

March 3, 2022

Chairman, Frederick L. Hill
Board of Zoning Adjustments
District of Columbia
Washington, DC

via: bz submissions@dc.gov

Re: Testimony in **support** of BZA Case No. 20638, Harrison Wisconsin LLC for Special Exception relief from the zone boundary lines

Dear Chairman Hill:

Please accept these comments on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth, the leading non-profit organization in the D.C. region advocating for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the DC region to grow and provide opportunities for all.

We support the proposal for a Special Exception to construct a new, six-story, 214-residential unit, with first floor retail, mixed-use building at 5151 Wisconsin Ave. NW. The developer has agreed to provide 11% of these apartments affordable at 60% MFI. This will be roughly 24 IZ units, depending on their size, within an easy half-mile walk of the Friendship Heights Metro station, and along Wisconsin Ave., a major bus corridor.

We are disappointed that the applicant did not take advantage of the increased housing capacity provided for in the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) by applying for a Planned Unit Development or zoning map change. We would also like to see fewer parking spaces, and agree with DDOT's preference for a 0.3 parking ratio.

Nonetheless, this proposal is a significant contribution to new housing, and more importantly affordable housing in a very desirable location, fulfilling key goals of the DC Comprehensive Plan. The 20+ IZ units will offer 20+ low-income DC households an opportunity they would not otherwise have to live in a walkable neighborhood close to stores, jobs, schools, and transit. This project makes Friendship Heights more inclusive and contributes to meeting the District's

housing equity goals. Adding more than 200 new housing opportunities here also helps address our climate crisis by enabling more people live in a walkable, transit-rich environment, allowing them to drive less and use sustainable travel modes for more of their trips.

We ask the BZA to approve this application without delay.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cheryl Cort', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Cheryl Cort
Policy Director