TX to the Dorchester neighborhood of Boston and Stapleton, Staten Island. I specialize in energy efficiency in the built environment and my last position was at the US Dept of Energy, before I left to work at a start up that makes a smart window that has both energy efficiency and occupant health benefits.</p> <p>If we truly believe in sustainable, healthy and equitable development then we should be celebrating this project. It is on an existing underutilized parking lot in a commercial area less than a mile from the metro - an ideal site for dense walkable uses that will reduce the car trips that local residents would need to make to shop or dine elsewhere. In fact, there is good reason to believe that the increased activity in the area will actually benefit the co-op as people will pop in unplanned when they pass by. Moreover, the tax revenue from these commercial uses will offset the need for residential property tax increases, keeping Takoma Park more affordable.</p> <p>I am excited about this development because I think we actually need more local shopping and dining choices. The representative from the Takoma BID confirmed my personal experience with compelling research that this area is underserved by retail and there is plenty of demand for current and new businesses to be successful. In fact, neighborhood revitalization efforts around the country have shown that having a mix of uses, including public space and retail, is actually more effective at creating successful neighborhood gathering places than large, un-programmed open spaces.</p> <p>I am very impressed by the amount of community engagement and thoughtful planning that the council has undertaken to date. In addition, the developer is clearly committed to a long term working relationship with the community, as the design is in keeping with the neighborhood character and they have agreed to provide public space, sustainable features etc in response to community feedback. The traffic studies conducted by both the consultants look very thorough, thoughtful and unbiased. I think best solution can be objectively selected based on these analysis, and it could result in an outcome that's better for pedestrians, cyclists and cars than the current traffic situation.</p> <p>I have run community meetings myself and unfortunately the nay-sayers always turn out in greater force, so I encourage you to take a broader look at sentiment in the community, as all my local friends support this development.</p> <p>I trust that the council will be able to resolve any outstanding questions about traffic flow and other technical details in an expeditious manner so we can get shovels in the ground and enjoy the improved Junction as soon as possible.</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to consider my input.</p> <p>Best, Elena</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Laura Barclay	?	<p>Dear Mayor and City Council, Following please find the OTBA's support of the Combined Site Plan that I read tonight. The Board of Directors of the Old Takoma Business Association has voted to support the Combined Site Plan for the Takoma Junction Development Project with the following expectations: -that thoughtful improvements should be considered to better serve the existing businesses, community and future customers - and that the City Council will continue to hold the developer to the terms of the agreement and proceed with the process as defined. We know that these discussions have been difficult. To be clear, the Old Takoma Business Association values the TPSS Co-op's important place in our community as a thriving small business. We also value the mindful development of the Junction which we know can be compatible with the Co-op's continued success. We are encouraged to hear that the Co-op and the developer are in discussions again as an expanded Co-op has been one of the project goals from the start. Additional businesses in this shopping corridor will fill a gap in our commercial district, activate the street front, add increased density, vibrancy and customers which will benefit all businesses on the block. To continue to achieve this positive impact, we are cautious about increasing the set back of the building any further, especially in front of the proposed anchor restaurant, which may minimize its visibility and the positive contribution that an anchor restaurant will have on the entire project. I would also like to make the following points: Point 1: New commercial space will provide additional opportunities to meet the unsatisfied retail demand that exists in our community as supported by the recent Takoma Retail Market Analysis. Point 2: The current density of businesses at Carroll and Laurel in Old Town, contribute to the success of all businesses in that area per the Takoma Retail Market Analysis Point 3: The community spends a considerable amount of money outside of our community as supported by the Takoma Trade Area Overview - this is economic support that we can bring back to Takoma Park. Point 4: Current leases for new buildings or newly renovated spaces in our community run from \$43-\$50SF and are currently leased primarily by independently-owned local businesses. Also, our commercial spaces are almost ALL fully leased at this time. Point 5: The current density and scale of the proposed building is approximately the same size as 7000-7008 Carroll Ave (Trattoria Da Lina to Middle East Cuisine) Point 6: Excessive set-backs and large parking lots do not activate a street front nor contribute to the vibrancy of a block – examples in our commercial district include the CVS on Carroll St, NW and the 6930 Carroll Ave office building. Last point: The proposed public space in the site plan exceeds the size of the existing patio space at the Gazebo. We are confident in your leadership to continue to guide the project and to demonstrate that Takoma Park is a welcoming place for both existing and new businesses and future development projects. Laura Barclay</p>
4/25	Mark Burlinson	3	<p>I fully support the development of this vacant, non-pervious parking lot. Please move forward as quickly as possible. Mark</p>
