

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION**

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
4/4	Norka Ruiz Bravo	2	<p>Dear Mayor Stewart:</p> <p>I noticed that in your blog of 03/29/18 you reiterated that "The Council has repeatedly stated that we want the Co-op to thrive and continue to be an integral part of our community, and we believe we can both redevelop the parking lot and continue to have a vibrant and successful Co-op.?"</p> <p>I am in full agreement with that wish, but would add that I would like to have a vibrant and successful Co-op in its current location.</p> <p>I also noticed that you made no mention of the Co-op in your list of items that form part of your "personal vision for Takoma Junction?". Does this mean that your personal vision for the Junction may or may not include the Co-op?</p> <p>Equally troubling for me is that your stated personal vision for the Junction failed to include any mention of vehicular or pedestrian traffic, which as you know, is already difficult, in the absence of any additional development.</p> <p>How will development of the Junction improve (or at the very least, please, not make worse) the current vehicular and pedestrian traffic issues?</p> <p>The most recent version of the NDC plan failed to address adequately the Co-op's needs for loading/unloading, and failed to convincingly address the Junction's very real traffic issues.</p> <p>I trust that you and others on the Council will not approve any development plan that does not fully address these issues.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention.</p>
4/7	Edwin Welles	3	<p>Hello City Council Members and Mayor</p> <p>Please reject the currently proposed Takoma Junction site plan.</p> <p>I can easily imagine a development plan for that site which would improve the Junction. The Site Plan proposed by NDC is not that development.</p> <p>The space for deliveries and refuse removal is too small and will have a substantial negative impact on the tiny open space proposed.</p> <p>The open space is too small.</p> <p>There is not sufficient parking to sustain the development's retail spaces and office spaces.</p> <p>Please insist NDC propose a plan which will blend with the community and not cause greater vehicular difficulties and result in retail businesses failing in the building.</p>

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4/7	Roger Schlegel	3	<p>Hello Council Members,</p> <p>I'm writing as a resident who has been carefully studying and following issues related to Takoma Junction since 2010. I served as Co-Secretary of the Takoma Junction Task Force, and in that capacity I drafted the Vision Statement and took the lead in bringing together various members' and committees' contributions to produce the final report. As a member of the Community Outreach subcommittee of the Task Force, I joined with Meghan Gallagher and Kay Daniels Cohen to conduct an extensive series of outreach sessions with over 150 neighborhood residents and other stakeholders to gain a sense of the community's interests with respect to the Junction. I also took the lead in digesting and summarizing all available former studies related to the Junction dating back into the 1990s, including the Old Takoma- commissioned market study. I also undertook detailed counts and measurements of available parking spaces and contributed to the Task Force report's section on options for improved traffic flow.</p> <p>I watched the NDC/StreetSense presentation of the Site Plan on Wednesday evening and took detailed notes. I am offering my analysis of that presentation, and of the Site Plan, below. An important caveat is that I am assuming there are no additional site plan details available other than those provided visually and verbally in the presentation. My understanding is that NDC's full site plan would be posted to the City website by Thursday, and all I can find are the Site Plan slideshow and the video of the presentation.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration of this analysis, which follows.</p> <p>-----</p>

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4/7	Roger Schlegel (cont.-1)	3	<p>ANALYSIS OF HOW WELL THE NDC/STREETSENSE SITE PLAN (April 4, 2018) PRESENTATION RESPONDED TO COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2017-53 (October 25, 2017)</p> <p>- Roger Schlegel</p> <p>I think that NDC has failed to meet most of the Council's eleven (11) requests in Resolution 2017-53 and that it's time to move on. Below is my breakdown of how NDC and StreetSense responded to the resolution. To summarize, NDC's draft site plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fails to meet items #1, 2, 3, 5, and 7.</li> <li>- Fails to respond to items #6, 8, 9, and 10.</li> <li>- Responds adequately to item #4.</li> <li>- Doesn't provide enough information about negotiations or agreements with the Co-op relevant to item #11.</li> </ul> <p>We have to assume that this is just about the best possible site plan that NDC can come up with, given that they have had months to respond to the Council's requests. With NDC having responded adequately to just one of the eleven requests, it doesn't make sense to continue negotiating with them.</p> <p>RESOLUTION ITEM (1) A large amount of vibrant, comfortable, and easily accessible street-level public space that functions as a community gathering spot, does not require the purchase of food or beverage to use, and is accessible for year-round use.</p> <p>- DRAFT SITE PLAN FAILS TO MEET #1: A space that hugs the street edge, as the NDC design does, is not "vibrant" or "comfortable." If such a space were "vibrant" and "comfortable," we would see people flocking to the picnic table near the Co-op entrance. I've tried snacking there with my kids, and it's an "ugly" place to be, in the unsolicited opinion of my 10-year old daughter. The reason is obvious: you're too close to the traffic, and it leaves you feeling on edge. The NDC designed space is even worse because it's going to be in near-perpetual shadow. (Their artist's rendering depicts a sunny facade, which isn't going to be the case except in the summer months in the early morning or the end of the day.)</p>

