

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION**

| 2018<br>DATE | NAME            | WARD* | COMMENT   |
|--------------|-----------------|-------|---|
| 5/1          | Kristen<br>Roth | 2     | <p>I am very concerned about the proposed development at the Junction. The scale of this "2-story" building is too large for the Junction. Also, the lack of public space and the lack of accommodation for the co-op's needs are particularly vexing. The co-op - a long-term pillar and defining characteristic - of Takoma Park and the anchor of the Junction - has expressed its concern that its existence is threatened if this plan goes through. For one, trucks will only be able to deliver from off of 410 - which is my understanding. This is ridiculous! Traffic is already horrible there (filling in the bus bay on 410 so the bus has to stop in the street was a poor idea in my view) and if trucks are blocking one of the lanes - forget it! This plan seems like a poor bid for TP to make some much needed revenue. This plan is not in keeping with the scale of the neighborhood or the spirit of Takoma Park - or at least the reason I moved here. I understand progress but this doesn't seem like it. It also seems like y'all are pushing this plan through without appropriate review. Very uncool.</p> <p>Thank you,<br/>Kris Roth</p> |

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| 5/2       | Ryan McAllister | 3     | <p>I've watched the presentation online and attended the popup. I am deeply concerned about the Takoma Junction development plan presented by NDC in April.</p> <p>Why this matters to me:</p> <p>I live 2 blocks from TPSS. It is the most common out-of-the-house destination for my daughter Freya, who is profoundly intellectually disabled, and I to walk to. We cross the intersection several times per week. The co-op is one of the few stores in the area that we are comfortable going to, and this is part of the inclusiveness I value in Takoma Park.</p> <p>I also care about both local business and cooperative business as valuable. A cooperative business is different from other for-profit businesses because the "profit" goes back to the business or to the thousands of memberowners, most of whom live in Takoma Park. Most businesses, especially any that could afford NDC's rent, would primarily benefit private individuals, not the community.</p> <p>Certainly for Freya and myself, no business that might come into the new development could be worth the risk of losing the co-op. No business could be worth the increased congestion, or the increased accident risk in an already burdened intersection.</p> <p>What I'm asking for:</p> <p>I support prioritization of the co-op's needs for business continuity, long-term viability, and expansion over the other concerns even if it means this developer won't develop here at this time. This at least means adequate parking and delivery space for the coop during and after construction.</p> <p>I believe that the accommodations currently proposed by NDA are unrealistic. I've listened to the presentations and I don't think it'll function the way NDC wants to visualize it will. I trust that the Board and management of the Co-op know best what they need, and we should listen to them. I believe the Co-op, a community institution, over NDC, an outside commercial interest.</p> <p>I want a junction that is safer and easier to navigate than it is now.</p> <p>More public space. For what it's worth, I think the plan presented by the TP Community Vision is beautiful. I believe that if any business space is to be added, for it to be affordable, such that it could house a community kitchen and/or space for any of the small local businesses that are trying to grow and survive in the area. (Fair Day's Play has already gotten priced out of its current location.)</p> <p>I don't want:</p> <p>An underground parking garage 2 blocks from home. This seems like deep urban-style development.</p> <p>High-priced restaurants, stores, and other things that will contribute to a increases in property values, rents, and an overall gentrification dynamic.</p> <p>Our city supporting a developer unless the developer is in turn supporting locally owned small and/or cooperative businesses.</p> <p>Other concerns:</p> <p>I think it's easy to imagine nice seating when the drawings presented are without traffic. But I think that the seating there will be next to a crowded road with frustrated drivers on to road, with trucks and busses in the layaway, and with at least occasional double parking. When I look at how the seating works near busboy's and poets, I see how it extents into the walking area in such a way that it makes the sidewalk too tight for a wheelchair to comfortably pass through in places, and overall seems very unappealing to me.</p> <p>Thank you for considering these concerns,</p> <p>Ryan McAllister</p> |

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| 5/2       | Sarah and Joshua O'Donnell | 2     | <p>While I fully support economic development in Takoma Junction, I have serious concerns with the current plan. I think you can and should do better. The citizens of Takoma Park are counting on you to do better.</p> <p>My concerns are the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The orientation of the building should have been taken into consideration at the outset. A tall north-facing building will create too much shade to make the area attractive and useful to the public. The single ornamental tree in the plan won't be able to do much good if it is incorrectly sited.</li> <li>2) The lay-by is much too close to the public area and public seating options. Customers will be fully exposed to diesel fumes while consuming food and beverages. How can an asthmatic child or a person with pulmonary health issues find this public area a great place to spend time?</li> <li>3) The traffic plan to route trucks in a loop is no good. Residents do not need or want a a constant flow of diesel trucks in front of their homes.</li> <li>3) The Junction is already far too congested. The current plan only adds vehicles to the already crowded roads.</li> <li>4). The current plan blithely ignores restrictions put in place in our state to ensure good environmental practices. The slope of the hill behind the proposed project is too steep to allow the successful implementation of the current plan.</li> <li>5) The details of the bio-retention feature have not been worked out to show that they will not create a breeding ground for mosquitoes.</li> </ol> <p>Thank you,<br/>Sarah and Joshua O'Donnell</p> |
| 5/2       | Katja Toporski             | 1     | <p>I live on Carroll Ave between downtown Takoma and the junction. I have not made any public comments on the situation with the development proposals before now.</p> <p>I support development of the junction. However I have two major concerns. One relates to traffic, which I feel has not been adequately addressed by the developer. I have cars idling outside my front door for hours every day, and anything that could conceivably make that situation worse, is not something I could support. From the traffic studies i have seen, the proposed solutions actually made the situation worse. What is lacking is some more radical problem solving, both in terms of the traffic solutions, and in terms of how a building such as the one proposed could be modified to enhance foot traffic, bicycle use, and to discourage the use of cars to access its facilities.</p> <p>My second concern is the size of the building, particularly as it is viewed from the Columbia Ave aspect, where there is a steep hill on top of which the building will be looming. There has to be a more creative (and less boxy looking) way to construct the back of the building, maybe with some kind of terraced design. While I support the revitalization efforts for the junction, this does need to be done with the aesthetic of the current housing stock in mind.</p> <p>Thanks you for hearing my opinion on this.</p>   |
| 5/2       | Elizabeth Langran          | 2     | <p>I object to developing the junction, especially if it jeopardizes the coop, raises my rent, and makes biking through there more difficult</p>   |