4/25	Rachel Hardwick		<p><i>Letter Submitted on April 25, 2018</i></p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Emily Dufton	3	<p>I'm Emily Dufton. I live at XXX Sherman Ave with my husband, Dickson Mercer, and our toddler son Henry. I'm writing because unfortunately I can't come to the city council meeting tonight, but I'd like to show my support for the Takoma Junction redevelopment project.</p> <p>I admire the ways in which Takoma Park residents debate and consider all aspects of this new project, and I believe strongly that the best design will prevail. As a whole, our family is very supportive of the project, and we're excited about the possibilities it contains. We live around the corner from the Junction, and can't wait for the liveliness (and livelihoods) it will offer. I'd like to thank the council for being so considerate of many residents' hopes and fears, and wish you the best of luck with the continued work. Please let me know if we can be of any further assistance, and many thanks for considering our support for the project.</p> <p>Best wishes, and happy Wednesday, Emily</p>
4/25	Joan Duncan	3	<p>While I think it would be great to have some development at the Junction Site, safety must be the first consideration in any plan. Traffic at the Junction is now challenging and the current developer's plan for the Junction will result in traffic gridlock, illegal maneuvering and safety hazards for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians (including the many neighborhood children who cross this intersection to and from school). This is not only a quality of life issue for Takoma Park, but an urgent life, safety issue as well. The proposed lay -by is an inadequate area for large delivery vehicles to maneuver and exit from the site. Exiting from the proposed underground parking into oncoming traffic will also be hazardous. This maneuvering will slow or stop traffic in the area which is already over-burdened by stop lights. Emergency response from the nearby fire station will be compromised because it will be impossible for fire and rescue vehicles to move quickly through the Junction area with this increased traffic and the likelihood that service vehicles and cars will be backed up and/or double parked in traffic lanes. Parking at the Co-op will be a further challenge and will be similar to the impossible parking at Whole Foods in Silver Spring, where customers of surrounding businesses park for free making it difficult to find parking anytime for shoppers. I have given up on the Whole Food store because of the amount of time I have driven around the lot in search of a parking. The Co-op lot is much smaller and shoppers will drive through the lot and exit after not finding a space- most likely making an illegal turn to circle back around to the area or park in the surrounding neighborhood to find free and close in parking. All of the traffic problems will be further compounded by the development of JNA school site into a new child care center which will serve a community outside of Takoma Park. That could be an additional 665 + rush hour trips a day to the area. This latest development must be taken into account when calculating increased traffic at the Junction. Again, we have a bad traffic situation at the Junction as it stands and the proposed Junction development, and increased traffic from the JNA site will further compound the ability to move safely and efficiently to and through the area.</p> <p>Thank you, Joan Duncan</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Gary-Geck	3	<p>As a resident of Ward 3, I encourage you to proceed with the development plans being presented by NDC. These site plans, as well as traffic improvements at the Junction, will be a positive impact on Takoma Park in the coming years and decades. Both the site plans and the intersection improvements require additional detailed modifications, but first the commitment to the projects need your vote of support.</p> <p>I have 30+ years of professional experience as a civil engineer (PE) and urban planner (AICP) in the DC and Baltimore region. The Takoma Junction development itself will not be an extreme change to the character of Takoma Park, but is part of an evolution of urban form in US cities that is occurring with the younger generation. Please do not succumb to the negative approach of the aging baby boomer generation that decimated the urban environment with relentless sprawl, and instead vote for cost effective, greener, denser development.</p> <p>Gary Geck</p>
4/25	Caleb Gibson	2	<p>As a resident of Ward 2 (Trescott Avenue--and a member of the TPSS Co-op--I would like to register my support for the development of the city-owned lot and the Junction intersection. I have been encouraged by the businesses that seem to be making it work on the north side of Carroll, but this part of town has struggled for years to thrive as a unified community/retail destination. Adding space for dining and parking and improving traffic congestion and walkability would be a great benefit to the neighborhood.</p>
4/25	Janet Max	2	<p>I'm not sure yet, due to child care, if I will be able to attend the meeting tonight. I had the opportunity to attend the pop up last Sunday and as a 10 year Ward 2 resident, and 10 year co-op member, I am in favor of the of the development plan and will hope you will cast your vote in support of the plan.</p> <p>Thank you for your time, commitment and support for continued progress of this wonderful town.</p> <p>Janet Max</p>
