

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/27	Barbara Francisco	NR	<p>Dear mayor and council people, I have lived in nearby Silver Spring and shopped at the Takoma Food Coop for 30 years. I find it to be a community treasure: welcoming to its diverse clientele of shoppers and offering the kind of hard-to-get food that I think is good for me and my family and for the planet. When I shop at the coop, I am able to support local agriculture, find offerings from small businesses, and reduce packaging in purchases. There are things at the coop that I can't find anywhere else! I am very concerned to hear about proposed development that would add to the area's traffic congestion and threaten the viability of a number of small businesses at Takoma Junction, including the coop. I spoke to a city official who commented to me, "Well, we've been working on this for years." That may be true, but a current flawed proposal is not better than a postponement that could result in a community-oriented, environmentally-friendly, and coop-saving development. Thank you for considering my comments, Barbara Francisco</p>
4/28	Nina Garfield	2	<p>I have been to most of the recent Takoma Junction council meetings and have had some thoughts that have morphed as I have heard the comments but have not comfortable saying them publicly as the meetings have become basically a show of force for various positions. I don't feel like I align with the coordinated talking points and am not as smart as many of the people talking so I sit and listen. I don't have the credentials of an MIT urban planner, or an economist, but I work for NOAA, have lived in Takoma Park for almost 25 years and have been a PTA president, active in the community in a number of ways, and am raising my daughter here. I have heard good points during this process and my thoughts have been shaped by what I have heard and my review of the plans. I am taking this opportunity to submit my thoughts on the Junction development in writing. I have been disturbed by the polarization of the discussions and the seemingly binary choices that people have imposed as being "for or against" "pro co-op vs. anti-co-op" "old timers vs. new families"... I have listened to all sides and would now like to articulate my thoughts. I am organizing them into broad topics.</p>

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4/28	Nina Garfield (cont'd)		<p>What I like about the current state of the Junction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like the parking lot and the fact that it offers open space. In fact, I like the ability to have free parking. I miss the free parking lot in downtown. The fee for parking is high for those of us with little extra money to spare and it has reduced my spontaneity of frequenting down town. The farmers market has become less accessible for purchasing lots of things. The loss of the free parking lot in downtown seem to reflect the changing times with Takoma Park morphing from a small town to more of a busy commercial center on a trajectory towards a Silver Spring or Bethesda. I'm conflicted about that and the one hour free parking behind the shops on Laurel was a nice compromise. Eliminating the parking lot at the junction will further reduce open space and create a parking lot that I am sure will come with a fee which will be high and will impact my access and that of others I know that are low income and can't walk easily. I fear it will also impact access for CO-OP patrons who need a car. • I like the open space and the fact that we can have festivals there, and music, and food trucks – the small things that make it intimate. I am sad to lose that. <p>Traffic and Parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The revised timing of the lights has been amazing at reducing frustration. I am not sure how long you have lived here but the congestion issues really started when they replaced the stop sign on Sycamore with a light and then to make matters worse, they took away the "lay-by" for the bus stop on Ethan Allen. It was a double blow. I never used Columbia as a major route until the light went in causing back-ups into the neighborhood. I don't know why they took away the pull off area for the bus stop to allow traffic to pass – but when they did, that's when cars skirted around busses creating a hazard. The new timing of the lights has been good, but I encourage the re-design to consider incorporating the "lay-by" for the bus to be put back. It was a really dumb

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	Nina Garfield (cont'd)		<p>decision to take it away – I have no idea what benefit they were thinking about other than greening up the spot.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am intrigued by the proposal to redesign the intersection with the triangular island. The presentation to the Council was too fast and complicated for me to understand fully. The maps displayed during the meeting did not have a north arrow on them which made me have to work hard at determining which was north east south and west while they were presenting options and pros and cons and so I got a bit lost. With any re-design, I would make sure there are no impacts to the businesses on Carroll Ave. What I did take away was that big trucks should not be exiting on Sycamore – it would be a huge impact to the community and I have no doubt that a child is going to get hurt. I strongly encourage you to prevent this from happening. • I would like to keep the full red stop for pedestrians. This reflects the community values and we have worked really hard to make this safe for pedestrians including our children. I reject the traffic planner’s comment that it makes it dangerous by teaching our kids that they can cross in other communities without thinking because our intersection gives them the false expectation that all intersections are like this. Give me a break! That was perhaps the stupidest thing I have heard and demonstrates that not only does he underestimate our kids, but is politically motivated – it was totally out of bounds for him to insert his social-psychological diagnosis of the impact of this intersection on our kids. I felt like asking him to show me the data. He lost a great deal of credibility with me – but I digress. Bottom line – I say keep this full stop as an anchor in our community of the small town we don’t want to lose, of the core value that this is a town where our community members can safely co-exist with the ever increasing traffic congestion and road rage that ensues. This should be non-negotiable. And I like what the councilwoman said about providing foot access to the new development from across the street without having to walk so far to cross the street.