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| 5/2       | Alan Zibel      | 1     | <p>All: I'd like to register my support of the city's plan to develop the vacant parking lot at Takoma Junction. Working with the City, NDC has put together a thoughtful, attractive plan that will be a great asset to our community. I'd also like to register my opposition to any plan that would stop, delay or reset this prolonged process. That includes the "Community Vision" group's "alternative" plan to build a tiny building on the site and maintain a large, environmentally unfriendly parking lot. This plan would generate little pedestrian traffic, maintain car dependency and generate very little in the way of tax revenue for the city. Please don't be swayed by NIMBY voices or those who seem solely focused on a purported threat to the TPSS Coop. In reality, this development should benefit the coop in the long run. -Alan</p>  |
| 5/2       | Catherine Tunis | 2     | <p>I think this redevelopment needs to be stopped and re-proposed. NDC is now pushing radically different configurations and pricing than they had in the beginning, when they were trying to win a contract with the City. This shows they cannot be trusted to be an honest partner with the City. Pushing the co-op out of business is an unacceptable cost. I worry that staff, since they seem incapable of saying no to the developer, may not be capable of properly managing this project and Council needs outside help from construction contract experts. I don't mean there are bad actors on staff, but that they may be in over their heads. The City, residents and businesses, should not be losing as a result of this project. Right now, that seems to be where we are headed.</p>  |
| 5/2       | Megan Scribner  | 1     | <p>As I mentioned in my testimony on last Wednesday, I'm distressed that our community has become so divided on the Takoma Junction Development. But I don't think the divide is as large as we see/hear/feel – and that there are ways forward that can be considered a win-win. One side is legitimately concerned about the Co-op and all the ways the NDC development (as currently proposed) encroaches on the things the Co-op needs to be viable; how the development will lead to safety and traffic hazards; and how this development gives the City very little return for its land/endorsement (little public space, revenue etc.). The other side sees a parking lot and a store that it doesn't use. It longs for the kind of restaurants and shops that are now flourishing on the other end of Carroll. I can empathize with that. Two sides with legitimate concerns and desires. But I don't think they're opposite – they've just been painted that way, painted into these corners. I think the key word is accommodate. This word has mainly been used in terms of the Co-op – the development needs to accommodate the needs of the Co-op1 so that it can continue to thrive and be a resource for the community and beyond (and that's been the bottom line since the very beginning, clearly spelled out in the Agreement with the developer – so no surprise to NDC). Others want the development to accommodate their desires for a more vibrant business/restaurant area. That's been clear from the beginning, too. I think it's possible to accommodate both – by accommodating the space itself. The key is to go with a development that does not overwhelm the space. If we went back to some version of NDC's original plan – the one that enticed the Council in the first place – or some other smaller development, we could all wind up ahead.</p> |

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|              | Megan Scribner<br>(cont'd) |       | <p>We could accommodate the Co-op, we could accommodate the desires for new businesses, we could accommodate the desire for public space for outdoor seating/events/food trucks etc. etc. And most important, we could accommodate – actually strengthen – our community. Recapturing the part that we love about Takoma Park – a vibrant, engaged community that works together – as opposed to pitting side against side.</p> <p>I think we need to pause, not stop, but pause the process, and open mediation between NDC and the Co-op with representatives from the City Council, and from each side of the community at 1 If you don't usually shop there, I really encourage you to drop by. I'm always struck by how bustling it is, and the diversity of the customers and employees. Don't take my word for it, drop by and see, I think you'll be surprised. And yes, prices are higher for organic food – we do pay a bit more for healthy food and local – not corporate – vendors. But there are also bargains each week, and the bulk products are very reasonably priced. We do almost all of our shopping there, and save on money and driving.</p> <p>the table. By hiring a mediator, and having all sides represented, we could find a way forward – come up with a design that accommodates all – with NDC or another developer.</p> <p>I believe that this is the leadership that is needed and that you all can provide – and by doing so know you are truly working for all of Takoma Park. While there may be some push back for taking the extra time, that push back will be minor compared to what it will be like if you have to choose a side in this. Help us come together on this, by creating a path where we can all work together.</p> <p>I urge you to take this path. Do this for the health of our community now and for the future of our community and the Takoma Junction – as we all want and need something that works.</p> <p>Thank you,<br/>Megan Scribner</p> |

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| 5/2          | W. Allen Taylor | 3     | <p>My name is W. Allen Taylor, and I am a fairly new resident of Ward 3 in Takoma Park. I'm writing in support of the Vote NO campaign against the Takoma Junction Redevelopment Plan currently under consideration.</p> <p>As an artist and educator, I moved to this area from California (the bay area) in late 2016 and knew nothing about Takoma Park. My daughter, who has lived in the DC area for 18 years, suggested it as a possibility for putting down roots.</p> <p>I had lived in or near Berkeley CA for 27 years and she knew the kind of environment that would make me feel at home. Her deal-closing line to me was "Dad, they even have a food co-op!".</p> <p>This was no small thing, and as she predicted, the TPSS Food Co-op has become one of my favorite destinations in the city. And I am far from being alone. To have a quality healthy-conscious grocery in the vicinity is obviously appreciated by the many loyal customers that have become co-op members.</p> <p>And the fact that it IS a co-op makes it all the more special. That is the sign of a community that is thinking horizontally...aware of its responsibility to all who may inhabit it. And with an eye and ear on what makes a business and community feel equitable.</p> <p>This is why I'm here, and why I hope to continue to call Takoma Park my home.</p> <p>The TPSS Food-Coop is glorious symbol of the true character of our community, and it must be protected!</p> <p>The changes proposed in this redevelopment plan, in my view, underestimate the potential problems both short-term (CO-OP parking &amp; loading, traffic congestion, public safety) and long-term (the very existence of the Co-op AND the basic character of the neighborhood that brought us here in the first place)that will be caused by its implementation.</p> <p>I therefore implore you to Vote NO on this very important issue!</p> <p>Thank you.<br/>W. Allen Taylor</p> |
| 5/2          | Richard Vitullo |       | <p>I'm an architect and an illustrator and I live at 7016 Woodland and I have done some drawings that more accurately show the scale of both the NDC design and the alternative design called "Community Vision". Both are shown from the same vantage point and as a pedestrian would see them. The previous NDC drawings/perspective show their design from a higher vantage point which, as it happens, diminishes the scale and scope of the massiveness of that project. So I believe that these two drawings, shown side by side, are a helpful way to judge them both equally.</p> <p>I also am including a colored version of the Community Vision drawing to help visualize it's benefits since the NDC proposal has so many visually rich drawings as well. Equalize the playing field. <i>(Attachments)</i></p>  |
| 5/2          | Jill Gay        | 1     | <p>This is the plan we should have:<a href="https://cvtakomajunction.com/2018/05/02/an-alternative-plan-fortakoma-junction">https://cvtakomajunction.com/2018/05/02/an-alternative-plan-fortakoma-junction</a></p>  |