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION**

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4/7	Roger Schlegel (cont.-2)	3	<p>RESOLUTION ITEM (2) DRAFT SITE PLAN FAILS TO MEET #2: 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>- The lay-by adds many feet, and much extra time, to the delivery path for the people off-loading goods or loading trash and recycling. The lay-by is likely to be blocked at times with drivers who are standing to pick up passengers. The lay-by, when occupied by a truck or by cars, will cause additional trucks to double-park illegally and block traffic. The lay-by, when occupied by a truck, will be an ugly thing for people in the proposed "cafe" and other shops to look out at. The lay-by, when occupied by a truck, will make for a scary passage for cyclists and will encourage them to clog up the sidewalk. The lay-by, being so close to the main crosswalk, will create a hazard for children crossing, who are hard to see from the cab of a truck. It won't be possible to coordinate the timing of deliveries to the multiple businesses who will need to use the lay-by.</p> <p>RESOLUTION ITEM (3) Placement of the elevator or elevators in a location that serves patrons and tenants conveniently, including patrons of the TPSS Co-op.</p> <p>- DRAFT SITE PLAN FAILS TO MEET #3: The elevator is at the wrong end of the development and makes for the maximum possible travel distance for patrons of the TPSS Co-op. These are the patrons who might be using shopping carts and having to negotiate the twisty sidewalk to get to that elevator. If people take carts to the parking level, it will be very hard for a Co-op employee to return multiple carts to the Co-op.</p> <p>RESOLUTION ITEM (4) A street-facing facade design that consists of large storefront windows on the retail level and includes exciting or iconic features that evoke the spirit of Takoma Park.</p> <p>- DRAFT SITE PLAN MEETS #4: The facade looks nice, with lateral variety and interesting details.</p> <p>RESOLUTION ITEM (5) Massing that fits with the area and is comfortable for those using and passing by the site on Carroll, Sycamore, and Columbia Avenues.</p> <p>- DRAFT SITE PLAN FAILS TO MEET #5: The massing doesn't fit with the area because it pushes so far back into the existing woods, because it casts a big shadow over the sidewalk and street, and because it will loom over Columbia Avenue. The structure is better suited to New Hampshire Avenue when that area begins to redevelop further after the Bus Rapid Transit line and Purple Line stations are in place.</p>

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4/7	Roger Schlegel (cont.-3)	3	<p>RESOLUTION ITEM (6) Appropriate landscaping and building facade design of the Columbia Avenue side of the property that improves the appearance of the green space and would help address environmental sustainability and other goals for the project.</p> <p>- DRAFT SITE PLAN FAILS TO RESPOND TO #6: All I can find on the City website is the slide presentation from Wednesday night. I watched the entire site plan presentation, and there was no description of these items. NDC/StreetSense have failed to provide any sense of these items although they did tell you that they would provide these when you asked the question. It's important to note that on this count, they have definitely failed to fulfill the requirements of Resolution 2017-53.</p> <p>RESOLUTION ITEM (7) Design features that will preserve and improve alternatives to automotive transportation.</p> <p>- DRAFT SITE PLAN FAILS TO MEET #7: The NDC/StreetSense site plan does the opposite. The Capital Bikeshare rack is eliminated. There is minimal space for locking privately owned bikes or for dropping rental bikes. The bus stop is eliminated with no clear plan for relocation. The sidewalk is no longer straight; it is twenty feet longer with four more turns. There is no provision for pedestrian access through the woods from Columbia Avenue as the Takoma Junction Task Force recommended. There is greater danger to pedestrians at the relocated driveway because, for drivers turning left into the driveway, pedestrian visibility is obscured by the plantings at the "public space" next to the driveway. The recently established crosswalk at Grant Avenue passes directly in front of the lay-by, which creates a safety hazard for small children. The lay-by creates a situation that cyclists will perceive as more hazardous, which will funnel some onto the sidewalk and create more conflicts with pedestrians.</p> <p>RESOLUTION ITEM (8) Details regarding parking options for off-site businesses located in the Takoma Junction.</p> <p>- DRAFT SITE PLAN FAILS TO RESPOND TO #8: NDC has not provided details beyond saying that there will be 72 spaces in total, and that some "may" be set aside for Co-op patrons. The indication given at the presentation was that all of these spaces would be metered. If the parking rates inside the garage are higher than those on the surrounding streets (and we know they will be more expensive than the free spaces on Columbia and in other neighborhoods and in the Co-op's Sycamore parking lot), we are likely to see people circling the neighborhood and/or taking permitted spaces in the neighborhood or restricted spaces in the Co-op (e.g. buying one item in the Co-op and then doing other activities in the new building). There's no clarity as to how many spaces will be reserved for employees or staff involved with enterprises/offices in the new building. NDC has failed to provide details and has thus failed to respond to Resolution 2017-53.</p>

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4/7	Roger Schlegel (cont.-4)	3	<p>RESOLUTION ITEM (9) Design and construction features which satisfy the requirements for LEED Gold or higher certification from the U.S. Green Building Council or an equivalent certification.</p> <p>- DRAFT SITE PLAN FAILS TO PROVIDE ENOUGH INFORMATION TO RESPOND TO #9: We didn't see enough details on this. We saw that the facility will have operable windows and a partial green roof. In particular we didn't see details on how much of the woods would be removed to make way for the "bio-retention" feature. However, based on the company's track record, we can assume that they will find a way to meet LEED Gold standards.</p> <p>RESOLUTION ITEM (10) Details necessary to provide reasonable accommodation to the TPSS Co-op for access for loading of deliveries, customer parking, and continued operations during construction.</p> <p>- DRAFT SITE PLAN FAILS TO RESPOND TO #10: We didn't get any details on this in the NDC/StreetSense presentation, so they have failed to meet the requirements of Resolution 2017-53.</p> <p>RESOLUTION ITEM (11) Identifies any resolution or agreement reached between NDC and the TPSS Co-op regarding shared facade design or other improvements that would enhance the aesthetic appeal of the whole commercial strip between Sycamore Avenue and the fire station.</p> <p>- DRAFT SITE PLAN DOES NOT PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT #11: No agreement was described or represented visually in the site plan presentation. No details on negotiations in progress were provided.</p>
4/7	Kathleen Breckbill	2	<p>Missing elements:</p> <p>Loading space very bad - both for Co-Op and any new business.</p> <p>Where is the bus stop?</p> <p>Where are dumpsters for trash and recycling?</p> <p>Bike parking smaller than current.</p>
4/7	Daniel Seligman	?	<p>I lived for ten years at 7327 Carrroll Ave in Takoma Park, four or five houses from the Junction, and served on the Takoma Junction Task Force that set forth guidelines for development on the C1 Parcel. I think the proposed development is a pretty faithful reflection of what the committee recommended and believe the proposed design will be an long-term asset to the community. While I'm no longer a Takoma Park resident, I shop often at the Coop and visit the Junction frequently, and believe this concept represents a signficiant improvement. I'd urge the City Council to vote "yes." Thank you!!</p>
4/7	Glenda Kapsalis	1	<p>This plan seriously hampers several issues. The co-op which is a vital part of our community is being denied appropriate access, parking, and convenience for those with shopping carts going to their cars. The co-op was treated as an ordinary grocery store, which it is NOT. Funds are not unlimited in order to feed into lucrative development companies. The idea of delivery trucks parking on Carroll Avenue, right in front of supposed outdoor seating is preposterous ! My husband specializes in vehicle pollution and the effects on humans. Beyond that, the traffic on Carroll already is very congested and because it is a through route to New Hampshire area the cars and trucks are going quite fast and regularly run the red lights at that intersection of many streets. This also is a very common route for emergency vehicles and having large delivery trucks parked on the same street right at an intersection of multiple streets is going to make crossing at that intersection, frequently used by school children, extremely dangerous. If the object of the development company is to put a small specialized grocery out of business so they can build and bring in a chain grocery, then they may succeed at doing that, but we assure you that we will end up shopping elsewhere and feel very betrayed by the community that holds its sense of neighborhood dear.</p>