4/25	Alison MacDonald	?	<p>Work travel has prevented me from joining you tonight at the council meeting. I am sorry to miss it and thank the council for allowing public comment. I've lived in Takoma Park for 10 years and have enjoyed watching the vibrancy of our city grow over that time. My husband and I chose this area to raise our children because we loved the proximity to downtown DC, the tight knit community and the diversity of the city.</p> <p>I am very excited about the recently-released plans for Takoma Junction and urge the city council to move forward with the plans with little delay. The junction is truly the geographic center of city and a revitalization of the cityowned parking lot would give the community a gathering point within walking distance of all the Takoma Park neighborhoods.</p> <p>While I appreciate that there are issues that need to be resolved with the plans, given the financial investments the city has already made and the potential long term financial benefits, I believe not only will the development add to the vibrancy of the Takoma Park, but it is also the fiscally responsible action to take.</p> <p>Thank you for your service and dedication to our city.</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Jacqueline Moore & Michael Blau	2	<p>First, good thoughts being sent out to you, your ailing relative, and your family, Mayor Stewart. Now, on to some concerns regarding the current plan to redevelop the Takoma Junction area. I think you can do better. I think you SHOULD do better. The citizens of Takoma Park are counting on you to do better.</p> <p>1) The orientation of the building should have been taken into consideration at the outset. That's just basic city planning and Architecture 101. A tall north-facing building will create too much shade to make the area attractive and useful to the public. The one sad little ornamental tree in the plan won't be able to do much good if it is incorrectly sited.</p> <p>2) The lay-by is much too close to the public area and public seating options. I do not want a side of diesel fumes with my food and beverages. How can an asthmatic child or a person with pulmonary health issues find this public area a great place to spend time? The traffic plan to route trucks in a loop is crazy. How about if we have a fleet of diesel trucks do some loops in front of your homes to see if you really think this is a wise decision?</p> <p>3) The Junction is already far too congested. The current plan only adds vehicles to the already crowded roads.</p> <p>4). The current plan blithely ignores restrictions put in place in our state to ensure good environmental practices. The slope of the hill behind the proposed project is too steep to allow the successful implementation of the current plan.</p> <p>5) The details of the bio-retention feature have not been worked out to show that they will not create a breeding ground for mosquitoes.</p> <p>6) The TPSS Co-op has been a mainstay of our community. Stop treating them like dirt under your feet.</p> <p>You are moving too fast and completely ignoring your own resolutions from October 2017. Slow this turkey down and do it right. Thank you, Jacqueline Moore & Michael Blau</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Pierre Perrolle	1	<p>I have followed closely over the past two years the presentations and public discussions of the Takoma Junction development. We have heard many (perhaps too many!) comments for and against the position of the Co-op, for and against the proposals of NDC, and claims of "what the community wants". At the risk of adding the last straw to the huge volume of public comment, I send you my views.</p> <p>After digesting all this input and attending the very useful "on-site" program arranged by City staff last Sunday at the Junction (thank you), I come away with three basic conclusions. I hope the Council will give consideration to these concerns and the suggested strategies for addressing them.</p> <p>1. The currently proposed building is much too massive. Despite marginal compromises made by NDC and its designers, the proposed building is much too massive for the neighborhood and the Historic District: The facade and the elevator tower are too high and too close to the street/property line. The project should match the rest of the neighborhood, in particular the strip of commercial buildings along Carroll Avenue (the "Votaw tract") as well as the flanking and facing buildings: the Turner Building, the Healy Surgeons, and the trio of commercial entities across Carroll Avenue. The latter are not necessarily attractive buildings, but they set the scale of the area, which is also in proportion to the nearby residences on Carroll (in both directions), Ethan Allen and Sycamore. The Firehouse, a public building with history, should remain the sole dominant structure of the area. The proposed development should be lower than the Firehouse and should not be more than twice as high as the adjoining and facing structures. This is not a plea for more public space (although it would be nice to have), it's an argument for building on a more appropriate scale and avoiding the often deceptive character of attractive architectural drawings (especially those marked "not to scale".</p> <p>How to address the problem of scale: The City Council should stand its ground with NDC and demand major changes rather than marginal compromises. The Council is setting the rules in the interest of the City's residents and should not fear pushing back — way back — on the current proposal. In particular, the current Council should not feel bound by the views of the previous council. The current Council has the advantage that new Councilmembers can bring a fresh look to the process. Please use that advantage.</p> <p>2. The lay-by is a disaster in the making. Takoma Junction is the City's most challenging traffic and transportation area and the situation should not be aggravated by introducing a lay-by space in front of the development. Trucks, large or small and delivery or waste pick-up, should not constitute the de facto facade of the building. The reasons have been amply discussed: traffic, pedestrian safety, air pollution and esthetics. And (need it be said?) no dumpsters on the sidewalk at the head of the lay-by or anywhere else.</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