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	Nina Garfield (cont'd)		<p>What I don't like about the current design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't like the large footprint the building takes up • I don't like the lack of open space • I don't like the fee parking and the lack of a place for electric cars to recharge. • I am not a fan of the green roof – see below • I don't like the fact that it does not incorporate solar. • I don't like the trucks pulling up for deliveries where school children cross and people walk – the Junction will become a cacophony of congested traffic going from east to west, people walking to work, kids going to school, people walking their dogs, and a delivery zone. Its too much! But I get that we can't have it all and will have to make compromises. <p>What I would like to see with new development if I never saw the current design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am excited about developing the property. I would like to see a consistent link to the shops on Carroll that will bring a destination spot and stabilize the businesses. While I originally wanted the development to be architecturally similar to the businesses on Carroll I defer to the development principles that one woman presented at the last Council meeting that indicated you don't need it to look like the existing historical design. So I am good with letting go my original idea. • I would like to see open space preserved in the new development with a plaza type feel. I think this could be a great gathering space – much like Silver Spring has incorporated. • I would like to see the CO-OP remain – it is a core value of our community to have this healthy food option, support local farmers and organic farming, to have a small town grocery store. Yes, its expensive, but that is not a reason to want it to go or not support its inclusion in the new development. Republic is too expensive for me to frequent, but I would never say it should not be there. Its existence adds value to the overall business center and diversity of people who come to our town. The CO-OP is frequented by a wide diversity of people all the time. I know of few people who buy all their groceries there – but that is not even the point and its not for me or anyone to determine its value in our community. The fact is it is there because we invited them here and we shop there. As a landlord nearby, the CO-OP is a draw for renting my apartment.

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	Nina Garfield (cont'd)		<p>Its nice to have this grocery store in walking distance rather than have to drive out of the neighborhood for our basics. While there are those that say that support for the CO-OP is “elitist” – I feel they are elitist in imposing their judgements on those who use it. To get rid of the CO-OP because its too expensive for a lot of people to shop there and instead put in a high end restaurant that will be too expensive for us to patron is a double standard – and as a result require us to drive out of the community to shop is outrageous. The value of the CO-OP should not enter into this equation. How we accommodate them should and it should be a core principle of the building design.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would like to see solar on the roof instead of a green roof. I have a green roof on my house and while I love it, it requires a lot of maintenance and restricts the space I can use for socializing. If not maintained, weeds will grow and it will quickly look like a prairie. You can’t stop the birds from dropping seeds. The purpose of the green roof is to provide cooling, roof protection from the sun, and storm water management services. All are laudable goals. But this also creates a maintenance headache and reduces the roof to public access. I would argue for solar panels instead to be incorporated into the design and utilize the roof of the CO-OP as well. (obviously these are two goals that would need to be balanced) I think you can deal with run off by installing water catchment barrels and even incorporating some landscape architectural feature that directs the water from the roof through an interesting landscaped area that filters the water and slows it down before draining into the woods behind the lot where it will be naturally filtered even more. This is where we could use some creative landscape architects to be brought into the project.
	Nina Garfield (cont'd)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would like to see a two story building that utilizes the second story as community eating and drinking and socializing space. I can see this as an option for restaurants to have upstairs outdoor seating, or a common area where people can gather for social events. • I do not want to see apartments or offices on the second floor – its boring and a waste of space that benefits only a few people. <p>What I would modify from the current design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I envision actually two smaller buildings that face each other with an open plaza in between where people can eat outside at tables, kids can play, we can have a sculpture, and landscaping that serves to treat the water coming off the buildings. The one building could abut the CO-OP the other face it from the other side where the car repair shop is – maybe make that an L shaped building that has street facing shops as well. • This could be an opportunity to re-do the CO-OP and perhaps make it a two story building so it has less of a footprint which can open up some parking space or delivery truck space – I still think this is going to be an issue –the need for trucks will be increased by the need for additional deliveries for the other businesses – something the traffic guys did not seem to account for (nor did they ask the CO-OP for their delivery data upon which to make their plans. They only went with one week of data they observed as if they were doing investigative work to undermine the assertion of the CO-OP.) I also think this is an opportunity for the CO-OP to become integral with the new development and perhaps add a small rooftop café to align with the groove of the new development.

