

Public Comments

Agenda Item 6B - NCPC File 7746: Washington Union Station

Andrew Grinberg

From: Andrew Grinberg

Email: andrew.grinberg@gmail.com

I'm writing with regards to the Union Station expansion project being discussed at the meeting on 1/9 (Agenda item 6B). As a resident, pedestrian and person who rides a bike in the surrounding neighborhoods, I'm very concerned with the preferred alternative selected by the FRA. I urge the NCPC to request the FRA go back to the drawing board and come up with a plan that better supports safe and carbon free transportation. The A-C alternative includes an unnecessary and harmful number of parking spaces. There is no need for a massive above ground parking garage at Union Station. It undercuts the climate and safety needs of our community. Instead, the Union Station expansion should prioritize pedestrian and bike access, while discouraging private auto use. Please reject this reckless plan that squanders our once in a generation opportunity to make Union Station the beautiful multimodal hub that it can and should be. Thank you for your consideration.

Austin Jones

From: Austin Jones

Email: austin.ted.jones@gmail.com

I'm writing in regards to the Union Station expansion project, and in particular the lack of pedestrian and bicycle access, and overbuilt parking.

As a resident of H street/Capitol Hill, Union Station should be a great resource for me, but it fails to meet my needs in a number of important ways.

First, as someone who bikes into downtown for work most days, the current Union station and surrounding roads are a huge barrier. Getting to work means I need to ride close to an extra mile each way in order to stay safe. East-West access through the site for bikes and pedestrians is critical and is not adequately communicated by these designs.

Second, if I want to ride to Union Station and shop or use one of the many forms of transportation available at the site, there is not a safe location for me to store my bike. The Bikestation was a great step in this direction, but was never large enough to accommodate the demand. A safe place for large numbers of commuters to store their bikes must be part of this plan, as well as a route ensuring safe and convenient access to the bike parking from as many directions as possible (i.e. from the MBT, from the H street area, from the Capitol, etc.). There are many models available from Europe in particular for how to build accessible and secure bike parking at train stations. A bike parking demand analysis should be conducted alongside the car parking demand analysis already requested.

Third, if I want to walk or take the bus or streetcar to get to the trains or metro station, I have to walk through a long and unpleasant bus terminal. Easy access to the station and metro station for pedestrians and transit users should not be compromised for a bus terminal that is larger than it needs to be. The same goes for car parking.

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And finally, Union Station is one of the most well-connected sites in all of DC, with regional and intercity rail, Metro, bus, and the streetcar all in one site. You do not need a car to access Union Station and the surrounding area. Apparently, Amtrak agrees that no parking is required for their purposes at Union Station (slide B-18 in the staff report). Using highly valuable space for on-site parking incentivizes people to use their cars to access Union Station nonetheless, and makes displaces many other possible uses of the space. These cars reduce the demand for safer, more space efficient, and environmentally-friendly modes of transport; negatively impact the people who live, work, and recreate nearby; and are fundamentally inconsistent with the needed movement away from cars in dense urban areas like Washington, DC. Please eliminate all non-essential parking areas, and do everything possible to get exemptions allowing parking to be as close as possible to zero.

Thank you,
Austin Jones
H street/Capitol Hill resident

Nicole Mogul

From: Nicole F Mogul
Email: nicole.mogul@gmail.com

RE: Union Station expansion project (Agenda item 6B on 1/9).

This project needs to seize the opportunity to make Union Station a multi-modal transit hub that benefits the neighborhood in terms of climate, safety, and livability.

The preferred alternative selected by the FRA is a step backward. I urge the NCPC to request the FRA go back to the drawing board and come up with a plan that better supports safe and carbon free transportation.

The A-C alternative includes an unnecessary and harmful number of parking spaces. There is no need for a massive above ground parking garage at Union Station.

The Union Station expansion should prioritize pedestrian and bike access, while discouraging private auto use.

I am writing to urge you to ask the FRA to revise their plans with these urgent considerations in mind.

Best,
Nicole Mogul

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Rami Turayhi

From: Rami Turayhi

Email: RamiTurayhi@gmail.com

RE: Union Station expansion project (Agenda item 6B on 1/9).

This potentially game-changing project presents DC and the wider region with an opportunity to remake Union Station into a true multi-modal transit hub that is fully integrated into a walkable, amenity-rich and contiguous pedestrian-friendly neighborhood. The A-C alternative includes an unnecessary and number of parking spaces which will serve little purpose other than to continue to isolate Union Station from the neighborhoods and city surrounding it. There is absolutely no need for a massive above ground parking garage at Union Station.

The preferred alternative selected by the FRA is a HUGE step backward. I urge the NCPC to request the FRA go back to the drawing board and come up with a plan that prioritizes pedestrian and bike mobility and safety, while discouraging private auto use.

I am writing to urge you to ask the FRA to revise their plans with these urgent considerations in mind.