	Pierre Perrolle (cont'd)		<p>The Co-op has a recognizable problem caused by deliveries by large semi-trailer trucks. But the Co-op appears to have been intransigent on this issue, has not demonstrated any effort to find a solution, and has simply laid the problem at the feet of the City and the developer to resolve. The convenient set-up provided by City's vacant lot serving as a huge turn-around space for large trucks (I'm not referring to the leased loading-dock space) is an issue that appears to have been swept under the rug. The reality is that the Co-op will have to devise a solution to make-up for the loss of that turn-around space.</p> <p>How to address the problem of trucks: The City Council should not accept the lay-by proposal. As to smaller delivery trucks and waste-removal trucks, which presumably other NDC tenants will need to accommodate, NDC should be asked to design a solution that makes use of the back of the property or the underground level rather than a lay-by. The Co-op can either use their existing lot and smaller trucks (as they once did) or work out an arrangement with NDC. I'm sure many retailers in many towns and cities across the U.S. and elsewhere have found solutions to similar constraints.</p> <p>3. The City should protect itself against long-term SHA designs. The State Highway Administration (SHA) has had a long-standing problem with Takoma Park: From the SHA perspective, Takoma Park constitutes a 1.35 mile two-lane bottleneck along the otherwise four-lane 22.5 mile East-West highway (MD 410). The City's main shield against widening of MD 410 is the County's Historic District designation. Any proposed redesign of the highway by the City, even a minor one, will undermine the strength of the T.P. Historic District designation vis à vis the SHA.</p> <p>While some intersection modifications may seem attractive in the short run, they are likely to be very costly in the long term if the SHA eventually presses hard for the widening of Philadelphia and Ethan Allen Avenues and cites as precedents City-supported modifications at the Junction (such as elimination of B.Y. Morrison Park as well as making room for a lay-by lane on Carroll Avenue).</p> <p>How to address the threat of the SHA widening MD410: The City Council should reject the proposals resurrected by the traffic studies to add a traffic circle or modified connection between Carroll and Ethan Allen Avenues. The City Council should avoid placing itself in the position of not standing fully behind the integrity of Takoma Park's Historic District designation.</p> <p>I urge you to bear in mind the long-term consequences of your decisions: once built, buildings (and even lay-bys) do not easily go away and roads never get narrower and torn-down houses never return. I wish you the courage to act forcefully and in the long-term interests of our residents. Thank you for your attention.</p> <p>Pierre Perrolle Willow Avenue</p>
4/25	Miriam Szapiro	1	<p>I'm writing to oppose the current Takoma Junction development plan and project. There are so many weaknesses in this plan that they literally swallow up any potential positive attributes - the threat to the Fire Department's ability to respond to emergencies, the ways that the plan exacerbates the already dangerous traffic situation at that intersection, particularly to pedestrians and bikers, the failure to provide adequate, open public space, the lack of protection to local businesses, etc.</p> <p>I believe the time has come to acknowledge that this project does not have the support of Takoma Park citizens and that we can do better. It's time to start anew and get it right - in the long run, you will be glad you did.</p> <p>Thanks for all you do, Miriam Szapiro</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Jeffrey Trunzo	3	<p>Thank you for your patience, thoughtfulness, and perseverance as we continue with these weekly work session topics. I am particularly thankful for how our new Councilmembers have immersed themselves into the project, and for their efforts to rapidly absorb information and ask important questions. And of course, I am also appreciative of the ongoing contributions of our more veteran Councilmembers and Mayor.</p> <p>I have always supported and continue to support NDC/Streetsense’s efforts to create useful and attractive commercial and public space at Takoma Junction. To the point of tonight’s meeting, I endorse their efforts and the City’s efforts to apply data and leverage engineering expertise to identify solutions to the perennial complaints about vehicular traffic and pedestrian safety in Takoma Junction.</p> <p>I attended Sunday’s pop-up on the lot, where everyone observed the State Highway Administration (SHA) crews on site to connect the upgraded signal infrastructure that has been in place but not activated for so long. I also attended Monday’s presentation of the traffic studies and left encouraged about the possibilities for the future of Takoma Junction. I suggest that the detailed engineering reports be further evaluated, and the City consider putting out a simple one-page fact sheet summarizing the results. They are a little bit wonky for the non-engineer audience.</p> <p>Since Monday, I have observed the upgraded signals at several different times of day and from different approaches, and I see there are crews on site performing work on signal optimization. My experiences so far are mixed, I had several excellent experiences approaching from the Carroll Avenue Junction shops and on Ethan Allen and Sycamore Avenue. However, I also observed a very large backup in evening rush hour on Carroll Avenue approaching from Old Town. I am sure the new traffic signal capabilities will continue to be optimized.</p> <p>Since Monday, I have been thinking about Ward 3 Councilmember Kay Daniels-Cohen. As many people here know, Kay was passionate about many things, but the Junction held a special place in her heart. Kay cared deeply about the well-being of people, and she provided most of the fire and energy to get cross walk improvements at Takoma Junction. She was willing to do almost anything to make the signals work better for both pedestrians and vehicles, and she wanted to increase the perception of safety and attractiveness at Takoma Junction. “Make the Junction Function” was one of her favorite statements. And if you have seen a picture of Kay in her red, white, and blue regalia, in a hardhat and holding a hair dryer as a mock traffic monitoring device, well, that picture can never be erased from your mind. Some of Kay’s hopes and dreams and passion have been realized this week with the progress on the Junction’s traffic and pedestrian signals. We are thankful for her love of Takoma Park and all its residents.