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| 5/2          | Laurie Mazur      | 2     | <p>Greetings, and thank you for reading my comment. I am not opposed to development in the Junction; I think it makes sense to have greater density near Metro stops. Nor do I think a public plaza or park is the highest and best use of that space, given that there are other such spaces nearby.</p> <p>My primary concern is that the current plan endangers the co-op, a vital neighborhood institution. As the only grocery store in the city, within easy walking distance of thousands of households, the co-op saves countless trips by car. Also, as a consumer cooperative with a commitment to healthy, local food, the co-op reflects the values of our community.</p> <p>Develop the Junction, sure. But make sure that the co-op can safely accept deliveries and maintain continuity of operations during construction. Save the co-op, and I will happily support commercial development in the Junction.</p>   |
| 5/3          | Sarah Fitzpatrick | NR    | <p>Below is the full text of the public comments I gave at the City Council meeting on May 2, 2018. Thank you for your continued efforts on this difficult and complex project!</p> <p>I want to start by talking about the height and mass of the building. 42 feet seems extremely tall for a 2-story building, maybe more appropriate for a 3 or even 4-story one. I realized after studying NDC's drawings that they appear deceptive with regards to scale. In fact, each one of their slides contains the disclaimer, "not to scale". I'm confused about why technical drawings, which include dimensions, wouldn't honestly represent scale visually. In the artistic sketches submitted, the viewer is above where the average human would stand, looking down, and this angle minimizes the appearance of the size of the building, as do the giant humans and cars on the sidewalk and street. High retail ceilings like this are more consistent with urban designs, and this is not an urban area. I would like to see NDC submit drawings that are accurately scaled, and for them to explain in detail how they believe their design is appropriate for the intersection and the nearby neighborhood.</p> <p>I'm also concerned about the impact of underground parking, which I understand is very expensive. In order to pay for the construction of the underground lot, rents will be much higher, making it difficult for small businesses to survive, and producing an inevitable upscale retail area. How can we expect small business people to take a serious interest in such expensive space? This points to an area of even greater concern for me, which is the clear path towards gentrification that I see here, and that we have all noticed creeping in over the years in Takoma Park. If NDC believes that their plan will not ramp up gentrification, then they have not demonstrated this, and I ask that the City make slowing gentrification a priority. Whether local or national, small or corporate, high rents mean high prices for customers. I am hard-pressed to imagine myself paying to park in order to eat at expensive restaurants and cafes on a regular basis, or, even more ridiculous, paying to park just to sit on a bench in this so called "public space". If I can't afford to shop or eat at these businesses, that is a part of my community that I can't participate in, it's a place where I don't belong. Please ask yourselves if you see our City's poor, working class, or even middle-class residents spending time in this space. Where is our City's commitment to inclusion in these discussions?</p> |

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|              | Sarah Fitzpatrick (cont'd) |       | <p>Further, I was encouraged to learn that the City recently passed a resolution committing to considering the racial equity impact of their decisions, and I thank you for your leadership in this area. However, I am deeply troubled by the cursory implementation of the resolution here, which amounts to an entire two sentences. The first sentence states the location of the lot, and the percentage of residents and business owners in Takoma Park who are POC, and the second sentence simply reads: "We do not believe this Council action will disproportionately impact any particular group."</p> <p>For me this does not even begin to be an analysis of the impact of this project on equity, and again I ask the City to give sincere consideration to this crucial issue, before, not after the vote. I'd also like to know if and how NDC applies a racial equity lens at any stage of their planning.</p> <p>Thank you!<br/>Sarah Fitzpatrick<br/>Greenwood Avenue</p> |
| 5/3          | Susan Schappert            | NR    | <p>My husband and I have been members of the TPSS Co-op for decades. We both strongly support the idea of small, community-owned businesses, especially grocery stores, and continue to travel from Wheaton to shop there. Our weekly trips to Takoma Park also result in other shopping, which we might not otherwise do in Takoma Park, at the local farmer's market and hardware store, to name a few. We do not support a plan for the Junction which puts the Co-op at risk, or which threatens the special character of the area. Please keep Takoma Park Junction at a more human and green scale. We support the alternative community plan because it is preserves what we love about this area. Don't let it become an echo of Bethesda or downtown Silver Spring!</p>   |



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| 5/3          | Laurie<br>McGilvray and<br>Walter Mulbry |       | <p>We are supportive of appropriately scaled and designed development at Takoma Junction that meets the requirements set forth by the City Council when it embarked on the process for developing its lot in Takoma Junction. The current development proposal falls far short of being appropriate development for the site for a number of reasons. We strongly urge you and the other members of the City Council to direct NDC to revise the design to be consistent with the requirements enumerated in the City Council’s October 2017 resolution for the development. If NDC will not or cannot make the adjustments to the design, we recommend that you vote against the current development proposal.</p> <p>Our concerns with the current proposal are as follows:</p> <p>1. The development is too large for the location. The October 2017 resolution clearly stated the Council’s desire to see a development of approximately 34,000 square feet. The current development appears to be at least 45,000 square feet and includes the Takoma Auto Clinic parcel. No smaller 34,000 square foot proposal has been presented. The addition of the Takoma Auto Clinic parcel has simply increased the amount of built space, eliminated public space on the City’s parcel, and not provided a means to resolve other issues related to access for deliveries or trash removal necessary for the continued functioning of the Coop.</p> <p>“Councilmembers are interested in seeing the impacts of an approximately 34,000 square foot structure of two stories (first level retail, second level office and community space) and of any updated square footage estimate that includes the expanded area of the Takoma Auto Clinic parcel and of the impact of a development concept that includes greater public gathering space at the front of the building at street level and space for year-round outdoor use, including the potential of a third floor public space.”</p> <p>2. There are serious traffic and safety issues. The proposal to build a layby for deliveries creates series traffic issues and access and egress issues for the parking garage, especially if there is no reconfiguration of the traffic pattern at the intersection. The Council must wait for the final results and analysis of the State Highways traffic study before making any final decisions on the development. It is unclear who would pay for any reconfiguration of the intersection and whether it could be completed before the development would be open for business. Additionally, the layby may create safety issues with regard to the Fire Station if the traffic is backed up due to lanes being blocked by delivery trucks who cannot get into the layby when it is occupied by other trucks.</p> |

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|              | Laurie<br>McGilvray and<br>Walter Mulbry<br>(cont'd) |       | <p>3. The proposal has not provided reasonable accommodation for the Coop. At a minimum, the proposed development does not 1) accommodate delivery, trash, and recycling vehicles in a manner that does not cause traffic problems, and 2) does not place the elevator in a location that will serve Coop patrons as it is at the opposite end of the site from the Coop. The continued success of the Coop is incredibly important to us as a valued part of the community that provides convenient access to healthy local food. "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, as the project moves forward, the Council expects to see a Draft Site Plan/Preliminary Plan that meets the criteria of Resolution 2015-19 and the Development Agreement, including the Agreement's provisions relating to reasonable accommodation of the TPSS Co-op, ... 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. 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>4. The amount of public space is inadequate, unattractive, and will interfere with pedestrians and bicyclists transiting the sidewalk in front of the development. The public space appears to be an afterthought or at best a minimal effort to meet the letter but not the spirit of the development agreement. It is small and unattractive and unappealing because it is right next to traffic that will be constantly backed up at the intersection and with a view of tractor trailer trucks in the layby. The location also will make it harder for pedestrians and cyclists trying to pass in front of the development to get to the bus stop, walk to the metro or into downtown Takoma Park. Additionally, the proposal does not address relocating the existing bus stop or the Capital Bikeshare station, both of which are very important to residents.</p> <p>5. Blended title for the development. The City has a development agreement and lease arrangement for the City-owned lot. However, the current proposal includes the Takoma Auto Clinic parcel which the City does not own. None of the presentations or materials address an arrangement whereby a single building would occupy the leased parcel and an adjacent privately-owned parcel. How could the City terminate the lease agreement and take possession of the building if it is not entirely on City-owned land? The inclusion of the Takoma Auto Clinic property as part of the overall development rather than as a separate feature and solution to other issues (deliveries, trash pick up, etc.) appears to be highly problematic. We recommend that the City only consider a proposal for the leased property alone and reduce the development back to the smaller footprint. Whatever arrangement may be made for the adjacent Takoma Auto Clinic parcel, it should be fully transparent and available for public review by Takoma Park residents.</p> |

