

PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION

2018 DATE	NAME	WARD*	COMMENT
6/3	Lois Wessel	3	Thank you for your continued efforts to turn the parking lot adjacent to the co-op into a vital space for Takoma Park. I know the process has been met with challenges. I appreciate your on going efforts and dedication to the project and look forward to celebrating there with you in the future.
6/3	Daniel Miller	2	I strongly support takoma junction development. There has been enough delay and coop-centric obstruction. The coop is a business, and an expensive one at that. I urge the council to vote, and to vote in favor of progress, not reactionary fear mongering against change.
6/3	Airi Maeno	3	The new site plan proposed by NDC is attractive, matches the character and tenor of Takoma Park, and provides the much needed (and long awaited) missing piece to a vital piece of Takoma Park. Completing this project is a progressive act that furthers goals such as environmental sustainability, public transit, fostering community, and providing tax revenue to support Takoma Park's social programs. Please do not let a few loud voices derail this project that is so close to fruition. I am counting on your support and your vote to approve the Site Plan. Thank you very much for your dedication and service. I've lived on Spring ave for 10 years now, and would be thrilled to have somewhere for my family and I to walk to easily, where we could meet up with friends and neighbors. Before I moved my family to Takoma Park, I lived in a condo developed by NDC in Columbia Heights and have believed in their work and progress for many years. I am also involved in residential development in Takoma Park, and have supported nearly of our local businesses. I have no doubt that the Junction development would enhance our lives and the lives of my parents who are moving here to retire, down the street from us, and look forward to seeing progress soon.
6/4	Linette Lander	6	Per subject, please move forward with project, and please do not waste public monies on mediation in this case. As evidenced by recent mailings from TPSS, what they want to do is talk - and thereby stall the project. I don't think this is a worthy use of public funds. As a side note, I read that a proponent group for the development seems to believe the Junction development will favorably affect tax rates for residents. I tend to doubt that, just as I doubt that the City will EVER decrease the storm water fee having increased it for a time-limited reason provided by the City. The latter is a particular grievance of mine, since we (TP residents) are paying more, but those residents who do storm water mitigation in Takoma Park do not get the incentives of Montgomery County residents in almost all other locations for the cash outlays. Not the best thing about living in Takoma Park.
6/4	David Keely	3	Thanks for the hard work and listening to everyone's input. It is well past time to move forward with this plan.
6/4	Ellen Fabian	3	I just want to add my voice in favor of a Yes vote by the City Council on the Takoma Junction. I live in Ward 3 on Allegheny Ave. As a senior citizen, the more local businesses available to us, the more likely it is that we will be able to remain in our homes for the long-term.
6/4	Kerry Danner	3	I write to express my continued concern with the lack of push back by the Council and City staff against NDC excessive design that disregards community input and the City's own request. I had not been too directly involved on this issue until I saw how much the development space grew and community space shrank. The current development plan only serves the most economically well off. Middle-income residents, like my family, and lower-income persons will be harmed by higher property valuations and high priced businesses that in effect exclude us. At the May 9 Council meeting, I was distressed to see a basic approach of minor tweaks to NDC's latest proposal not substantive, authentic discussion that aims at building consensus, place-making, and including low-income residents. Please reconsider your approach and ensure that any development directly benefits all residents not just wealthy ones. Councilmembers Kovar and Dyballa, you seem to best understand the needs of the community but you hesitate to forcefully protect the community goods that your comments reveal you understand. Please slow down this process and encourage an increase in community space, place making and community consensus. Councilmember Kostuik, I am gravely concerned of your unilateral support for NDC and unwillingness to fully represent the diverse views of ward three. I see that you are trying to be inclusive but I believe you are doing so in a way that does not grasp the critical issues. For example, you spoke about the possibility of bringing food trucks in. How does this serve the need of the least well off and reduce traffic? You considered how to retain light in the proposed business space as if you planned to enjoy your new remodeled home. Why—at this stage-- is the focus on attractiveness to potential businesses not on how to balance all your constituents concerns?