</p> <p>I encourage your efforts to ensure that redeveloped Takoma Junction “functions” for all residents in Takoma Park.</p> <p>Thank you! Jeffrey Trunzo</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/25	Lauren Van Tol	2	<p>As a relative newcomer to Takoma Park I had the unique experience of having lived directly across the street from the proposed junction site at 7200 Carroll Ave. for 2 years. When Spring Mill bread shop opened up it was really exciting and gave residents on that side of Philadelphia Ave. a place to grab a quick bite or gather to meet with friends. Unfortunately, I rarely went to the Co-op due to the prices being too high for my family to consistently shop there.</p> <p>I've since moved across the bridge to the "between the creeks" neighborhood and as much as I love Republic, Roscoe's, and the new Italian restaurant they are too far to walk with a little one. The Junction development would bring businesses and hopefully a restaurant or coffee shop and community space to an under served area that residents would be able to walk to. The empty parking lot at the proposed Junction site isn't contributing to the community, and it's under utilized. The Junction development would give residents a gathering place and bring businesses and jobs to this side of Carroll Ave. Being able to walk to the proposed development would be hugely beneficial environmentally as well as building more of a sense of community. I support the proposed development of the Junction 100%.</p> <p>Best, Lauren Van Tol</p>
4/25	Marissa Walker	3	<p>I plan to attend the meeting about the Junction tonight, but wanted to share my comments with you in advance. If I have neglected to send this to the right recipients, please forward it along.</p> <p>I strongly support the redevelopment of Takoma Junction.</p> <p>As it is now, I am a regular at the existing junction. I shop at the Co-op multiple times per week and love chatting with the employees there. My husband and I work out at MAD Fitness. I am at Carriage House dry cleaners every week where my three kids take turns pushing the button to watch the shirts whirl around. They take music lessons at Richardson School of Music. We pick up weekly treats together at Spring Mill. I regularly drop off Zappos returns and birthday packages at the Postal Center and they bring their quarters for the gumball machine. It is like Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood and I love it.</p> <p>BUT we do all this despite the fact that the current traffic and parking situation is a dangerous eyesore. My little gaggle HUSTLES across that double crosswalk in the 10 seconds we get and then we watch for cars zooming in and out of the Sycamore parking lot. We NEVER walk across the entrance to the larger parking lot because it is just too dangerous with kids. A few times we have had close calls crossing Grant Avenue between Spring Mill and the old gas station.</p> <p>My point is: The status quo is not safe or sustainable, as much as I love and use it. Our junction could be so much better and I am confident and optimistic that it will be better under the current development plan. PLEASE KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK AND KEEP MOVING FORWARD.</p> <p>Thank you, Marissa Walker</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/26	Steve & Kathy Breckbill	2	<p>We were at the Council meeting last night but didn't get a chance to speak because the public comments went on so long. It is clear that everyone is growing impatient for this to be over and for construction to begin but there are two concerns that need to be dealt with before we proceed or there will be trouble down the road.</p> <p>We are not members of the Co-op but we don't think that the council has given proper weight to the importance of the Co-op to the Junction. Other stores come and go but the Co-op is the most vibrant, successful business we've had at the Junction and if we lose it we'll be facing empty stores just as we have in the past. Without the Co-op many people will find little reason to go to the Junction at all. The Co-op should be the anchor store around which we build a neighborhood shopping experience, not just another store that we can do without if it goes under. We must find a better solution to the issues that the Co-op has with the new development. The lay-by delivery plan appears to be unworkable, and there's no thought being given to how the Co-op stays open during construction. The Co-op is the one irreplaceable feature of the Junction.</p> <p>It is also clear that the development as conceived by NDC has gotten bigger as time has passed and has become too big. Do we really want a building there that's 40 feet tall and covers every square inch of build-able space? The council must rein in NDC and give them strict limits on the size of that building or else we'll end up with something that overwhelms rather than enhances. A height limit of 25 feet and 35,000 square feet of space seem like reasonable limitations that would allow an inviting development at a scale in keeping with the existing buildings.</p> <p>I think that we're getting close to the finish line and if the Council fixes these two problems most people in the city would be very happy.</p> <p>Steve & Kathy Breckbill</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/26	Tony Camilli	1	<p>I along with my family, live on Tulip Ave in Ward 1. I want to first, as always, thank this elected body for your time, dedication and persistence in all that you do for Takoma Park. Many of us see how much work it takes to do the job that you do and I for one am very grateful and admirable of your effort.</p> <p>On the Junction matter, I urge you to approve the site plan with a few minor tweaks, which I'll discuss shortly. Unlike some observers, I can't imagine a more democratic process than what this city has provided to its residents thus far, but at some point either delaying or not making a decision IS, de facto, a decision.