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|              | Laurie McGilvray and Walter Mulbry (cont'd) |       | <p>6. Stormwater and protection of the wooded area on Columbia Ave. The current proposal is too large and provides inadequate protection to the wooded area. Additionally, the current proposal does not include a description of how stormwater will be managed on site and yet it is listed as one of the benefits of the proposed development. Because the building extends right up to the edge of the parcel before the steep slope down to Columbia Ave., a large retaining wall will be needed to stabilize the belowground parking and there is no space for onsite stormwater management. It appears that the likely outcome will be the destruction of the wooded area and buffer for residents on Columbia Ave. and greater stormwater problems on Columbia and Poplar Avenues. For all of these reasons, we strongly recommend that the City Council require NDC to provide a proposal for a smaller development that fully meets the requirements and expectations of the City Council's October 2017 Resolution. We strongly urge the City Council not to move forward with any decisions until such time as the necessary changes are made to the proposal and the serious deficiencies are addressed.</p> <p>There are no "do-overs" if the City Council approves a flawed development and it results in all the negative impacts that we have identified. The City Council should not feel pressured to go along with whatever NDC proposes because the City owns the parcel and has the power to insist on a development that all residents can enjoy.</p> <p>Sincerely,<br/>Laurie McGilvray and Walter Mulbry</p> |
| 5/3          | Les Ramo                                    | 3     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I'm a concerned constituent writing to express my strong support for TPSS CO-OP.</li> <li>- This valued community institution deserves the full support, appreciation, &amp; respect of our elected officials.</li> <li>- It is one of the largest private sector employers in Takoma Park. No government action should threaten this.</li> <li>- In the 1990's, the CO-OP was recruited to relocate to Takoma Park to become the anchor store for Takoma Junction. This was done with the assistance of a block grant from the State of Maryland. No action of the Takoma Park city government should undermine the state's investment of our tax dollars.</li> <li>- The CO-OP needs adequate space for trucks to unload their deliveries. It needs adequate parking for its customers. It needs space for trash &amp; recycling dumpsters.</li> <li>- The CO-OP needs to be able to conduct its business operations without interruption during any construction process that may occur on the city-owned lot next door. That is a priority!</li> <li>- The NDC proposal is completely inadequate at meeting these needs. Therefore, I urge you to vote no on the NDC proposal.</li> <li>- If NDC is unwilling or unable to meet these fundamental community needs, their services should be terminated.</li> <li>- I want my elected officials to support our local jobs &amp; local businesses, rather than supporting the interests of developers.</li> <li>- Thank you.</li> </ul> <p>Les Ramo</p>  |

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| 5/3          | Ruth Polk      | 3     | <p>I have been somewhat following the controversy around the redevelopment project. I wanted to share with you a few of my thoughts:<br/>                     I have not been following it as closely as you. I trust you to make reasonable decisions.<br/>                     I am concerned that in the effort to reach a perfect solution, we will forfeit our ability to create positive change. I continue to feel sad and concerned that Adventist Hospital ultimately decided it made more sense for them to relocate rather than continue to try to negotiate a solution here in Takoma Park. I would be sorry if developers gave up on the Takoma Junction project because working with Takoma Park was too difficult.<br/>                     From what I have read on takomapark, the supporters of the Co-Op appear to be more vocal . I wanted to let you know that you have support if you believe the proposal currently on the table is one worth pursuing.<br/>                     Thank you for taking seriously your roles as stewards of Takoma Park. I appreciate your commitment to public service.<br/>                     Ruth Polk</p> |
| 5/4          | Mary Jacksteit | 1     | <p>I believe that the Community Vision for TJ alternative plan represents a development much more suitable and addressing all the interests being expressed by city residents - the current plan is too big, covers too much of the space, has unworkable plans for the COOP's reasonable needs for loading, trash etc. It feels like there's been a "mansionization" of the development concept (to borrow a phrase from the phenomenon of overbuilding on residential lots.) . Thank you.</p>  |

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| 5/4          | Richard Cowden | 3     | <p>I am Richard Cowden. My wife Ellen Fabian and I live at 6518 Allegheny Avenue in Ward 3. I have a Master of Urban Planning degree from the University of Kansas and retired recently from Bloomberg BNA, where I covered banking and commercial real estate law for 15 years. I am writing in support of the NDC proposal to build a mixed-use facility at the site of the cityowned lot adjacent to the Takoma Park Co-op. The general outline of the plan represents a significant new asset for the area. Certainly the design could be tweaked to address local concerns, but the time is right to finally put this property to productive use.</p> <p>Having attended the April 25 City Council session, I came away with the impression a major factor that was generally missing from the overall discussion was Takoma Park's policy on density in general and transit-oriented development in particular.</p> <p>The NDC proposal envisions a modest two-story structure, with a glass elevator that rises to 45 feet. Those of us who see the value of new development in Takoma Park, which has been in short supply, have come to expect that any proposal like the NDC plan will face strong opposition. So the barrage of criticisms has come as no surprise. Some are at least based on interpretations of existing rules; others are based on fabricated threats or misconceptions. But by far the most tangible opposition relates to density. Any structure that is larger than nearby structures usually is considered an affront to neighborhood norms. Presented with any proposed design, Takoma Park opponents will always insist it must be smaller.</p> <p>It is up to the City Council to understand Takoma Park's role as a node along a crucial public transit artery that links the entire Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. Boosting the density of development near these multimodal hubs is not a fad among urban planners or a scheme to benefit developers. It is well established as a component of Smart Growth, which promotes increased density near transit hubs.</p> <p>In part, the goal is to help lure people out of autos and onto public transit, thereby reducing sprawl, premature land conversion, pollution, and inefficient energy consumption. Transit-oriented development also encourages "walkable" cities, where residents can conveniently access shopping, entertainment, employment, and cultural opportunities in close proximity to their homes. None of this is likely to occur in Takoma Park without a fresh look at policies that favor the low-density structures, which predominate throughout Takoma Park's primary development zones.</p> |

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|              | Richard Cowden<br>(cont'd) |       | <p>The Master Plan for Takoma Park makes only passing reference to Smart Growth, despite the city's obvious proximity to the Takoma Metro station. In the past, local officials have commonly carved out ambiguous positions that allow themselves to nominally favor Smart Growth, but to oppose developments that some deem to be "inappropriate." Although the Takoma Junction site is not a true example of transit-oriented development, perhaps the NDC proposal will force the City Council to take a more definitive posture on development along the major roadways leading to the Metro station.</p> <p>Objections to larger structures tend to focus on terms or phrases that have become cliches lacking objective foundation. They express fears about "context," or effects on neighborhood "character." Even buildings only one story taller than a nearby structure often are said to "loom" overhead or to "overwhelm" neighboring buildings. These kinds of characterizations should be regarded as rhetorical; they are merely impressions, not facts.</p> <p>I note that at least two structures of 10 stories or more already exist along Carroll Avenue between the Takoma Junction site and the Takoma Metro station. The Takoma Business Center stands 10 stories tall and Victory Tower has 12 stories. Both are either adjacent to or across the street from single-family residences, and yet neither appears to present any threat either to specific properties or to the neighborhood.</p> <p>The policy question is whether they should be considered anomalies or whether the community could accommodate somewhat increased density, especially at sites nearest the Metro station. Put another way, would Takoma Park approve construction of Victory Tower today if it did not already exist? If a developer proposed the same facility serving the needs of several hundred modest-income senior citizens, would the city reject it? If we agree Victory Tower meets a significant public need, would other multi-family affordable housing facilities be too much?</p> <p>A reflexive hostility to even moderate density increases has been at the heart of past opposition to other construction proposals, including the long-delayed EYA Takoma Metro project and a mixed-use proposal at the corner of Westmoreland Avenue and Carroll. Although the Metro project would lie within the D.C. boundaries, opposition to the proposed design from Takoma Park city officials themselves helped to put it on the back burner, where it sits today. The 2006 Westmoreland and Carroll proposal encountered so much neighborhood-level resistance and filibustering, the investors gave up in frustration.</p> |