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	Nina Garfield (cont'd)		<p>Process</p> <p>I feel this discussion has been constrained by the fact that the developer did a bait and switch on us and the Council did not seem to put that in check. I also feel like the fact that only one design option was presented constrained the conversation and prevented any constructive collaborative dialogue – which created the dynamic we are in of being for or against the development. When I hired an architect for my house he provided three preliminary drawings for me to consider to focus the direction of the design. I was able to draw on elements from each to come up with the final design. This would have been nice to do here. We rejected the megamall after a lot of time and energy went into that process and we are much better off for it – and I think we can do it here.</p> <p>I appreciate that this has been a long process and that people want to just “get it done as quickly as possible with no more delays”. But this has polarized the community and the timing of the decision is less important than the quality of the decision and the long-term social and physical impact on our community. So I do urge you to slow down and implement a community based process where people can come together outside of the politically charged council meetings and hash these things out – bring people from various positions together in small groups to find common ground and really identify what is negotiable and not negotiable. Do this in people’s homes or in small venues in town. Perhaps have the discussions facilitated. Allow people to present various ideas that are not reflected in the current design since there seems to have been little space for this kind of input. I also would suggest breaking down the ward-based discussions as wards have common issues and so we end up with one ward having their specific issues – not entirely – but it self-selects for common issues and can create positions. I would like to see the community come together across wards so we can have dialogue across issues and understand the different views of residents across the city. I think it can foster tolerance, integration and pride in our community and in the development that ensues.</p>

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	Nina Garfield (cont'd)		<p>I think the council should allow for these discussions – to break up the groups that are “for” or “against” and enable ideas to mingle, and common ground articulated. These could be facilitated and the city can allocate funds for this purpose if need be.</p> <p>If you don’t allow this process for the community to come together, I fear that there will be disastrous consequences. I have been at social gatherings where people actually said that if this building is approved, there will be protests on site preventing construction from happening – which I am sure would provoke anti-protests. Let’s do everything we can to prevent Takoma Park from devolving into this chaos and divisiveness and invest in a bit more time to get this right. I believe that there is common ground that everyone wants development, and that is a good thing. We were given something to react to, and since there is a lot of excitement about this, we need to harness the great ideas on all sides and the intelligence throughout the community to make this the best and most exciting new development in the City. I think everyone will realize they can’t get everything they want – but through discussion and exchange of ideas, we can find ways to negotiate and come together to support a path forward.</p> <p>Sorry this is so long – but I hope there are some nuggets in my comments that are useful. Thank you for all you are doing to support our Ward and the City as a whole. Please do not let timing be the driver here – there is no reason we can’t add a bit more time to get it right and to deescalate the tension.</p> <p>Respectfully Yours, Nina Garfield 7008 Woodland Ave.</p>