</p> <p>Meanwhile, that surface parking lot remains a blight on the community and a loss of tax revenue for the city in a time when, ironically, the city is in need of new revenue for other important projects like the library renovation and infrastructure upgrades. If we don't increase economic development in Takoma Park, where is the city going to get the revenue for its ambitious goals?</p> <p>I've already written at length to you about the Junction site, so I won't repeat myself here. Instead I would like to use the remainder of my time to focus on what I think are some minor tweaks that you might consider in your discussions with Adrian and the team at NDC.</p> <p>Change #1: I agree with the Coop supporters that NDC should provide a means to access the proposed garage immediately adjacent to their business. The current design is certainly "groovy", but forcing drivers to traverse the sidewalk and community space with grocery shopping carts just to access the garage, especially during inclement weather, seems to be a missed opportunity. Perhaps there's a way to move or add an elevator on the east end of the project.</p> <p>Change #2: Don't just build for cars. NDC's plan provides much improved sidewalks for the site - better than anywhere else in Takoma Park. This is a good start to nudge people out of their cars. But more can and should be done. So please, please push SHA to put the junction intersection on a road diet from 4 to 3 lanes (with a turning lane on either end) and extend the Carroll Ave bike lanes that end at Carroll and Philadelphia Aves.</p> <p>It is counterintuitive, but the research is clear on this axiom: if you build for cars, you get cars. If you build for bikes and walkers, then, ironically, you get less cars because people will use other infrastructure if it's safe and convenient. Some people will always drive and that's ok, but these people can't complain about traffic in a place that's only built for cars.</p> <p>Change #3: I reviewed the traffic studies and watched the presentations by both AMT and The Traffic Group. My reading of these studies is that they confirm what we already know - that the realignment of where Carroll Ave (MD195) connects with Ethan Allen Ave (MD410) should be pursued by the City.</p> <p>I for one am partial to the design 2a by AMT that moves Morrison park next to the sidewalks by Spring Mill and Seoul Food, thereby creating a more safe, accessible public space that complements the public space proposed by NDC. The Traffic Group's "island" design is also an improvement from the current situation, but I doubt the island will be as safe, useful and functional as the AMT design 2a.</p> <p>In closing, the Coop-backed group "Community Vision for Takoma Junction" has recently started a petition urging you to vote "no" on the proposed development. They claim the following: "We seem to have to prove, again and again, that we are the majority and that our officials are elected to represent us. Please sign this new petition, share on your page, and email the link to friends." As of today, their petition has less than 300 signatures, despite paying for ads on Facebook and Twitter.</p> <p>Change is hard for people and businesses, but markets and cities by their very nature are dynamic over time. Contrary to claims made by others tonight, this community is not divided over this development - you're just hearing from the most vocal group that opposes it.</p> <p>I want to remind you that Takoma Park is a city of almost 18K people and even if 5,000 people signed that petition opposing this project, it is still not the majority of our fair city. Please remember the silent majority of residents who haven't come here on behalf of the Co-op to ask you to stop or stall this project. They're too busy helping their kids with homework, or working a 2nd job, or pursuing their passion. But you represent them too and all future generations of Takoma Park. You should do what's best for the whole community, not just the Coop.</p> <p>Best Regards, TC</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/26	Jared Hughes	3	<p>Thank you for this opportunity to raise my voice in support of this project. My wife and I moved to Ward 3 on Elm Avenue in Takoma Park 20 years ago in 1998.</p> <p>We signed up as lifetime Co-op members soon after and purchase dozens of the \$100 bags of groceries there each month.</p> <p>We are raising our family here and have taken great pains to cultivate a magical neighborhood community that is the envy of many a Facebook friend and a major selling point in multiple realtors' pitch to potential new neighbors.</p> <p>It could still be better.</p> <p>We have watched old town on the dc side develop smartly to the benefit of the takoma dc community. We were very much in favor of the arts and crafts style condo complex at the top of westmoreland Ave that included parking across from the park.</p> <p>We were dismayed 15 years ago that a vocal minority were able to stall the process to such an extent that the developers finally threw up their hands and gave up. I didn't formally speak up then and have regretted it ever since.</p> <p>Based on multiple conversations with dozens of neighbors who were not able to offer testimony, I am sure the vast majority of The denizens of the people's republic don't want another missed opportunity to vastly improve our community's retail, dining and gathering options - at the junction in particular - to pass us by again.</p> <p>We know why there were several vacant store fronts in the junction for years - one glad rags for at least 10 - 15 of them. There is not enough high quality shopping and interesting draws to bring the foot traffic. this plan would solve that.</p> <p>A tweak I would offer: As a professional non profit fundraiser who has served on the boards of three local non profits who been confounded by the durth of walkable attractive event space where we able to host full service events. encourage the developers to include a large multi use gathering space that would allow for that.</p> <p>We are written up over and over again in national publications that tout our diversity, our quirkiness our progressive and inclusive ways - and of course, our penchant for total and complete consensus to a fault. 25 years has GOT to be long enough. It's time to move forward with reasonable modifications to keep the Co-op whole while allowing for desperately needed development of and improvement to the junction. let's not squander this opportunity again and have to wait for another 25 years.</p> <p>Please vote in favor of this plan.</p> <p>Jared B. Hughes</p>