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|              | Richard Cowden<br>(cont'd) |       | <p>Many other communities along the Metro routes have not had the same aversion to transitoriented development that is evident in Takoma Park, and they have benefitted from it. Zoning rules for nearby Silver Spring allow maximum building heights of more than 140 feet. Just one Metro stop away in Takoma Park, zoning limits all building heights to 30 feet, with some flexibility for commercial buildings to just over 40 feet. Residential structures may reach 50 feet “if the Planning Board finds that such buildings are compatible with the neighborhood and substantially conform with the intent of the applicable master plan.” Those severe restrictions are hardly fitting for a community that is ideally located to promote Smart Growth.</p> <p>The circumstances surrounding past efforts to advance transit-oriented development near the Takoma Metro station are not unique. Factions expressing similar concerns about a proposed mixed-use facility at the Ashby Street Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station in Berkeley, Calif., stalled the development for two decades before the local governing body finally determined that the obvious need for housing near the subway station far outweighed what amounted to objections based on NIMBYism.</p> <p>Ultimately, Berkeley officials approved construction of a mixed-use facility, including an 18-story multi-family residential building at the Ashby Street station. Commenting on the ordeal, the contractor noted that “it seems like the people who came here in the 1960s and 70s have decided to freeze things just as they are.” He added that the opponents typically were older, white property owners. “It became extremely apparent that all of the opposition, with the exception of two people, were over 60 and white,” he said.</p> <p>Some of us who attended the April 25 session noted a similar lack of diversity among participants on both sides of the issue. Apart from its eventual determination in regard to Takoma Junction, the City Council should consider how it can pull into the discussion a wider demographic cross-section of the local population. Council members should ask whether the mix of opinion about development in Takoma Park would be split along its current lines if more lower-income and minority citizens were asked to weigh in on the question of neighborhood character versus affordable housing.</p> |

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|           | Richard Cowden (cont'd) |       | <p>Note that the two previously referenced proposals that faced neighborhood opposition would have increased the Takoma area housing supply by several hundred units, many of which would have met affordable housing standards. Presumably, those units have been built somewhere in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, but they are not here.</p> <p>Finally, the Takoma Junction project must be seen in light of a larger economic problem that threatens Montgomery County itself. An April 2018 report for the County prepared by Sage Policy Group, Inc. (The Coming Storm: How Years of Economic Underperformance are Catching up with Montgomery County) underscores the need for new economic vitality. The Sage analysis noted that “a confluence of factors has produced an increasingly risky economic and fiscal environment in Montgomery County.” Among the principal concerns highlighted in the study were that the county hosts fewer jobs in 2016 than it did in 2006. Further, business formation has all but ground to a halt; between 2011 and 2016 only six net new enterprises were located in the county, according to the report.</p> <p>Stagnating private-sector conditions have resulted in significant downstream fiscal implications for a county “tax base that is expanding far too slowly to meet future needs.” The report concluded in part that “Montgomery County has already entered a downward fiscal spiral in which debt service gobbles up an ever-growing share of the local budget, and that Montgomery County therefore desperately needs to step up efforts to expand its commercial tax base.”</p> <p>For all the reasons cited here, we would encourage the Takoma Park City Council not to respond to emotional clamoring or become bogged down in endless delay over what after all is simply a modest-sized mixed-use development. The NDC plan may benefit from some adjustments, but it is the kind of project that cities all over America welcome every day.</p> <p>Richard Cowden</p> |
| 5/4       | Angi Rivera             | ?     | <p>I apologize in advance to those who have obviously put much time and effort into this proposal, but I wholeheartedly disagree with it. I find it incredibly frustrating that any change for the better of the diversity and infill of our community fabric is met with opposition. I was first disappointed that community opposition pushed down the possibility of the development to meet the demand of additional transitional housing, of which we are in dire need. Now, there continues to be opposition to any change, even the smart and sustainable development of a surface parking lot, which is an eye sore and fragments our urban fabric. I am incredibly surprised to discover that a community so intent on promoting sustainable lifestyles cannot recognize that smart infill development that gradually increases density and diversity is necessary in an ever increasing population in order to mitigate urban sprawl. There is barely enough demand to keep the few retail spaces there now in business - in fact, there has always been at least one long-standing vacancy in the strip since we moved to the area ten years ago. With this new proposal not substantively increasing the demand for these retail spaces by providing additional residential and/or office clientele and yet providing additional retail, I can't see any way for these businesses to truly survive and make the streetscape more engaging. In order for that to happen, we need to create a mini-center with a continuous feel, not isolated structures surrounded by deserts of surface parking.</p> <p>I sincerely hope the City continues to push for increased density and diversity of uses.</p> <p>Thanks for listening,<br/>Angi</p>   |



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| 5/4       | Jenee and Paul Weeda | 3     | <p>On April 18, 2018 I went to the scheduled council meeting to show my support for the Takoma Junction Development. I arrived at 7:30 and put my name on the long list of residents that wanted to speak during public comment. It was so encouraging to see many residents speak in support of the TJ Development, and so many great points made. After waiting over two hours my name wasn't called so I left and thought I would share my support by emailing.</p> <p>At the Junction Pop-Up I spoke with Kacy and Suzanne to share why I support the development and the NDC design as proposed. When we first moved to Takoma Park, 8 years, ago I noted how the Junction was a funky and quaint commercial area, however, the businesses didn't seem to be thriving. Often we would pack up the kids in the car and head to Silver Spring for dinner since there more dining options. The Junction has so much potential to grow and thrive, and bring residents from the community to gather for coffee, dinner or shopping and it is in this community space that the people could meetup much like Old Town on Sunday mornings. A good example of smart development is in Old Town. In the last few year several businesses that have been here for years are doing better with more anchor tenants that bring more foot traffic and business.</p> <p>I have spoken to many families that share the same sentiment: bring more local places so we don't have travel to DC or Silver Spring for dinner or shopping. The majority of the families I know all support the Junction Development but don't have the time to get involved or come out to Council Meetings. Please know that these families would be highly disappointed to know that the Junction Development was not going to happen.</p> <p>The City Council, Mayor and City Staff have done a great job to make the information public and have gone the extra mile to accommodate the questions and concerns. Please vote in support of moving forward and bring more vibrant businesses to an area that has so much potential.</p> <p>Best,<br/>Jenee and Paul Weeda</p> |
| 5/4       | Marco Davis          | ?     | <p>I oppose the high-density proposal being considered by for the Takoma Junction. I think the alternative for the Junction presented by the Community Vision is much MUCH better, in every way.</p> <p><a href="https://cvtakomajunction.com/2018/05/02/an-alternative-plan-for-takoma-junction/">https://cvtakomajunction.com/2018/05/02/an-alternative-plan-for-takoma-junction/</a>,<br/>Maybe Community Vision alternative won't enrich some developer as much as the high-density option, but that should not be the goal. This is Takoma Park! The goal should be sustainability, community access, neighborhood compatibility, and appropriateness of scale. I have lived on both Ethan Allen and on Carroll, and this area is near and dear to me.</p> <p>Please do the right thing.</p> <p>PLUS take a look at Eric Saul's alternative for fixing the current double-bind intersection by aligning Carroll and Sycamore.<br/><a href="https://www.facebook.com/eric.saul.3/posts/10215704164467825">https://www.facebook.com/eric.saul.3/posts/10215704164467825</a></p> <p>The actions we take now that will impact our city for years and years to come. Please reject the high-density option and embrace the Community Vision.</p> <p>Thank you! Do our city proud!<br/>Marco Davis</p>   |