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4/28	Lea Chartock	3	<p>I wanted to thank you again for holding today's listening session. The turnout demonstrated how engaged Ward 3 residents are on the topics covered. Regarding the Junction, we heard a variety of opinions about the proposed development. While much disagreement was expressed about the specifics, what we all do seem to agree on is how distressing is the level of acrimony engendered in the community by the process. I think everyone in the room would agree that the Council can play a role in helping bring people together around a generally shared vision. Of course, total consensus isn't possible, but the Council must be seen to take seriously the objections to the project as proposed. To date, as the comments suggested, many of us don't feel that the significant problems with NDC's proposal have been addressed by the Council.</p> <p>To do so, as a Ward 3 resident, I urge you, my representative on the Council, to move forward with the NDC proposal only if, in the draft resolution, the City requires the following conditions to be met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NDC must list what specific arrangements it will make during construction to enable the Co-op to continue its operations. These commitments must include how trash and recycling will be picked up, how deliveries will be made, how construction dust/etc. will be mitigated, and how safe customer access to the store will be maintained. 2. NDC must move the elevator to the Co-op side of the building; 3. NDC must make specific arrangements with the Co-op to continue locating its trash and recycling on the development side (existing parking lot) of the Co-op. The cost to lease that space must be on a par with what the Co-op currently pays the City; 4. NDC must provide one-hour free parking in the garage to Co-op shoppers. 5. NDC must state the exact square footage of empty/walkable space that the public space will encompass (not including street trees, planters, tables, or other stationary features); 6. NDC must state how it will mitigate the negative effects of trucks idling in the lay-by while making deliveries. The public space will only be attractive to people if they are not being assaulted multiple times per day with the noise and pollution that such trucks generate. 7. NDC must reduce the height of the building -- a 40-foot elevation is significantly higher than most two-story buildings and means that the building would dwarf everything else at the Junction--in other words, be completely out of scale with the neighborhood. In addition, the public space, given that the building faces north, will likely be in shadow for most of the day. <p>If these conditions are not met by NDC in writing within a reasonable time frame, then the Council should vote not to move forward with this developer. Without these specific commitments, the community is likely to remain severely divided. I trust that such an outcome is not what you want.</p> <p>I understand that people are tired and some fear that not going forward with this developer means we're doomed to an unattractive parking lot. I disagree. What we need is a development that's right for Takoma Park; what we don't need is moving forward at all costs. Once bad decisions become bricks and mortar, they can't be undone.</p> <p>Thank you. Lea Chartock</p>

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4/28	Susy Cheston	3	<p>I receive emails through the Sycamore listserv but also thought I should give you my email independently, so please sign me up: susy.cheston@gmail.com</p> <p>Sorry I missed your listening session.</p> <p>I am very worried about the Takoma Junction development due to traffic and safety concerns and I am hugely worried about the future of the Co-op which is a community treasure. It baffles me that we are risking a known valuable asset (the co-op) for the sake of an unknown private development that creates very little public good, using city property. The traffic study showed insane options such as one-way loops for traffic through the Co-op parking lot--as if people would be directed through the parking lot to 410 from Sycamore?</p> <p>Likewise, I am very concerned about Centro Nia. I love the idea of affordable daycare but do not see how the residential neighborhood can handle that much traffic, especially on top of the Junction development. And it seems antithetical to the spirit of TP that the center would not really offer slots to kids living in walking distance--creating an us/them dynamic that I don't think is healthy.</p> <p>What I have seen about the city budget is also very concerning. We want to live here until we die, but I am concerned that we may not be able to given property taxes, etc. I'm sorry our community is gentrifying in a way that may price people out, including current residents.</p> <p>Thanks, Susy Cheston</p>