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4/7	Janet Baldwin	6	<p>* Please ensure that this plan attends to the walkability of downtown and commercial and community common areas.</p> <p>* Residents and visitors appreciate the diversity and quiriness of our neighborhoods and the activist history and emphasis on community that are longtime hallmarks of Takoma Park. Please ensure that this new development not only meets important needs of public gathering spaces, new businesses, and parking, but also integrates the long time values of our community.</p> <p>* Takoma Park needs to address its parking problems, which have become worse in recent years, decades, as new and desirable restaurants and cafes have increased in number. These dinging establishments have increased the walkability of the community and provided opportunities for neighbors and visitors to mingle and socialize. However, they also have increased the traffic coming in to the City.</p> <p>* It sounds like the City and the planners are trying to address all this by increasing options for transportation beyond car culture. I hope you are successful. The underground parking option is a good component of the plan.</p> <p>* I am concerned about how all this is supposed to work. If open community space is available on Carroll Avenue, intended to provide areas for the public to sit and socialize, how do you plan to provide access to delivery and garbage trucks? The proposed plan appears to have both these activities occurring in the same Carroll Street. The open seating areas, intended for community spaces, should not have to compete with gasoline fumes from commercial vehicles servicing the Coop and other businesses. Can you consider an option for having these go to the back of the building? Streetscapes are important for preserving the quality of life.</p>
4/7	Rob Carter	1	<p>Thanks very much for providing the opportunity on April 7 to view the project designs for the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment. The design integrates well with the existing environment, and will be a welcome addition to the city! We're all very excited by the prospect of additional opportunities for local businesses to open and thrive in TKPK in a location that is both walkable and easily accessible by public transportation.</p>
4/7	Eloise Carter	1	<p>I think it will be cool to have new businesses in Takoma Junction. I think that a lot of businesses that belong in Takoma Park will have the chance to be in Takoma Park. Also with more and more restaurants leaving Takoma Park we now have space for new restaurants. In 4th grade my class did a project about good businesses that we could add to Takoma junction and I am glad that some of those ideas have the chance to go into Takoma junction. I am so glad that I get to be a part of the redevelopment plans for Takoma junction.</p>
4/7	Michael Reust	1	<p>I like the new draft site plan overall. I like that NDC is thinking about doing some innovative things to the building (e.g. garage door style windows that can open up, a space for art on one space of the building, windows that you can actually open, roof access to upstairs tenants, etc.</p> <p>Question: How will security of the walkway leading back to the rear part of the building on the 1st floor be handled? Will there be a buzzer/camera system or ??</p> <p>Question: Based on the draft site plan, it appears that the width of the access space leading to the rear part of the 1st floor is only about 10' wide. This seems very narrow to me for people and trash/recycle receptacles. I would like NDC to consider widening this walkway to at least 15'.</p> <p>Comment: I hope you keep this building funky. No one I know wants a cookie cutter building. I hope the large art space on the building is edgy and avante garde.</p> <p>Question: Will storm water from the site be diverted to the bio-retention area at the back of the proposed building?</p> <p>I feel there is real momentum now. Please keep it going in the right direction.</p>