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| 5/5       | Roger Schlegel | 3     | <p>Dear Council Members,</p> <p>Thank you for all of the time and careful thinking that you are putting into the question about development at the Junction.</p> <p>Councilmember Kostiuk indicated in this week's Ward 3 listening session that City staff have provided only limited analysis of how NDC's site plan responds to needs and expectations set forth by the City.</p> <p>Over the past four weeks, I've been developing the attached document, NDC's Combined Site Plan for Takoma Junction: Assessing the Site Plan's Responsiveness to Guidance Received, with the hope that it can be helpful to the Council in its deliberations.</p> <p>This document juxtaposes language from the original RFP, the Development Agreement, and Resolution 2017-53 with observations and commentary about NDC's site plan as presented and revised over the past month. The analysis is organized by topics ("Streetscape," "Commercial/Retail Mix," "Public Space," etc.).</p> <p>The assessment doesn't address potential traffic reconfigurations, or financial and legal arrangements associated with the project, as NDC was not expected to address these issues in the site plan. Two addenda consider the site plan through a racial equity lens and in light of an OTBA market analysis.</p> <p>I am asking the Council to ask City staff to review this work for accuracy (point by point), and to identify any areas of disagreement, if any. By addressing any areas of disagreement, ultimately the Council will have a document it can use as a basis for actual fact-based analysis of NDC's plan.</p> <p>I'm happy to discuss anything in the document over the phone, via email, or in person. I hope it can be helpful to you, and thank you for your consideration.</p> <p>Best,<br/>           Roger (Schlegel) ++++++ (Attachment)</p> |
| 5/5       | Jayne Holt     | 3     | <p>Hi Kacy - I wrote to you a few weeks ago with a long list of reasons why I support the development at the Junction as well as thoughts on what I would like to see happen at that intersection.</p> <p>I mentioned that I was a fan of the idea of rerouting Carroll to meet Sycamore, moving the under-used park and gazebo to the other side of the street where it would join the front of the shops. I was just walking through that area with my dogs this morning and was struck again by how much better it would be to have a wide sidewalk/plaza on that side of the street. The Korean restaurant is having their soft opening this weekend. With both that restaurant and the bakery open for business combined with the nice weather, there were around 8 people sitting and standing on the sidewalk outside, making it difficult to navigate through with two dogs (also difficult with a stroller, I would imagine).</p> <p>That sidewalk is too narrow for what I hope will be a vibrant food and shopping area. Widening it to include a lovely small park and shady gazebo would really be a benefit to the businesses there and might attract more.</p> <p>Just another 2 cents!<br/>           Jayne</p>   |

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| 5/5          | Keith Berner | 5     | <p>See my complete blog post: <a href="https://lefthandview.wordpress.com/2018/05/05/05-05-18-jarrettsmith-flips-on-takoma-junction-development-and-shows-his-usual-contempt-for-constituents/">https://lefthandview.wordpress.com/2018/05/05/05-05-18-jarrettsmith-flips-on-takoma-junction-development-and-shows-his-usual-contempt-for-constituents/</a><br/> Here is an excerpt:<br/> As for the substance of Takoma Junction development, the arguments in favor are compelling (for example, see this and this). I'm a bit biased about this source, but I'll reprint here Marty Ittner's response to Smith and Siegel yesterday (Ittner is my wife):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Why is Jarrett communicating to us through a 3rd party and not directly?</li> <li>2. To me, the worst outcome would be for history to repeat itself: nothing was done in the 80's, because neighbors couldn't agree. So we were left with a city-owned impervious parking lot, which is no longer free.</li> <li>3. A vacant paved lot at a major intersection is suitable for development, which will increase foot traffic and help the small neighborhood businesses along Carroll avenue survive and thrive, and draw more foot traffic from Old Town. The wooded lot behind will be left green. How is killing the Junction project supportive of neighborhood businesses?</li> <li>4. Uncertainty and divisiveness are germane to any large and complex project. This requires strong leadership to remain steadfast to address the concerns Mr. Smith himself points out in his list. Wouldn't it be better to commit to keeping a watchful eye on these valid points, rather than throwing in the towel after 5 years?</li> <li>5. I have been extremely impressed with the Council's exhaustive and inclusive process getting to this point. [Mayor] Kate Stewart has explicitly stated Council's commitment to keep the Co-op in place. (look at the plans!) The new building and streetscape are harmonious with Takoma's aesthetic. I am excited to have a new, walkable destination to shop and eat. Yes, there is uncertainty, but let's look to our leaders to continue to do the hard work of making this happen. The arguments against development all have a fatal flaw: they make the perfect the enemy of the good:<br/> Rather than seeing a positive plan that can be tweaked further, they push for an unachievable utopia and catastrophize any deviation from it;<br/> They claim starting over will be easy, forgetting the 30-year history of this conversation and the hard work and enormous progress made over the past five years;<br/> They facilitate the CoOp's ceaseless temper tantrum. From the start of the current effort, the CoOp's position has been (more or less): change one iota of our circumstances and we will die.** They have threatened their own death over and over again, refusing to engage at all constructively in a rigorous, inclusive process. There is zero evidence that the CoOp will be harmed by the development plans at Takoma Junction. Yes, their life will change. So be it. Smith's couple of arguments to Siegel are utterly specious. His (and others') carping about "green space" ignores reality entirely: an impervious parking lot and useless ugliness at the heart of our community. And the councilman's implication that Junction development is a threat to "neighborhood businesses" is even more ridiculous: here, at last, is an opportunity for small, locally owned businesses and restaurants to make a positive difference, for their owners, the rest of us, and the existing businesses that are struggling in a wasteland.<br/> I urge support for Takoma Junction development as the alternative to another 30 years of blight. </li> </ol> |