4/26	Daniel Hutton	3	<p>I wanted to add to my comments supporting the development of the junction.</p> <p>Some of you may know my parents, Debbie and Bruce Hutton.</p> <p>I was raised on Pine Avenue, and I'm proud to now be raising my own children in Takoma park.</p> <p>I've taught at Takoma Park Elementary School for the past 17 years, have proudly been an azalea award recipient, and I sincerely love this town.</p> <p>I'm pro-development because I would like to see the space ad value to the community</p>
4/26	Jacqueline Moore	2	<p>The May 2nd Designing Safe Streets might be useful for you to attend prior to any more movement on the unacceptable NDC plan that you are pushing forward for Takoma Junction. The lecture happens in the afternoon prior to your evening meeting.</p> <p>Jacqueline Moore</p> <p>Talk: Designing Safe Streets: Vision Zero in D.C.</p> <p>Wednesday, May 2</p> <p>12:30–1:30 pm</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/26	Tom Di Liberto		<p>My family would love to have been present today to give these comments in person but a sick toddler and a late evening prevented us. The conversation around the development has energized me and after looking over the plans. I can comfortably say that I am 100% in favor of moving on with this development.</p> <p>My family is a member of the Coop who are very excited for the new development to move in. While construction is never great for business, I see no reason why both the development and Coop can't thrive together. And the junction would benefit greatly from new storefronts bringing in high quality shops. Better yet, this development will replace a ugly parking lot with a well designed building and encourage walking through this area. Is it perfect? Or course not. If anything, I wish it had affordable housing units. But we cannot let perfection be the enemy of good.</p> <p>I moved to Takoma Park not because of what it is but because of what it WILL be for me and my family. I want Takoma Park to change, for the better. And that begins with better progressive density development practices. And that starts here. I urge the council to make the, and I can't believe I'm having to say this in Takoma Park of all places, courageous and PROGRESSIVE choice to move forward on this development, work on the small things that need to be changed and set a precedent in this city that it is forward thinking with its development practices.</p>
4/26	Gretchen Goldman	2	<p>My name is Gretchen Goldman and I am a Takoma Park residence, a mom, a co-op member, and a scientist. I also serve as the Chair of the Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee for the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. I would like to express my full support for the proposal because of the many economic, environmental, and community benefits it will provide.</p> <p>Takoma Park would greatly benefit from the proposed development. It will provide new economic vitality and social life to the junction. Density of buildings has many positive economic and environmental impacts, lessening the need for Takoma Park residents to drive and allowing people to combine trips when out. Study after study has shown the importance of density in reducing carbon footprints, and environmental impacts. This project will do the same. With the higher density and increased walkability this development brings, we also see safer streets. Evidence has shown that traffic injuries are fewer in higher density areas with multimodal streets. More activity of pedestrians, cyclists and other road users on a street mean slower car speeds and enhanced safety for all.</p> <p>It is crucial that the future of Takoma Park not be centered around the car. And this development is a key step. I want my child to grow up in a community that values people and a community that thinks about its own economic future. Takoma Park has been very limited in its expansion of new housing and commercial space in recent years. Yet these factors are vital to ensuring our town continues to thrive. We need to think about the future generations who will inherit the city. This development helps us look to the future. I fully support the proposal.</p>
4/26	Kenyon Crowley	2	<p>I am supportive of smart development of the junction. The plans seem reasonable. I hope that some parking spots are accessible for other Takoma Junction shops like Spring Mill, the Co-op, and barber shop. I also think it's too bad the publicly \roof has gone away in latest revision, that seemed like a nice innovation. If possible keep it. And, hopefully the traffic situation can be managed effectively, personally think a well-designed traffic circle or circles is preferable to the current congested setup.</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/26	Alison MacDonald		<p>Work travel has prevented me from joining you tonight at the council meeting; I am sorry to miss it and thank you to the council for allowing public comment.</p> <p>I've lived in Takoma Park for 10 years and have enjoyed watching the vibrancy of our city grow over that time. My husband and I chose this area to raise our children because we loved the proximity to downtown DC, the tight knit community and the diversity of the city.</p> <p>I am very excited about the recently-released plans for Takoma Junction and urge the city council to move forward with the plans with little delay. The junction is truly the geographic center of city and a revitalization of the city-owned parking lot would give the community a gathering point within walking distance of all the Takoma Park neighborhoods.</p> <p>While I appreciate that there are issues that need to be resolved with the plans, given the financial investments the city has already made and the potential long term financial benefits, I believe not only will the development add to the vibrancy of the Takoma Park, but it is also the fiscally responsible action to take. Thank you for your service and dedication to our city.</p>