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4/7	Todd Fawley-King	1	<p>The proposed development is exceptionally good. Underground parking, accommodating the co-ops traffic (which the co-op apparently can't/won't accommodate on its own property), steel/concrete construction, an attractive design, and a lot of small storefronts.</p> <p>Frankly, the problem with the development is that it isn't dense enough. It should be four stories with apartments on top. Please do not give in to the pressure of the nay-sayers in this community who are scared of any change and want to preserve an unattractive parking lot, or harp about the seating in front not being perfect.</p> <p>I highly encourage you to approve this design, as an urban planning professional I can't foresee another development coming along that improves upon this. Construction costs are high, the development cycle is ending, and retail is extremely challenging. Say yes before you lose the opportunity.</p>
4/7	Lee Peterson	Ward 2	As a resident I am concerned about moving forward on any development to Takoma Junction Development project without the Traffic Impact Study completed, reviewed, and having community input.
4/7	Rob Carter	1	Thanks very much for providing the opportunity on April 7 to view the project designs for the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment. The design integrates well with the existing environment, and will be a welcome addition to the city! We're all very excited by the prospect of additional opportunities for local businesses to open and thrive in TKPK in a location that is both walkable and easily accessible by public transportation.
4/7	Frederica Adelman	?	This plan continues to demonstrate a lack of understanding of current traffic congestion issues and promises to make a bad situation worse. It can take up to 30 minutes during morning and afternoon rush hours to get from Takoma Metro to neighborhoods just beyond the Junction. Furthermore, this plan threatens the Coop by not providing adequate space for deliveries or trash removal, let alone parking for patrons. The plan proposes a development that is far too large for the space, ignores the needs and desires of the residents, and aspires to unrealistic financial goals. The retail spaces across the street have been largely unoccupied (or in use by Historic Takoma) for years. The issue isn't foot traffic, it's inadequate parking and unreasonable traffic congestion. It is hugely disappointing that the mayor and city council members are working with an outside developer to effectively close down the most vibrant and critically needed retail in the entire city. This development is unsound, overly grandiose, unattractive, and ill suited to the area. Please, please, please end this painful and divisive plan and begin again with a more thoughtful and community-based approach.
4/7	Ingrid Chase	NR	<p>I walked to the COOP when it was still on Sligo Ave, Silver Spring. That's when my children were still small. Since the Coop moved to Carroll Ave/410, I had to take the car and in recent years turned into the Coop's parking lot only to find it full and had to circle the block to turn into the adjacent parking lot near the car repair and then shop at the Coop.</p> <p>With this new development, I don't see enough parking spaces for the Coop because there was always enough space to park in the other parking lot, not far to walk to shop and afterwards shlep the groceries to the car. The new design puts all that in jeopardy as nice as it looks in the drawings. I want to preserve enough free parking spots for the Coop (and everyone will park there to get around paying the parking fee of the new garage). That raises a red flag in my mind. It might mean to rather go to Whole Foods which I can easily reach on foot. I consciously choose the Coop, the "local" store over Whole Foods that is now owned by Amazon. How can you guarantee the Coop's survival when you squeeze it like that without any alternative parking that gives easy access to the Coop. If it is too much trouble to get a parking spot, I might stop going there and I don't know how many people will think like me. Think about it. We are talking squeezing the life out of a lovely community store. I think that smaller does it many times. Make the new development smaller and leave enough spaces for garbage hauling, parking for the coop, generous sidewalks to make people safe. I want to support local stores and choose to shop there whenever I can. Don't take that away!</p>



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4/7	Susan Miller	3	<p>1) The entrance/egress to the garage will be dangerous. The lay-by will be dangerous.</p> <p>2) The Co-op will go out of business, and we will be left with no downtown grocery store and some expensive bougie shops and cafes. NDC seems to be thumbing their noses at the City's requirement that they accommodate the Co-op, by putting the elevator at the opposite end of the development.</p> <p>3) The drawings are duplicitous at worst or poorly-researched at best, among other things, showing sunshine on a north-facing building.</p> <p>4) NDC failed to provide the required information on who can access the garage. They have repeatedly failed to answer questions on how many parking spots will be available to the public (i.e. not reserved for specific businesses).</p> <p>5) The public space is a concrete apron abutting traffic and the bus-stop (according the StreetSense guy today when I asked where the bus-stop would go). The City has repeatedly asked them for public open space, and they have reduced that space with each new design, even taking away the public rooftop and making it private. I'm not sure why the City is putting up with this blatant disregard for the Council's own directions to the developer.</p> <p>6) You (and we) have documentation that a majority of opinions sent to the City have been against this development (not ALL development). It's time to pull the plug on the lousy Brian Kenner process, push the reset button, and regain the confidence of residents. Then, invite our community's own architects and urban planners and landscape designers to create revitalization plans for this public land that will allow off-street deliveries and will not contribute to traffic and safety hazards. Then, hire people to make it happen. I look forward to the re-unification of Takoma Park behind a new plan.</p>
4/8	Roland Weiss	3	<p>In response to my question, the NDC representative said that they do not envision making any changes to the site plan in response to traffic study results. He described these as being separate, with the state being responsible for making improvements that would handle the traffic. It occurred to me that the proposed site plan may be the minimum that NDC needs to have a profitable development and might not be able to make further reductions.</p> <p>There are significant physical and financial limitations on what road improvements can feasibly be made in the Junction. Based on my experience in other types of engineering projects, I would expect an initial analysis to performed at this point to determine whether feasible improvements exist that could handle the additional traffic that the site plan will generate. If not, the site plan will need to be changed. This analysis does not need to be detailed, the idea is to determine if you're in the ballpark.</p> <p>It saves time and money to determine this feasibility earlier rather than later.</p>
4/8	Roland Weiss	3	<p>If the city approves the site plan, is NDC prevented from proceeding if state does not fund and make the necessary road improvements to handle the traffic? In other words, is NDC's ability to proceed with the development contingent on the traffic improvements being made?</p>
4/8	Roland Weiss	3	<p>In response to a question, the NDC representative said they would not accommodate trash pickup from Carroll Avenue, and CoOp trash would have to be picked up from their side lot. This is different from what I recall at the earlier meetings. I suspect that the residents on Sycamore will not want trash to be picked up there due to the noise.</p>
4/8	Roland Weiss	3	<p>I've seen a recent proposal there should be a requirement that businesses in the Junction be locally owned. I do not agree with that. I have been a client of the Takoma Park Animal Clinic since they opened, and I am a frequent customer of Springmill Bakery. I am a frequent customer at Ace Hardware in Old Town. The manager, Eric, is very responsive to local needs and has won the Azalea Award. With retail like this I am able to do much of my shopping locally, reducing my need to drive.</p>
4/8	Roland Weiss	3	<p>I was pleased to see that the revised site plan eliminates the third floor that was proposed in the previous version.</p>
4/8	Roland Weiss	3	<p>Elevations and drawings showing views from the rear of the property (Sycamore, Columbia, Poplar) should be provided, similar to those provided from Carroll Ave.</p>