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| 5/6          | Julia<br>Eddy | NR    | <p>I used to live in Takoma and now live just 15mins away in NE DC. TPSS is my favorite and primary grocery store; no joke, it was one of the reasons I moved to this area and knew I could survive here.</p> <p>I get that you are eager for something to happen on the lot at the Junction near TPSS, I'd love to have more cutesy shops and space for eating and communing myself. But I am really concerned about the current plans for the development, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-trash and recycling for TPSS is inadequate</li> <li>-the arrangement for delivery trucks to TPSS and other shops is adequate and unsightly</li> <li>-the elevator needs to be moved to better serve everyone using the space, including shoppers of TPSS</li> <li>-there should be some free parking for TPSS shoppers and staff in the garage</li> <li>-there is nowhere near the amount of open green space I would want and expect for Takoma Park -- I think the proposed buildings should be downsized.</li> </ul> <p>TPSS is a cornerstone of Takoma Park, I know that you know this. It is the anchor that draws me and I'm sure many others to the area. On my weekly trips I sometimes couple the trip with a visit to the Farmer's Market, hardware store, Spring Mill and other eateries. I can't begin to imagine how my routines would change and what I would think of Takoma Park if something happened and TPSS Co-op could no longer sustain itself in that location.</p> <p>I've watched the video recordings of the council meetings. I'm appalled that the Council is not holding the developer accountable to the values defined earlier in the process and is not taking a stronger stance to ensure that the needs of the Co-op and community are met. I hope when this is all said and done that the Junction is a place we can all enjoy and be proud of for decades.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and for voting NO on the development UNTIL the needs of TPSS are met and values of the community are upheld.</p> <p>-Julia</p> |

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| 5/6          | Ronald Davies | 3     | <p>As constituents of yours in Ward 3, my wife and I would like your views on the planned development of Takoma Junction. It is clear to us that the current proposal —like the previous proposals—is disastrous for the City and its citizens. The traffic at the intersection of Rte 410 and Carroll Ave is already a huge problem at rush hour—and other times also. There is no way that a planned underground parking garage will not add to the congestion. And that increased congestion will be permanent. The main issue is the impact of the planned development on the Takoma Co-op. The Co-op now uses the large parking lot for deliveries by 18-wheelers. Under the proposed plan, that parking lot would disappear—though it is also now used for other purposes, such as selling Christmas trees by the Takoma Volunteer Fire Department and for an electric charging station as well as for the May Day celebration and other functions, such as "fun outreach "programs for children, programs run by the Co-op throughout the year. That electric charging station has already been removed from the large lot by the Co-op—for no discernible reason, unless it is assumed that the current plan is a lock to be approved by the Council, and the vote itself is just pro forma. That would be a travesty of democracy. The electric charging station has been put in a very awkward spot on Carroll Ave—in fact the location of that charging station creates a new hazard since cars trying to park in the lot behind the Olive Garden cannot see clearly when coming out of that parking lot if there are cars at the charging station. There is only legal space for one car at the charging station, though two cars are supposed to be able to use the charging station at the same time. No one can park in the parking lot without paying \$5. Nor can a bus use its stop, except very awkwardly—and possibly dangerously, if drivers behind it get impatient-- if there are two cars at the charging station—which is the goal of having the charging station. It would be far better to put the charging station back where it was—in the large Co-op parking lot just off Carroll. Where there was easily space for two cars to charge up at the same time. No hazard to traffic or complications for buses. And there was easy access. Whoever took the charging station out of the large co-op parking lot—the only large free lot in downtown Takoma Park—and put it where it now is—was not thinking.</p> |

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|              | Ronald Davies<br>(cont'd) |       | <p>If there is concern with the appearance of the large parking lot, then by all means resurface it. But to take it away from the Co-op will cripple and possibly kill the Co-op.</p> <p>The Co-op is an integral part of Takoma Park. It is a multicultural institution in the best sense of the word, and provides healthy fare including vegetarian, vegan and organic food. The staff are very friendly and completely ethnically mixed. It is in fact virtually a perfect embodiment of Takoma Park—and it is beyond baffling that the Council does not realize how important that is—and the clear hazards presented by the planned construction at Takoma Junction,, which will unavoidably severely hurt it.</p> <p>First, the period of construction will discourage shopping at the Co-op. The noise, pollution, and dealing with construction trucks—probably for years—will result in many shoppers finding other food sources.</p> <p>Once shoppers have changed their shopping habits, it will not be easy to bring them back. Especially since the planned underground parking lot—which will be pay parking—will add more cars to the already crowded area. In fact it will also go against the Takoma Park ideal of equal treatment, since only the well-heeled will park in the underground parking garage. The underground parking garage is to have space for 72 vehicles. This will even discourage biking and pedestrian shoppers, since the more cars, the more pollution—and bad air for non-drivers to breathe. And as noted, that will be a permanent change—for the worse.</p> <p>The increased traffic will create more hazards for pedestrians—including children--and bikers crossing at Takoma Junction.</p> <p>Those of us who oppose the current plan for development of Takoma Junction have been accused of having unlimited time since many are retired—(which is not totally true, since some of us work from home.)</p> <p>The flip side of this is obviously that the proponents of the development, who claim to be overwhelmingly still at regular jobs, will therefore not be there to experience the joys of construction during weekdays—the noise, congestion, and fumes. So these features of construction make no difference to them.</p> <p>Some of those who are pushing hardest for development of the Junction are themselves developers, and may well have ties to the firm which is to have the contract. There may well be side deals between developers, of which we have no knowledge. Bruce Williams, former mayor, is a case in point— at a Council meeting he was a passionate advocate of the planned development. Exactly what is in it for him?</p> <p>On top of this, in contrast to the boiling controversy over the Junction plans, there are actually some Wards of Takoma Park which would welcome development—I believe the Ward 6 spokeswoman at one of the recent meetings pointed this out. There is an obsession with the Takoma Junction, to the neglect of parts of the City which are actually hoping for development, funds, and attention. This makes no sense.</p> <p>If you are in favor of the Takoma Junction development plan now before the Takoma Park Council, exactly why are you in favor?</p> <p>Expansion of the tax base is not sufficient as a reason. Nor does Takoma Park suffer from a lack of (sometimes overpriced) boutiques and restaurants. And there is already space--- particularly along Carroll Avenue heading down to the Takoma Metro--- which has not found tenants. If there is a need for more boutiques and restaurants, this space could be used.</p> <p>Why have none of the issues I have brought up been addressed?</p> <p>Ronald D. Davies</p> |

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| 5/6       | Meriwether Jones   | 3     | <p>I'm puzzled. How were we herded into this false duality – a single ever-expanding project from NDC vs. no action at all? At this point it's clear the council is not seriously considering any option but to proceed with whatever NDC proposes. You've given them control over the scale of the development and are exerting governance only over which details to tweak. At this point, the process for public input feels like window-dressing.</p> <p>Once you allow a developer to pitch only a single plan, following many years of investment in process, is it really surprising that they'll feel comfortable growing the scope to better meet their own goals? They know you can't realistically walk away at this point. Not if the only choices are Our Latest Proposal or Do Nothing. As real estate power dynamics go, this is hardly rocket science.</p> <p>What concerns me most is how this take-or-leave-it duality is pitting our community against itself. I just watched the video of citizens speaking at the last session. Wow. It's become a bitter struggle between two factions – older, long-time residents opposed to the ever growing scale of the development vs. against younger newcomers who appear to think the debate is whether to do nothing at all (i.e, leave the space as a parking lot) or ignore the knee-jerk objections of activists opposed to development of any kind. That is not the choice our community faces. The bitterness that will follow when long-time residents are strong-armed on this decision will divide Takoma Park for years to come. Every new problem we encounter will become ammo for "I told you so" finger-pointing, instead of the collective problem-solving that healthy communities demonstrate.</p> <p>Please, please slow down the timing of this decision. There is no urgent crisis that can't wait till we get it right. Ask NDC to present a second option more in tune with the original vision. If they insist a large-scale development is the only feasible option for The Junction, then evidently they were not the right developer for our needs after all. However I suspect what's become out-sized is their power to dictate the range of options from which you must choose.</p> |
| 5/7       | Seth Maughan       | NR    | <p>My wife and I are in the process of purchasing a home that is less than 1/4 miles from this development. We are in strong support of this project going forward. With any development, there will be those against it, no matter how much the developers try to accommodate everyone's needs. After reviewing this presentation, it is clear that the developers have listened to community feedback and have incorporated it into a new, improved design. Features such as the green rooftop and the space for artwork are certainly in accord of the Takoma Park character which has brought us to the neighborhood. This intersection is already quite busy, so we do not see this development as being a huge change for the immediate neighbors. For my family, this use far outweighs the current use as a parking lot. I urge the council to support this project.</p>  |
| 5/7       | Elizabeth Thompson | 3     | <p>Thanks so much for posting the link to the traffic studies! As a native Takoma Parkian :,), architect, planner, and green consultant, I'd love to put in a quick vote.</p> <p>I like this option best. My ideal would include:<br/>         Extra greenspace / sidewalk / stormwater / bike lane to buffer the houses that the new road would front.<br/>         No median between the two directions. +++(Attachment)</p>  |

