

# PRESS RELEASE

Friends of McMillan Park

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## VMP Zoning Hearing Message to the Community: *This Land is Not Your Land*

The DC Zoning Commission held the first of four formal hearings last Thursday on the Vision McMillan Partners (VMP) application to re-zone historic McMillan Park for high-rise office building and condo development. The take-away message for many residents in attendance and in the Twitter-sphere was that the proposed development would be more private country club than public space and that VMP was clueless about how to mitigate the sharp increase in vehicle traffic that would cripple the surrounding communities as a result of the project.

The hearing began in front of a packed room with the Commission denying the Friends' [motion to dismiss](#) and then continued until 11:30pm. The most audible reactions to the proceedings in the room and on Twitter focused on four different points:

1. According to VMP, the acres of impervious surfaces that they hope to build would absorb more storm water than McMillan Park's existing 20-acre green roof.
2. The new streets that they hope to create in the park to "alleviate traffic" would be privately owned and thus parking privileges would be at the whim of private managers. VMP's traffic engineer, after admitting that no bussing improvements are planned before breaking ground, suggested, as a solution to the major increase in traffic, "private transport options for residents" in what could turn into a Country Club-ification of McMillan Park.
3. The [proposed medical office buildings](#) generated largely negative backlash. Reactions to the building images on Twitter were beyond harsh: "Looks like a first year architectural student has been playing with a computer drawing program," said one, "makes me want to cry" said another, and more comically, "VMP's renderings for McMillan redevelopment kinda look like Naboo storyboards from [Star Wars] Ep 1. And we all know how that turned out." VMP spent \$34,000 of taxpayer funds to produce the 5-minute 3D video according to information obtained via FOIA requests.
4. The scant so-called "affordable housing" offering would provide subsidies to people making up to \$80,000 per year, which fails to address the actual need.

Because of the intense opposition to VMP's plan, an additional zoning hearing is scheduled for May 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm. Friends of McMillan Park, in addition to gathering nearly 7,000 signatures on the petition to stop the VMP plan, has [rallied supporters](#) and submitted over 200 letters of opposition to the application to re-zone McMillan Park.

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