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4/8	Steve Silverman	1	<p>The [City's] response points out there will be public benefits from private development , which is kind of a straw man (and some of those asserted benefits — like less of a carbon heat source from less asphalt — smack of clutching at a different type of straw). Shumans main point is that public development would produce more public benefit which is not addressed. More concerning is that the response isn't written conditionally but as if a final decision already had been made. This is not a sign of good faith discussion of what are vexing and troublesome issues associated with this still only potential development.</p>
4/9	Lisa May	1	<p>My family have been Takoma Park residents for this entire century, having moved here in 2000. While I love having shiny new things (Republic! Takoma Beverage! Roscoe's! Busboys!), I don't support having everything we love disappear. One of the first things we did when we moved here was join the Co-op. We shop at our Co-op regularly and love its recent remodel...and have no interest in forcing them to remodel again, or worse, close. Any development option that forces either of these outcomes is unacceptable.</p> <p>Further, the traffic on Philadelphia, Ethan Allen, Carroll, and Piney Branch is nearly unbearable as it is. As a long-time bike commuter, I've witnessed an increase in hateful and dangerous driving behavior from people mostly on their way to elsewhere, who are frustrated with being snarled in the bottleneck that is Takoma Park. Our household also has multiple drivers including me, all of whom are just as frustrated with running even the most basic errands such as going to the Post Office or bank.</p> <p>Our City needs to prioritize better traffic management, bike infrastructure, and our community-owned Co-op ahead of additional development and poorly thought-out parking and intersections. I am not in the slightest opposed to new and shiny things, but Takoma Park needs to eat its vegetables before starting on dessert. Take care of the quality-of-life fundamentals first.</p>

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4/9	Bruce Kozarsky	1	<p>Dear Mayor Stewart and Members of the City Council,</p> <p>I have reviewed the draft site plan presented by NDC and Streetsense at your April 4th meeting and come to one overwhelming and inescapable conclusion: They are insulting your intelligence.</p> <p>Rather than make a good faith effort to address the concerns you raised in Resolution 2017-53, they have met just one of the 11 guidelines delineated on page 4 of the resolution (Item #4) ? they have indeed come up with an architecturally appealing design. But cosmetics do not make for a successful development. The underlying substance and workability of the development matters far more.</p> <p>On Item #1, public space, what they?ve come up with is a joke. It?s a tiny area ? far less than the 40? x 65? dimensions NDC claims because that includes the sidewalk and area bordering the street. But even that would be de minimus. A few friends or small groups might be able to gather and chat, but no public events of any size could occur, much less community-wide events like the Truckgarten.</p> <p>On Item #2, the lay-by will cause massive traffic problems, and rather than constitute ?reasonable accommodation to the TPSS Co-op,? it will be tantamount to a death sentence. As delivery truck drivers have testified, there are often two or three trucks unloading there at the same time, and under a lay-by situation, they will double-park to unload, because that is what they always do under these circumstances. In addition, the distance from the back of an 18-wheeler in the lay-by to the Co-op?s delivery entrance is more than 200 feet and requires crossing the sidewalk. Many of the items they unload are large crates, far bigger than pallets or boxes. And the draft site plan makes zero provision for the location and pickup of trash and recycling. This will not work for anyone, including any new restaurant or caf?.</p> <p>On Item #3, the elevator does not conveniently serve Co-op patrons.</p> <p>On Item #5, the building footprint covers almost every square foot possible of the buildable land. It is massively out of proportion to the area. I venture to guess its footprint will be larger than any building in a one-mile radius. And the rear retaining wall appears to infringe on the woods in the back of the site.</p>

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	Bruce Kozarsky (cont.-1)	1	<p>Item #6 is not addressed in the draft site plan.</p> <p>On Item #7, the draft site plan does the opposite. It will undermine ?alternatives to automotive transportation? by removing the bike share station, by making the road even more dangerous to cyclists with the lay-by, and by making no provision whatsoever for the safe location of bus stops.</p> <p>On Item #8, NDC said nothing about parking options for off-site businesses.</p> <p>On Item #9, NDC said it hoped for LEED Gold but certainly couldn?t document whether it would meet these standards.</p> <p>On Item #10, NDC offered not one detail about how the Co-op?s operations would be protected during construction. In fact, continuity seems impossible, given the massive footprint and the underground garage, which goes underneath the sidewalk right up to the street edge. As a result, the entire sidewalk and at least one lane of Carroll Avenue will have to be blocked for an extended period of time. How will the Co-op receive deliveries and have trash and recycling picked up? And pedestrian access will be severely infringed. Again, this is a death sentence for the Co-op.</p> <p>Item #11 is not addressed by the draft site plan.</p> <p>Your word matters, but NDC apparently doesn?t value it. Their proposal offers the cosmetics you want and throws a few fig leaves your way, but otherwise they?re thumbing their noses at you.</p> <p>That same attitude has been apparent from day one. The bid-winning proposal NDC submitted maintained the Co-op?s off-street loading and delivery area. Then, they did a ?bait and switch? with later plans changing it to the lay-by and threatening the Co-op?s survival as a result.</p> <p>That?s why I urge you to demand that NDC go back to its bid-winning proposal, with off-street loading and delivery, and come up with a new draft site plan. Eliminating the rear half of the building (which will generate the least revenue anyway), and replacing it with a driveway for trucks and perhaps above-ground parking as well, is one way this could happen. You should also demand a further reduction in the footprint to accommodate a true public gathering space.</p>