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6/4	Kerry Danner (con'd)		<p>Councilmember Seamens, I was shocked that in regard to accessing a hypothetical roof restaurant you would say, "sure, you might have to buy a drink." Such a statement reflects a limited and privileged position. How does this work for a family of five or seven?</p> <p>Councilmember Smith, thank you for your courage in not being afraid to disagree with your peers and continually expressing your concerns about this project. Thank you for seeing that your primary responsibility is to represent the needs of your residents, not businesses or city staff. Indeed, the city staff and council work for the residents.</p> <p>Councilmember Searcy, I am also concerned that you are looking at minutia in regards to the proposed plans and not the wider community and value issues at stake in the development. The junction needs to bring diverse people together not further isolate us from each other.</p> <p>Mayor Stewart, the City of Takoma Park is not cash strapped. Why are you not pushing back on NDC's blatant disregard for the vision that most of the community wants? Almost everyone I speak to is supportive of development that serves all residents. You can make this happen by pushing back NDC's redesign to 34000 square feet, ensuring robust community space away from the road, and shifting truck deliveries and trash out of the main areas. There is still time to imagine—imagine a fountain like down town Silver Spring. Imagine community placemaking. Imagine the full-integration of residents living on Lee Avenue, on Maple Avenue, on Flower Avenue. Hold NDC accountable. Advocate for the needs of the least well-off among us. Bring your community together. NDC works for Takoma Park and that means every resident not just the councilmembers. You are better than this. We as a community are better than the proposed plan. Hold NDC accountable. Do justice by all your residents.</p>
6/5	Gene Koo	3	<p>Thank you for all of your hard work representing our community and balancing the needs of neighborhood preservation and economic growth. You've heard from me many times on this issue: I remain firmly in support of approving the Site Plan for Takoma Junction. A progressive community must move forward. It is time for us to do so. The Co-Op is an important member of our community, but they are only one member, and they should not be allowed to override the interests of a much larger set of stakeholders throughout our City. I am counting on your support and your vote to approve the Site Plan. Thank you very much for your dedication and service.</p>
6/5	Jeffrey Trunzo	3	<p>Dear Mayor and Council, The new site plan proposed by NDC is attractive, matches the character and tenor of Takoma Park, and provides the much needed (and long awaited) missing piece to a vital piece of Takoma Park. Completing this project is a progressive act that furthers goals such as environmental sustainability, public transit, fostering community, and providing tax revenue to support Takoma Park's social programs. Please do not let a few loud voices derail this project that is so close to fruition. I am counting on your support and your vote to approve the Site Plan. Thank you very much for your dedication and service.</p>
6/5	Jeffrey Trunzo	3	<p>Thank you all for your continued efforts to support a more vital Takoma Junction. In regard to the building's size, placement on the site, the public space, and the lay-by, I urge you to conclude deliberations after the traffic data is finalized, and vote to advance the plan to the next step. I prefer to see this happen by the end of June, 2018. About the roof, and the possibility for additional event space on the roof, the conversation has been exhausted and has determined that third floor event space is impractical for environmental reasons and for immediate neighbor acceptance, so I withdraw my earlier concerns that lack of an event space on the roof will impair the project. No additional discussion is necessary. I also urge you to end discussion about substantially reducing the footprint of the building and reducing the size and number of parking spaces in the below-grade parking facility to accommodate a surface road behind the building for deliveries and services. The proposal for such a configuration takes us back 30 years, when the community was opposed to "suburban-style" development at this location. It was a bad idea then and it is a worse idea today. Less below-grade parking will not enhance Takoma Junction and will not maximize the value of this land to the commercial district. However, should the community unify behind a proposal to reduce the building footprint and include surface access roads on the site, such an alternative plan, must also allow the building to achieve its full height potential allowed by law (including a full third floor and 50 feet of height), and such a building must be deemed viable by this developer, I would be willing to reconsider my position. To be clear, I expect that any Councilmember promoting such a concept insist on the additional height provision, and suggest consideration of a further height allowance above 50 feet to compensate for the wonderfully deep setback from the street already proposed. Additional height for additional setbacks is standard practice in commercial development, it is all about fairness and trade-offs. Finally, about "reasonable" accommodation, I strongly urge you to keep the mediation process between NDC & the Co-op as focused as possible on the key logistical operational issues about which these new neighbors have to cooperate on to succeed. Thank you very much for your dedication and service.</p>

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6/5	Michele Bollinger	?	I have spoken to many of you, although not all of you, about the development plan at the Junction. Now is the time for you to weigh in and speak your mind on the issue. City Council contact info can be found here: https://takomaparkmd.gov/government/city-council/ Some friends and I have drafted this letter to explain our views. It is attached. Please feel free to share, sign on, spread the word. Likewise, the Poet Laureate of Takoma Park has weighed in on this as well: https://cvtakomajunction.com/2018/06/06/a-letterfrom-our-poet-laureate/ The most important thing is that we do the right thing for all residents of our community. Please know that I appreciate you and respect both your opinion and your right to engage on this issue the way you see fit. <i>(Attachment)</i>
6/5	Diana Bradley	3	Just wanted to send you an email letting you know my concerns about the Takoma Junction development. I spoke at a city Council meeting several weeks ago hearing my concerns about the scale of it, the traffic issues, especially the deliveries that need to be made to the co-op, I hope a lot of these have been addressed over the last several weeks. Thanks for your work on the project.
6/5	Merrill Leffler	3	I'm attaching a letter on my view of the Neighborhood Development Company's plan to develop the public property in Takoma Junction. As we all know too well , the debate over this plan has been heated and, in some instances, divisive, among neighbors and with members of the City Council . I am truly sorry about this — it shouldn't have to be so. All of us who have been engaged in the issues care deeply about the city — we don't live here by accident. Takoma Park is our home. Everyone is for revitalization but in my opinion there are important reasons why NDC's conceptual design is seriously flawed. One of them has to do with the lay-by itself; a second has to do with not having a large enough public space that will appeal to all the residents of Takoma Park . The letter tries to explain my reasoning. <i>(Attachment)</i>
6/5	John Maynard	3	I support the revitalization of Takoma Junction
6/5	Cynthia Serjak	NR	I am writing to express my concern about the development project at the Takoma Junction. Since the Co-op has agreed to enter into mediation with NDC, I urge you to delay a vote on this matter until the mediation is finished. I trust that you have the concerns of the Co-op and its many patrons in mind as plans proceed. I live in Silver Spring, just off Piney Branch, but the Co-op is the only place I shop for food and household goods that are Earth-friendly. Thank you!

*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