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4/28	Scott Gilkeson	?	<p>Thanks for hosting a listening session today. I hope you knew what you were in for when you ran for office! My hat is off to you and all your fellow council members who are willing to do that work.</p> <p>I had one question, and one thing I wanted to say:</p> <p>1. On the budget, I got there late and missed the presentation and discussion, but I'm curious as to why we need to raise the tax rate when it is already the highest in the county. According to the data I found, Takoma Parks rate for real property is 0.5348, exceeded only by Rockville class 1, which is 0.622 (and next highest is 0.292 and most are less than 0.2). Also, our personal and utility taxes are up there (highest by 50% in personal, exceeded only by Kensington in utility).</p> <p>I do appreciate what we have in Takoma Park, but am concerned about tax rates, which we both know never go down.</p> <p>I saw on the slide that was up when I came in that the county 'owes' us almost \$1M. If we got that, would be still need a rate hike?</p> <p>2. On the junction, this is a very difficult issue and I believe there is no resolution that will make everyone happy. I do have concerns about the size of the proposed development, although I know that developers need to maximize rentable space to make the financing work. But the one thing I wanted to say is this:</p> <p>I believe that the city should not give further go-ahead (i.e. vote 'yes') until there is a reasonable written plan for accommodating the co-op. That doesn't mean that the coop gets to set terms, but it does mean that we need to make it very clear that coop survivability is non-negotiable. As I recall, one of the three conditions that the city put on initial proposals was that any plan had to include the coop in the junction. I know it is my highest priority. I believe that if we have a development there that does not include the coop because it went out of business or moved, we have lost something important. I realize that there is no guarantee that the coop can survive a year of construction, and that a lot of the coop's future depends on the coop conducting their business in a reasonable way, which may not have always been the case. But saying to NDC "you have to work something out with the coop" is not sufficient. It needs to be crystal clear that this has to happen as a precondition for approval. If the coop and NDC can't get to agreement, then an independent mediator could facilitate. I just think it is important to have a written set of conditions that someone besides NDC thinks should enable the coop to survive--if it's not the coop, then an outside 'expert'. I know the city held on to the property and set it up to be the leaseholder in order to have leverage, but I also know that once the lease is signed and once the OK is given, the leverage goes way down. If NDC can't make the concessions necessary, then I don't think they are the right group to do this.</p> <p>I also thing they should have to address additional issues, such as how trash and garbage will be handled, which I don't think has been given enough thought. To say that all the trash from the coop and from a large restaurant on the far side of the space and any other businesses, including offices on the second floor, will come out though a little walkway with no access for trucks or dumpsters doesn't seem reasonable to me, and certainly doesn't seem conducive to a pleasant street-space.</p> <p>I'm frustrated when people say, "don't worry, it will work out." Unless Takoma Park clearly states conditions and writes them into any agreement, I am very worried.</p> <p>P.S. I would like to see two or three small restaurants like Seoul Food go in there, rather than another large and fairly fancy restaurant, but I realize no one gets everything they want. I think the building is a bit big and the streetarea a bit small, but also realize the developer has to make it economically feasible. But I think reasonable garbage disposal and addressing the coop's needs are critical before moving ahead.</p>

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4/29	Elliott Andalman	?	<p>I hope to see you Thursday evening. But if I don't make it, in addition to thanking you for your hard work, I want to say that I support the city's effort to develop the junction. But I am worried about the coop, which I know is quite worried. For some reason, they have been unable to successfully negotiate with the developers. I think the city needs to step in. The developer should provide a Lay-by for deliveries that will hold two full size trucks and address other issues the coop has raised. Also I think the building should be smaller and allow some additional public space.</p> <p>I am also concerned about the proposed day care center on Elm. I am not sure what the solution is, but I think it would be helpful if it arranged for some of the prospective children to be bussed. If adults are coming for classes, the school should provide parking on the premises.</p> <p>I have cc'd my wife, Martha Bergmark.</p> <p>Thank you. Elliott Andalman</p>
4/29	Jay J. Levy	1	<p>As a four-decade plus resident of the city, I am dismayed by the proposals floating around for development of Takoma Junction. There must be an absolute commitment by you to not only preserve the co-op's ability to operate a functioning business but also a pledge to enhance its operations before any other type of change to the area is approved. Sincerely, Jay J. Levy</p>
4/29	Sharon Levy	?	<p>As a former Ward 1 City Councilor Member, I know the challenges facing you regarding the proposed development of Takoma Junction. I continue to be involved in Community activities and still treasure the ethnic, gender and racial diversity in our city. Based on this involvement I fear that the current proposal of a large and expensive building of 'big box' retail stores and offices will seriously affect the creative, community businesses that now exist; especially the TPSS Co/op.</p> <p>I know there is a need for increased tax revenue in the city but don't agree with the current proposal.</p> <p>Sincerely, Sharon Levy</p>
4/29	Donald Malnati	NR	<p>As a coop member and shopper, I think re-locating the coop to a larger space with more parking makes much more sense than trying to fit into or fight against a sensible development that would bring more retail options to Takoma Park.</p> <p>Please support the development suggested for this spot, and urge the coop to relocate.</p> <p>Thank you, Donald Malnati</p>
4/29	Jimmy Daukas and Meg Royce	2	<p>Virtually everyone in Takoma Park wants some development at the Junction and wants a solution that does not divide the city. One way to do that is to require NDC and the Coop to enter into mediation to help them find a solution that works for both. This will head off the rising tensions and accusations between the two competing sides, e.g., "the Coop won't compromise" and "NDC does not care about the Coop." It creates a pathway to a solution rather than the Council deciding who is right, deciding whom to believe.</p> <p>A significant number of people at public hearings over the past two years have recommended getting a mediator, have recommended finding a solution rather than making a choice. I strongly encourage members of the Council join the process since you are part of the decision process. It is your responsibility to find a solution that works.</p> <p>Will you please let me know what progress is being made in demanding that the two entities sit down with a mediator? Now is the time to act.</p> <p>DON'T VOTE YES OR NO. VOTE FOR A SOLUTION.</p> <p>I look forward to hearing from you.</p> <p>Jimmy Daukas and Meg Royce</p>