4/26	Kelly and Caleb Gibson	2	<p>Kelly and Caleb Gibson are expressing their support for the most recent site plan, they are excited About more places to gather in Takoma. They can't be here because Kelly had a work dinner and Caleb is putting the kids to bed</p>
4/26	Kelly Mills	3	<p>I cannot attend the meeting tonight because I have a 6-month-old and her bedtime conflicts with the evening meeting. However, I would like to express in writing that our family supports the development at the junction. We live on Sherman and are eager and enthusiastic about the prospect of a desolate parking lot being replaced with a wonderful gathering place for the community.</p>
4/26	Matt and Kate Frades	2	<p>Matt and Kate Frades strongly support the most recent site plan. We are thrilled at the prospect of a vibrant, walkable community and commercial space closer to our home and feel the developers have taken great lengths to incorporate and balance the spectrum of our community's values and preferences in this plan. We cannot attend this meeting because we have two toddlers to put to bed, but feel it would be a shame if the wide support for the redevelopment plan shared by young families like ours are discounted because of our relatively limited ability to attend evening meetings like these.</p>
4/26	Elizabeth Skane		<p>I can't make the meeting tomorrow because it's dinner/bath time for my toddler, but if I could be there I would say: I am so excited that a local developer has envisioned great things for this severely under-utilized public space. This has been a slow, iterative process and as a neighbor, I would be devastated if all the time, money, and effort put into this project were flushed away because the perfect has become the enemy of the good. No other developer will come near that space if we let this opportunity go--and yes, they stand to make money because they are a forprofit business, as is the Co-op which has obstructed the project every step of the way without offering any solutions to their complaints. Urban infill projects like these are tricky and will not look like a new greenfield development, but let's not let a few solvable challenges get in the way of an awesome new destination for Takoma Park</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/26	Jeff Tessin	2	<p>I'm writing to generally support the Takoma Junction site plan. The traffic studies showed that the opportunity to reconfigure the intersection would substantially improve traffic. I like NDC's design for an island on Carroll, both for its efficiency and the fact that it narrows Carroll and the intersection. That should make the area more human-scale and calm traffic. It may allow the gazebo to be moved to a more central location, creating a historic sense of place and maybe getting it used. I am not concerned that they would eliminate the all-red signal or crosswalk, as that seems to contribute to the dysfunction of the intersection. It's pretty selfish for 1-2 people to demand that everything stops for them, when the intersection can be redesigned for safer and quicker movement overall.</p> <p>I was somewhat skeptical about how the lay-by would work. However, NDC's traffic consultant seems to have done a very thorough and well-reasoned analysis. I walk or bike through the Junction twice a day during the rush hours. NDC is correct that most of the Co-Op's trucks come in the morning hours, when traffic is going west. The lay-by will be in the eastbound lanes, so would be not interacting with the heaviest traffic. It will be large enough for several large trucks, and they have a plan for having trucks circulate on highways if it's occupied. If the Co-Op is so concerned about the lay-by, they should have the incentive to enforce the rules to make it function well.</p> <p>I am puzzled by the Co-Ops breathless claims that this plan would jeopardize safety. Right now, the Co-Op encourages large trucks to cross the sidewalk and interact with pedestrians like me and cars in the parking lot. Keeping trucks on the street removes pedestrian conflicts. Most unloading happens in the morning, when pedestrian and eastbound traffic is lighter. Pedestrian conflicts with moving pallets are much safer than moving trucks.</p> <p>Retail makes the most sense for this site. There are plenty of parks nearby, and a busy intersection is not the kind of place for recreation. However, I do think that a larger public plaza or square cut into the site, surrounded by the retail, would enhance the character of the area and create a more usable, appropriate public space. For example, a fountain or water feature in the center may create a public square and mask the traffic noise. It does seem as if NDC is maximizing their ROI by monetizing most of the site, which is not necessarily the purpose of a public project.</p> <p>Speaking of public value: the Co-Op's business interests are not identical to the public interest. It makes sense to preserve the Co-Op, because they are already successful and could contribute to the vitality of the area. However, why should the entire space cater to their every particular demand? The public at large benefits from improving this area as a whole: its retail, mobility, historic value, and sense of place. The Co-Op has insisted on preserving their exact business process, without thinking creatively about alternatives that would allow them and other site uses to coexist and thrive.</p> <p>In sum, vote to continue, but ask for a better public plaza, and insist that the development occur only if the intersection is redesigned as proposed.</p> <p>Jeff Tessin</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