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	Bruce Kozarsky (cont.-2)	1	<p>Beyond this, there are fundamental flaws in the City's approach to this development that transcend the draft site plan. As independent expert Michael Shuman noted in his report on the development, the City is undercharging NDC by approximately \$5 million in the first 50 years. Over the first five years, the City will receive less money from NDC for leasing the entire lot than it currently receives from the Co-op for a tiny portion of it. The back-loaded structuring of the lease makes no sense. In years 51-99, most of us will no longer be on the planet and NDC will likely have long sold the building anyway.</p> <p>Furthermore, you should insist on much stronger provisions requiring the tenants of any new development to be small local businesses, because that will generate the greatest public economic benefit. Locally-owned global franchises are not what our community is looking for. Do we really benefit with Baskin &amp; Robbins and Verizon as our local shops?</p> <p>Above all, this is public land. It should be used for the public good. But under the NDC plan, most of the benefit will flow into private hands, and the public's interest in maintaining our walkable community-owned grocery store and improving safety at the Junction will be harmed. Please uphold this fundamental principle, act in your constituents' best interest and hold NDC accountable for failing to follow the guidelines in your resolution. Thank you.</p>
4/9	Sue Katz-Miller	?	<p>What I liked about the new design: They took off the "third floor." I like the facade.</p> <p>Problems with the new design: As Roger Schlegel has pointed out, they did not respond to most of the City's requests/requirements in the resolution. Specifically, the lay-by will not be safe and will put the Co-op out of business, as described by everyone from the truck drivers to the fire chief last Thursday. Instead of a patch of grass with visible trees and sky next to the Co-op, we will apparently have a trash ally. I shudder to think about how it will smell. The "public space" is not even the size they say it is, because pedestrians (and bikers) will not take the longer sidewalk path, but will cut straight across it. The "public space" is adjacent to the entrance/exit to the garage, which is not a safe place to hang out with children. The grass next to the Co-op now is far safer. The "public space" and the entire sidewalk strip will be in shadow, not sunshine as in the drawing, because it faces north. A concrete pad is not attractive as a public space. Veteran's Plaza was far nicer when we had the astroturf there. I have half a mind to request astroturf. At least it would be fun, instead of looking like a little plaza in front of a downtown bank or office building. I was stunned to see the roof-deck become a private space. Again, no real intent to make this a public gathering space for anyone but those with the money to use it. I was stunned to see no outdoor seating for the cafes, which I thought was going to be one of the attractions of this whole development. Maybe it was felt that this would make the "haves" and "have nots" more obvious if restaurant patrons ate outside, given what the pricing is going to have to be for a restaurant paying \$45/sqft. The entrance/exit to the garage simply will not work. At rush hour, you cannot take a RIGHT turn coming out of that lot, let alone a left turn. People are going to feel trapped in the garage. (Even on the lot they feel trapped because of the difficulty exiting, despite blue sky and a treeline and clear sight lines).</p>

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4/9	Sue Katz-Miller (cont.)		<p>Given that NDC has been asked repeatedly to accommodate Co-op shoppers, including in very specific terms in your last resolution, putting the elevator on the opposite side of the development from the Co-op demonstrates either total incompetence, or contempt.</p> <p>We have no details on how the garage would be kept safe and clean. I was just at Washington Hospital Center, and the garage and stairwell stink of urine and are covered with trash. As is the tiny corridor to our Metro station elevator. Dark concrete spaces are used this way. And women (and some men) don't feel safe in them.</p> <p>We have no details on how many parking spaces would be available for ANY member of the public (as opposed to shoppers at a specific store) and what the pricing would be. This is not a small detail: it speaks to whether or not this is going to be a primarily private or public space.</p> <p>If this development succeeds economically (a big question), we will gain a few more expensive shops, a cafe, a restaurant, and offices. Takoma has shops, and restaurants, and offices. But we will lose our only downtown grocery store, which employs some 50 people from around the world, and attracts shoppers from throughout the region seeking a store based on ecological and ethical values. And you will lose the support of dozens of key community leaders, and the close to 1000 people on the Community Vision list. We are not a few scroungy old NIMBY hippies. We are in fact the clear majority of the people who have contacted you, as evidenced by the emails we requested.</p> <p>It's not too late. Activated by this process, the community and local and national placemaking experts are ready to pitch in to find funding for a visionary transformation of the lot with flexible open space for both deliveries and coffeeshop/events/concerts/beerfests/pop-ups, and new landscaping that will encourage use of this town center. I am an optimist, and will remain excited about this alternative, until the last possible moment. - Thank you,</p>
4/9	INAN PHILLIPS	3	As you have seen on the NDC aerial view of the site, our roof top is covered by solar panels and I fear that a 3 story tower on the proposed building will have damaging impact on the ability of my solar panels to generate electricity. Any considerations made to accommodate this source of green energy which is so fitting for Takoma Park environmental policies?
4/9	Margaret . (Meg) Royce	2	<p>I would like to request all City Council members to watch the video of the April 5th meeting at the Firehouse with Maryland State Highway Administrators. The mayor and at least two council members were there. This was an extremely important meeting. I believe in order for the Council to vote on this issue it is important for ALL council members to hear what was said particularly from the Fire Chief, truckers that deliver produce and will not wait for the layby but will simply double park, and all the other folks that live and commute around the already congested and dangerous Junction.</p> <p>Please those of you who were not there please take the time to watch the meeting.</p> <p>Thank you, Meg Royce</p>
4/9	Joan Meier	3	I can't tell from just looking at the sketches (1) how the street - + traffic - are affected; (2) where the co-op is and how it functions. These (esp #2) are critical to me.
4/9	Amy Finkelstein	2	The City Council needs to reevaluate the plan to address issues with the TPSS Co-op, including: accommodations of delivery trucks, traffic congestion and safety access to parking, trash storage, and pickup, and business continuity during construction. We support the TPSS Co-op as a community asset that needs the City's assistance to continue in operation.