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4/30	Matthew Littlejohn	2	<p>I am in favor of the recent proposal for developing the junction. I look forward to being able to walk to more dining and retail options from our house - one of the main reasons we like living in a suburban/urban environment. I think it will make the town more walkable and connected. I'm believe that NDC is smart and will find retailers appropriate for the area and follow suit of other recent developments in the city and near by. I would like the city to make sure NDC pays attention to critical details. I think NDC has done a good job elsewhere and hopefully - with the city's guidance - can do the same here. Note - I would like to the City to keep in mind that NDC is looking to make a profit (and manage them or finding an alternative developer with that lens in mind).</p> <p>Per traffic, please look at the whole picture and not simply at making the intersection more efficient (as they main beneficiaries will be East West highway through traffic and not Takoma Parkers). It is a opportunity to fix a problematic intersection.</p>
4/30	Sat Jiwan Ikle-Khalsa	2	<p>Council should not be afraid to delay or change direction from NDCs somewhat incompatible design at this point. There's a lot of divisiveness in the community and council should strive for 60% or more community support. (What is the rough tally of all comments received ? Phone email in person petitions etc).</p> <p>What if the narrative is "the developer and city both walked away from a project they deemed not in their interest"? Projecting that the "city or community killed it" is a little one sided. A developer presented a plan to have a smaller scale project with more coop and community accommodations. After doing more homework the developer said they needed a bigger project with fewer coop/community accommodations to "make it work" for them. The city/community didn't agree to the new design and both parties agreed to walk away. Sure a new developer would be more cautious about overpromising. But maybe a new developer would hit the target balancing a cheaper (class B??) development with more community priorities. There's a lot to be learned from this process. A future development somewhere else or even a new developer would not be a "start from scratch" process. It would have a lot of lessons learned from the current process. But on a more positive side, maybe the city can take former councilmember Tim Male's advice and push for 10% (or 15%) more from NDC and offer everyone a better chance to not walk away. (I'd personally try to get an accessible green roof around perimeter, with a reduced third story structure on the center of building that could hardly be seen. That may seem wild to some, but added discrete density could be a trade off to get an off-street delivery/trash solution for whole site, including coop.)</p> <p>While it's a noble goal to get this project move no and done, it shouldn't come at the expense of a fractured community.</p> <p>Ps I heard two things recently: From the coop That NDC told the coop only 18 wheelers could use layby and no trash/recycling there or in access alley. And from one traffic presenter that layby is first come first serve for anyone (anytime?) as it is built on state hw and sidewalk right of way. Has anyone (city or developer) approached county or SHA if the layby would be approved or operate this way?(or that reconfigured intersection would be considered favorably?). Would not a surprise answer to this question late in the game to derail things.</p>

