

# THE FUTURE OF 1617 U STREET, NW

## *Frequently Asked Questions* (version 1.2)



### 1. Is 1617 U Street public land? Yes.

All 1.88 acres of land stretching between 17th and U and halfway down the block towards 16th Street and back over to V Street is public land, with a police and fire station and a public alley.

### 2. Will the proposed redevelopment of 1617 U Street, NW, mean the end of public control of this site? Yes.

While sometimes contradictory and evasive, City officials have suggested 1617 U Street will be sold or leased longterm to a developer. Either way, public control over this public property will likely be lost to private interests in a protracted way as done with almost all public land deals in DC -- See the West End (library & fire station), McMillan Park, 4th & M Streets SW, Barry Farm, the old Convention Center, etc..

### 3. What kind of housing will be built at 1617 U Street, NW? Primarily market rate, luxury housing if we don't stop the steal of public land.

The Mayor, Ward 1 & Ward 2 Councilmembers point to D.C. law that allows 70% of the housing units at a redeveloped 1617 U Street to be built as market-rate, "luxury" housing. While 30% of the units would be listed as "affordable" for individuals making \$85,000/year, paying about \$2,125 in monthly rent.

### 4. Will the fire station and police station be rebuilt at 1617 U Street, NW, and what happens to our emergency responders in the meantime? Unsure & unclear.

There is absolutely no guarantee on the table right now that the existing Third District police station or DC Fire & EMS Department Engine 9 will return to a redeveloped project at 1617 U Street NW.

Temporary locations for our emergency responders have not been identified and the future of these existing emergency services has not been discussed openly and is in doubt.

### 5. What does rezoning the site mean?

"Zoning" sets the construction envelope (height, size, lot occupancy) of a building(s) on any given property in DC. At 1617 U Street, this 1.88-acres of public land is currently designated a "[MU-4](#)" zone, with buildings up to 50-feet with some setbacks from the sidewalks. "Rezoning" the site to a "[MU-10](#)" zone ([as currently proposed by the Mayor](#)) would allow the construction of building(s) up to 120-feet tall, with an 80% lot occupancy, and almost no setbacks from the sidewalks (no front or side yards).

### 6. What does construction "by right" mean?

If this site at 1617 U Street is rezoned to MU-10, whoever controls the land (see FAQ #2 above) will be able to "by right" construct a 120-foot tall building (see FAQ #5 above). "By right" means the entity that controls the land will not have to confer with the community before getting permits to start construction.

**7. Have the Mayor, Councilmembers Nadeau and Pinto, or any agency of the Mayor put out a community-feedback survey about the future of 1617 U Street? No.**

The only group to put out an online community survey is the all-volunteer U Street A.I.R. (Area Impacted Residents). [www.ustreetair.com/survey](http://www.ustreetair.com/survey)

**8. Have the Mayor or Councilmembers Nadeau and Pinto hosted a well-noticed, well-attended, data-driven public townhall about a collective and collaborative public vision for the future of 1617 U Street, NW? No, not yet!**

The only meetings to date have been low-advertised & low-attended late-night Advisory Neighborhood Commission meetings and one or two small meetings hosted by the Deputy Mayor's Office for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED). None of DMPED's meetings have resulted in any public reports discussing the community feedback they heard. Notably, despite her claims, Ward 1 Councilmember Nadeau has never hosted a publicly-noticed community townhall about the future of 1617 U Street, NW.

**9. What are neighbors saying about the future of our public land and services at 1617 U Street, NW?**

Among the most frequently mentioned potential uses of the site is housing for families of modest means, a park/playground, a public library, senior services & community center and the continued need for emergency responders. Residents are overwhelmingly opposed to more market-rate luxury housing on this public site and fear the displacement of our police & fire stations. Residents want a chance for meaningful input in a Request for Proposals (RFP) to express their wishes for this large public site.

**10. How can I express my opinion about the future of 1617 U Street, NW to elected DC officials and government agencies? YOU CAN ACT RIGHT AWAY!**

Please feel free to sign and share the petition to stop the steal of public land at 1617 U Street, NW: [www.UStreetAIR.com/petition](http://www.UStreetAIR.com/petition) and, you can also send a comment into the DC Zoning Commission in opposition to rezoning the site for 100+ feet tall buildings: [www.UStreetAIR.com/testify1](http://www.UStreetAIR.com/testify1)

**PLEASE ALSO CONTACT THE MAYOR AND DC CITY COUNCIL TODAY!**

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