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4/9	Roland Weiss	3	<p>There are obviously physical and financial constraints on what road improvements can be made in the Junction, and thus how much the capacity and flow of traffic in the Junction can be improved. I think the Council needs to better understand whether the proposed site plan appears feasible/plausible from a traffic perspective given these constraints before NDC proceeds with developing more detailed designs.</p> <p>It wasn't clear to me whether or how much NDC anticipated changing the proposed site plan based on the traffic analyses. They did say that the types of tenants affects the amount of traffic generated.</p> <p>I would think that such studies could be conducted now using traffic modeling tools and the current and projected traffic data, combined with the judgement of experienced engineers of how much the road capacity can realistically be improved. Alternative traffic scenarios could also be modeled to get a handle on this. I think the traffic debate would be much improved with such analyses results.</p> <p>Feasibility studies like this are customary on the engineering projects I've worked on (albeit in other disciplines). The process is typically iterative. Now is a good time. it's easier, less expensive, and faster in the long run to alter a site plan than detailed designs.</p>
4/9	Bradley Decker	2	<p>We represent our the Between The Creeks Neighborhood Association (Long Branch / Sligo Creek). We strongly support the TPSS Co-op and their continued operation. The new plan as presented raises serious concerns regarding the Co-ops operation including: accommodation of delivery trucks, traffic congestion and safety, access to parking, trash storage and pickup, and business continuity during construction. We request that the City Council reevaluate the plan to address these issues and ensure that the Co-op will continue to flourish as a business and a community asset. We recommend that the plan not be approved until these issues are fully addressed and the Co-op has agreed with the plan.</p>
4/9	Betsi Taylor	3	<p>I want to know where we place the bus stop, bike share, and crossroads. Thank you.</p> <p>I feel the ----- sustainability of the proposed development is not -----.</p> <p>Cars only will pollute our air.</p> <p>Congestion will scare bikes and pedestrians away</p>
4/9	Scott Gilkeson	3	<p>Was hoping for more space for small restaurants - only one now, plus a cafe - and more space in front for people - also, no good way to deal w/ smelly trash.</p> <p>Need a reset on relationship w/ co-op, which I really want to succeed - how do they survive construction?</p> <p>Can there be a way to have access in back (even if it meant less space in front)?</p> <p>Can't maximize footprint and still accommodate people/services in the way the junction should and still need a reasonable traffic plan/street crossing</p>
4/9	Joseph Klockner	?	<p>The project is way oversized and much too dense.</p> <p>Fine project for New Hampshire Avenue or a more urban setting, but not for our "sylvan suburb."</p> <p>The concept is uninspiring and not innovative.</p> <p>It will not be "funky + functional" - especially not functional.</p> <p>as is, It will undoubtedly damage the co-op if not put it out of business entirely.</p> <p>Please revisit!</p>

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4/9	Jan Stovall	3	Where to begin? First and foremost my concern is traffic! Since I love on Columbia and my driveway exits/enters from Carroll Ave, I'm severely impacted. As it is, it's difficult to get into my driveway sometimes. Will the proposed development and increased traffic, there will be a lot of cut through traffic. Columbia is problematic because it's one of the two streets without speed humps - it's treated as a one way, cars fly up and down it, and there's a blind curve on it, along with sidewalks on only one side of the street where the blind curve exists. (I've already lost one driver's side rearview mirror and a sideswiped door.) I hope that the traffic study took Columbia's problems into consideration.
4/9	Lisa Cookson	1	awesome - about time we have improvements! thank you
4/9	Seth Green	3	Let's do this!
4/9	Suellen Schlievert	3	Can we just put this on a ballot, shut down the small, but vocal haters & move this thing forward?
4/9	Ben Rosenthal	1	I am generally quite enthusiastic about how this has shaped up. I think the scale is appropriate for the setting and will bring benefits far beyond the present blacktop. I wonder if an escalator for grocery carts could ease transport to underground parking garage? Attention to location of bus stop is needed. Some concern over adequacy of "pull off" for deliveries. (P.S. I am a longstanding member of the TPSS Co-Op)
4/9	Nancy Martin	1	The new design seems to have responded to some of the design concerns the community has raised. Sorry to see NDC remove community space! Issues of pedestrian & parker use still need to be refined. Would like to see more details on NDC's plan for buses, ----, & pedestrians. Keep this process moving forward!
4/9	Bruce Kozansky	1	NDC/Streetsense is insulting the intelligence of the council. Their plan brazenly violates #1,2,3,5,7,10 and 11 of our October resolution. It only meets #4. Hold them accountable! Demand real public space. And demand off-street loading! Otherwise, this will be a death sentence for the co-op and create a traffic safety nightmare.
4/9	Megan Scriner	1	1) The development runs counter to almost all of the Takoma Park City resolution - why is the city not demanding that NDC meet its resolution? Until NDC seriously addressing the resolutions - all --- on this should be on hold. It is an insult to the Council + the City residents to move ahead without addressing this.
4/9	Susan Schreiber	1	Many Questions: Elevator needs to be moved to the side for Co-op parking & deliveries by vendors. Major traffic concerns Need ----- paid parking. Trash & recycling ----- Please require local businesses, non-franchised chains.
4/9	Karen Elrich	5	I want a referendum on this issue. This will divide our community and place many of the residents against the city government. Ask us what we want to do with OUR land.