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4/30	Judy Appelbaum Linda Carlson Colleen Cordes Robert Engelman Jill Gay Sue Katz Miller Jessica Landman Denny May Kathleen Milton Marika Partridge Susan Schreiber Miriam Szapiro Betsy Taylor	?	<p>Thank you for taking the time to meet with us last Thursday at Betsy Taylor’s home. We know you are very busy and appreciate your efforts to listen and discuss the proposed Takoma Junction development with us. We want to reiterate our thanks for the leadership you exhibited in helping craft the Oct. 2017 Resolution 2017-53 with eleven guidelines for the Junction Development. We believe that the current plan falls short on most of those stipulations.</p> <p>We believe that a large majority would like some form of development on the site. The devil is in the details, and we urge you to exhibit leadership in helping our community come together around a greater shared vision. With this letter, we wish to confirm our ongoing concerns as well as our understanding of what you committed to during our discussion.</p> <p>Thank you for confirming that if the proposal by NDC remains unchanged, you will vote against it. Thanks for ensuring that we will get more time to evaluate the site plan, as well as the city’s and NDC’s traffic studies, once finalized. Thanks too for confirming that the community will be given adequate time to consider design revisions prior to the Council taking the definitive vote on a revised NDC site plan. Your priorities - more public space, moving the elevator, resolving how layby and trash recycling would work - are a good place to start. We also urge closer attention to some of the other critical items raised in the October resolution.</p> <p>With respect to any further negotiations between NDC and the Co-op, we agree with your sense that those discussions must include observers. Please make sure the observers are other than City staff and that any observer brings an attitude of genuine goodwill and desire for progress for all.</p> <p>We hope you heard our serious concerns that City staff are far too biased in favor of NDC to evaluate aspects of the development objectively and represent community interests. (For example, given that the Council had already asked NDC to reduce the size of the building by taking off the 3rd floor, why didn’t staff bring up the issue of the height of the building in the site plan? Why hasn’t staff pointed out that the facade prepared by Streetsense is not to scale? Why hasn’t the staff helped Council members focus on the divergence between the guidelines in Res 2017-53 and the most recent site plan? In one conversation with staff, a comment was made that the Co-op would be gone in 3-5 years. In another, a staff member when pressed said the city used to support the Co-op, implying that they no longer did. In City website language, the lay-by has been referred to as a definite element rather than a possible one. Language was changed when this was pointed out.)</p>

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4/30	Amy Alderfer	2	<p>Dear Kacy,</p> <p>I don't believe we have met, but I live in the city ward you represent and I wanted to let you know my thoughts about the proposed development at the Junction. I am concerned about its impacts on the Co-op.</p> <p>If we truly care about the environment, we should support this business that provides an important source of healthy food within our community and is within walking distance for many people in Takoma Park. Being able to walk to buy food is doubly healthy -- for the people who walk and for the environment through reduced car miles. Not every community is so fortunate to have a store like the Co-op within an easy distance.</p> <p>In addition, the Co-op as a non-profit, is unlike many other food businesses, and deliberately contributes to the life of the community in ways that many for-profit businesses are unwilling to do. Through participation in city events as well as events they put on, they bring people together in thoughtful ways. Just one example: did you live in Takoma when they had a project to make a small mound garden on their property with high school students, as a way to demonstrate and educate about this African gardening technique?</p> <p>The Co-op does not serve only Takoma residents, but it is an important part of our community. I hope you will join me and the many others in Takoma and the surrounding area who support the on-going viability and service of the Co-op. It is not like other for-profit businesses and should be supported with what it needs to continue to serve our community. I urge you to be thoughtful as you and other members of the Council deliberate about the Junction development, and I hope you will proceed in support of the Co-op.</p> <p>Thank you. Amy Alderfer</p>
4/30	Sharon Burke	2	<p>Thank you for the recent display regarding the development of Takoma Junction (on the actual site, no less). As a resident of the directly affected neighborhood and longtime member of the Co-Op, I appreciated the opportunity to see the plans and talk to city staff. I just wanted to express my support for the project — it will be wonderful to add services to this part of the city, as well as to convert a generally underutilized and not particularly lovely parking lot into a revenue-generating resource for all residents of the city (and beyond) to enjoy.</p> <p>My only question would be why the city didn't cross the street and redevelop the odd little concrete structure and small parking lot at the corner of Carroll and Ethan Allen? The structure looks pretty derelict, and it's basically never used — or if it is used, it's by people who don't seem entirely sober (which may explain why it often smells of urine). I do use the EV chargers at that parking lot occasionally, but it is not an easy lot to get in and out of, which is probably the reason there aren't usually many cars parked there. It would be great to see that site improved, as well.</p> <p>Thank you, Sharon E. Burke</p>
4/30	Kathie Hart	1	<p>I've followed with interest the protracted negotiations about the use of the parking lot next to the Co-op on Carroll Ave. Unfortunately, in my view, these negotiations are not over. The current site plan falls far short of the original plan / promise to the residents. The "community space" is practically non-existent. The lay-by for 18 wheel trucks on Carroll at what is already an overcrowded intersection is not workable. And the subsidy being paid (ie: not charged) to the developer for the first 10 years is not in line with the current norms or with our values as a community. I urge you and the board to reject this plan as it has not met the criteria for going forward.</p> <p>Kathie Hart</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