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|--------------|--------------------------------|-------|---|
|              | Elizabeth Thompson<br>(cont'd) |       | <p>I dislike the traffic circles / roundabouts and strange wedge-shaped medians. They tend to be bad for pedestrian life and that intersection doesn't do well with dead space. Traffic engineers love them, but they don't work well for pedestrians and cyclists (even / especially if they strand the rental bike dock on the wedge).</p> <p>I'd prefer to see Sycamore stay open to northbound and southbound traffic. If it needed to close, it would be hard on residents like me who currently use that light. If a stop sign was put in on 410 at Woodland, that would help with the concern.</p> <p>Thanks again for all that you and the Council as a whole are doing to help Takoma grow and thrive!</p> <p>Best regards,</p> <p>Elizabeth Thompso</p> |
| 5/7          | Mary Schollhamer               | 2     | <p>The development proposed at the Takoma Junction is good for the community. It will bring muchneeded new life. The historic strip of Takoma Park is already saturated with stores and cannot accommodate expansion. This development will expand the "hot spot" of stores and restaurants, and it will improve property values further along Carroll Ave by promoting a "walking culture." I'm looking forward to the day it's built and I can walk to more businesses in the community.</p>  |



**PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION**

| 2018 DATE | NAME          | WARD* | COMMENT  |
|-----------|---------------|-------|--|
| 5/7       | Stephen Kern  | 2     | <p>I support commercial development of the project by NDC if the following conditions are met.</p> <p>1 - We can agree there is a 90%+ chance the Co Op will survive beyond 3 years. If the Co Op goes out of business because of the development and we lose our one walkable, healthy-choice grocery store I will consider the project a failure. If a mediator is required to sort this out, so be it. The lay-by has been controversial but if NDC allows Co Op box trucks to use it - not just tractor trailers - and there can be an on-site manager to direct drop offs at key times of the day it seems reasonable that this project could work.</p> <p>2 - A meaningful, centralized public space is created, preferably in the back on the woods, meaning a breezeway would need to be incorporated. The public space on public property should be at least 15% of the development so at least 7,500 square feet.</p> <p>3 - The height does not exceed the height of the tallest of two story buildings across the street - probably Richardson's music store.</p> <p>4 - The intersection is re-designed with the removal of Morrison Park per the option offered by NDC traffic study.</p> <p>4 - The contract with NDC specifies that no chain retail stores be allowed to rent. I believe the agreement "encourages" this approach but does not mandate.</p> <p>The stated reason for creating a commercial development was specifically NOT about increasing the tax base it was about revitalization. Since the serious talks began four years ago every available commercial space in the Junction is operational and thriving. The idea still being presented that there are junky empty store fronts is not true. The idea that we need 50,000 square feet to revitalize is suspect. The idea that 25,000 feet of office space is in demand and will help revitalize is suspect. Commercial office space was never mentioned as a reason to create the development, but now it's 50% of the project.</p> <p>I sill maintain that the best use of the space to take a "High Line" approach. Tear up the black top, landscape the space to be a natural treasure with room for pop ups that could operate 9 months a year, and flexible space for public events and tractor trailer drop offs. Sell some of the space to the Co Op so they can make a modest expansion and include a cafe. If the City can't pay for it, a private group could create a Kickstarter campaign. The High Line in New York, for example, was a public project made possible with private funds. I regret that this approach was never given the time of day four years ago when I suggested it; that said, since the former Mayor and Council were have determined to see a traditional retail/office space fill the lot, I ask that we at least scale back the size and ensure the continuation of the Co Op.</p> <p>Thank you</p> |
| 5/7       | Sharon Mandel | 2     | <p>I urge the Council to vote NO to the NDC's Junction Proposal.</p> <p>I agree with those who claim the evidence shows that plan for private profit and public harm and way to large for the community's objectives.</p>  |

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON TAKOMA JUNCTION**

| 2018 DATE | NAME                               | WARD* | COMMENT   |
|-----------|------------------------------------|-------|---|
| 5/8       | Kathie Hart                        | 1     | <p>From my perspective, this issue is NOT about the Co-op. And continuing to bring the conversation back to what the co-op did or didn't do misses the point at a critical juncture. My understanding is that the City Council plans to vote on the proposed development in the next few weeks. So perhaps it's better to focus on the larger question. Does the proposed development fit the available site, and is the current plan in line with the City Council's conditions set forth in October?</p> <p>Other questions involve the impact on traffic at an already congested intersection and the testimony from the fire chief that the traffic impact of the development would make it even more difficult to respond to an emergency. I also wonder whether the city is making the best business deal possible for the use of this city owned land. And finally, does this development support the character of Takoma Park?</p> <p>I have to believe it is possible to find common ground here. What I am sure of is that the way forward is not to approve anything that a significant part of the community has concerns about. I sincerely hope we can find a way to think together and work together toward a solution that better suits us all.</p> <p>Kathie on Willow</p>   |
| 5/8       | Business Owners of Takoma Junction | 3     | <p><i>Letter from Business Owners of Takoma Park</i></p>  |
| 5/8       | Andrew Ingersoll                   | ?     | <p>Takoma Junction Development</p> <p>Notwithstanding the high taxes we pay, I have lived here for 9 years while the city has been unable to develop prime real estate. I am encouraged that it is finally moving forward but remain highly concerned. The junction is completely dysfunctional and will only be worse with the proposed development and no solution to the traffic. The disconnectedness of the parking garage to the co-op is certainly disappointing (one elevator???). But more important than whatever gets built there, I urge the city to refuse to provide an authorization to construct without fixing the junction. There is so much that could be done, whether it is a traffic circle, removing the gazebo and reconfiguring the intersection between Carroll and Sycamore, putting back the bus pull-out there (which effectively provided a left turn pocket into the coop parking lot), moving bus stops and consolidating them in a new lane in front of RS automotive. Just something to permanently fix the flow. The proposed development, which apparently includes no fixes to the intersection will lock this area of the City into permanent and horrible grid-lock with idling cars spewing emissions and frustrating us all. In short, as proposed, the development will reduce, not increase, our standard of living. With the correct fix to the junction, this end of Takoma Park could truly be wonderful.</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