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4/9	Jessica Heppen	2	<p>I'm writing to express strong support for the revitalization of Takoma Junction. I've reviewed the site plans and think this development will be great for Takoma Park, particularly our between-the-creeks (LBS) neighborhood. I especially love that the development provides opportunities for more local businesses, which we love to support, and options for residents - including kids - to socialize with friends within walking distance.</p> <p>I am a co-op member and I support the co-op, but I don't agree with their strong stance against the junction plans. I do not think that we should leave an ill-defined parking lot just because the co-op has determined that would be best for their business. (Personally I believe that developing the area would be very good for the co-op's business.)</p> <p>I know this is all up for discussion again, at this week's city council meeting. I hope that you will vocally support development of the junction-- again, I believe that it would especially benefit our LBS neighborhood. We surely have neighbors with different opinions on the matter, but I do hope you feel able to represent those of us who are excited about the plans, and strongly support the project.</p> <p>Thanks so much for serving our community, Jessica</p>
4/10	Leanne Dougherty	2	<p>Just wanted to send you my quick thoughts about the junction/coop dilemma. I am a coop member and they shared a message today with members about the problems that the NDC proposal would raise. I understand their concerns but felt discouraged that despite a long list of problems, the coop did not offer a single solution. I will send them a message about this to them but wanted you to know that it would be really helpful if they could propose some solutions and not just problems. It comes across that they are not making an effort to compromise. Surely, there are some solutions they can propose that can help move us forward.</p> <p>Just my two cents, Leanne</p>
4/10	Kari McDonough	2	<p>Of top concern to me and my family as you debate plans for the Junction is safety of walkers. I have seen too many close calls. Please put that at the top of criteria in determining future plans.</p> <p>Appreciatively, Kari McDonough</p>
4/10	Linda Rabben	2	<p>I hope the City will take to heart the many concerns expressed by Takoma Park residents about the Junction redevelopment plan. As a longtime resident and Coop member I find the plan to be very poorly conceived, inappropriate for the space and threatening to the character of the neighborhood. The proposed building would be overwhelmingly big and would eliminate parking space for Coop delivery vehicles. The lay-by as indicated on the site plan is completely inadequate. The influx of customers into the underground garage would exacerbate traffic congestion that is already problematic and increase the hazards that already make the Junction dangerous for pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers. With the increase in congestion, drivers are more likely to detour through neighborhood streets. Air and noise pollution from idling vehicles would be hazardous to public health. All of these unaddressed problems would worsen the quality of life in our community. I don't believe the redevelopment plan is consistent with the wishes of Takoma Park residents for quiet, pleasant, green and sustainable surroundings.</p>
4/10	Elizabeth Hagerman	3	<p>Please listen to the testimony from last Thursday on the traffic implications. THE FIRE CHIEF is against the plan. I am pro development, but this is not the development that Takoma Park Junction needs. I am sure there is a solution. Please send it back to the drawing board and lets get a plan that addresses deliveries to all these places, that addresses trash from all these places, and that ensures real public safety regarding traffic.</p> <p>thanks</p>
4/10	Pat Conover		<p>The newest proposal hurts not helps the traffic problem at Takoma Junction. When I shopped at the Co Op today I saw a confused driver frighten a pedestrian. You have to allow for deliveries, trash pickup, slow turns into the driveway, etc. The new proposal just makes things worse.</p>

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4/10	Susanne Lowen	3	The NDC plan fails on so many levels I will not attempt to enumerate them all here but I hope that my City Council will recognize that the 'Draft Site Plan' is not ready for approval and that you will decide to ask NDC to return with a plan that is appropriately scaled (downsized) for the complexities of the Junction; that will serve to unite the economically diverse citizens of our City; that will support one of Takoma Park's largest employers and the heart and spirit of our community, TPSS Co-op. Thank you.
4/10	celine allard	3	In the name of revitalization, Takoma Park's Council is on the verge of approving a plan that will jeopardize the anchor business at Takoma Junction ? the TPSS Co-op ? while benefiting a private developer that is offering minimal green or open space. The financial gains for the city will be outweighed by the harm caused by the loss of the Co-op, traffic and safety nightmares, rising rents, reduced public space, and a blow to our City's core values. We therefore urge you to reconsider the project towards a more acceptable proposal. the Junction is an economic and social hub for the neighborhood, and its disappearance for a more commercial mall (like we see every well) would be a disaster for the city and its inhabitants. Kind regards, Celine Allard
4/10	Matthew Pelton	3	I'm writing because I see that the co-op is again soliciting their members to contact you (the Mayor and City Council members) to voice concerns with the Takoma Junction Development. I would like to re-iterate my strong support for the Junction development plan, and specifically for the Site Plan recently presented by NDC. I think the advantages of the development and of the site plan greatly outweigh the potential issues raised by the co-op board. If the co-op is able to proposed realistic, helpful solutions that are compatible with the overall plan for the Junction development, then they should of course be considered. In the absence of a better solution, though, I sincerely hope the Council will vote to approve the site plan on May 9.
4/10	Elizabeth Keyes	3	Dear Kacy, Thank you for the really helpful set of comments and links about the junction project. I have been following the discussions, but I learned new things. I want to write in support for the overall direction of the project. I think the vision is really good, especially every part of it that supports and (hopefully) enhances the co-op. I have concerns, as do many, about traffic aspects at rush hour, and I hope that these will be considered realistically instead of (to quote one of the books my daughter loves) "optoomuchistically." But knowing how hard you and the Council have been working on this, I trust that you will take the issues to heart! I am not well enough to come speak out on the project at a meeting, but I wanted you to hear my own two cents. If there's a better way to capture some of the positive constituent support for the project, please let me know, and I will do what I can! With gratitude for your hard work on all this.
4/10	Enid & Larry Hodes	?	I oppose the proposed form of Takoma Junction Redevelopment because I believe it will create horrible traffic congestion where 410 and Carroll Avenue join. I think the plan should be scaled down (many fewer stores). The area already has very heavy traffic all during the day. Enid Hodes (Larry is not opposed)
4/10	Dawn Reeves	6	This is Dawn Reeves, a Ward 6 resident, voicing my strong support for the planned Takoma Junction redevelopment. I understand that even though there is a contract in place, opponents are continuing to try to stop the project and that council meetings are disproportionately filled with opponents. Unfortunately I am not able to attend this week's meeting to voice my support, hence my email to you know. I live within walking distance of the Junction and it would be so great to be able to stroll up there with my husband and kids on a weekend or weekday evening and have so many more choices than what is there now -- which has gotten better over the last couple of years but could be a real destination for locals. I am also excited for a new traffic pattern there. Right now it is awful and I try to avoid driving through it at all costs -- taking sometime circoitous routes in order to do so. Please move forward with redevelopment plans. You have my full support

\*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