

November 29, 2021

Members of the DC Council,

Change is hard and even more so when it's not asked for nearly two years into a global pandemic. While acknowledging the difficulties in changing political representation and structure, we would welcome the new opportunities if our neighborhood, constituents, and friends and families are redistricted to Ward 7. We understand that as a part of this redistricting process, the Council is legally required to draw new Ward boundaries that decrease the population of Ward 6 and increase the populations of Wards 7 and 8. We also understand that the Council must do so in a way that is compliant with the law and that does not have the purpose and intent of diluting the voting strength of minority residents such as in predominantly Black Wards 7 and 8. While we and many residents of our single member districts may wish we could remain in Ward 6, we understand that the Council must make difficult decisions. Given that, we understand the rationale for the map that was chosen and transparently justified by the Subcommittee.

We do not oppose either as individual residents or elected officials a ward map in which Ward 7 encompasses all or portions of our single member districts. However, there are shortcomings in the approved map which the Council should rectify before approval. **We have included maps at the end of this letter which address these shortcomings.** Specifically:

1. Ward 7's population is simply too small, 114 residents above the legal minimum, while not using natural features or census tracts as the boundaries. Ward 7's population should be roughly equal to Ward 6 and 8.
2. The approved map splits a coherent commercial corridor in Eastern Ward 6, focused on Pennsylvania Avenue SE, Potomac Avenue SE, and 14th Street SE.
3. Census Tract 71, the triangle bounded by Pennsylvania Avenue SE, 11th Street SE, and the Anacostia River, should remain intact and not be split down Potomac Avenue SE as this small, isolated portion of Ward 6 forms a coherent community of interest.
4. The approved map likely means the end of the SMD solely comprised of residents of the DC Jail as the west of the river portion in Ward 7 would only be able to constitute a 5-person ANC. The DC Jail SMD has always been in an ANC of at least 7 commissioners to allow for regular vacancies as residents return or are sent out of state.
5. Less than 100 residents would live in buildings contributing to the Capitol Hill Historic District in Ward 7 along Potomac Ave SE and K Street SE. These residents would be represented in an ANC where over 99% of the residents will be in non-designated buildings and have no interaction with historic building regulations.
6. The 1,565 residents in Census Tracts 69 and 71 were not included in any of the draft discussion maps (despite many submitted map proposals including this area). Residents feel blindsided and voiceless in these decisions as most did not participate in the Ward 6 or citywide hearings as they noted they were unaffected by the discussion maps.

1) Ward 7 population

The approved map's population in Ward 7 would be 114 residents above the legal minimum including a west of the river portion of 9,993 residents. This west of the river portion would also include 2,226 residents of institutional facilities run by the Department of Corrections and Department of Behavioral Health. There are no natural features serving as boundaries here and the Subcommittee maps splits two census tracts west of 15th Street SE. There is no legal reasoning for why Ward 7 cannot be approximately of equal size to Ward 6, which is clearly laid out as one directive in redistricting law (§1-1011.01(c)).

2) Commercial Corridors

The commercial corridors at the eastern end of Ward 6 are distinctly different from the areas around Capitol South and Eastern Market/Barracks Row and is defined more by services and residential instead of restaurants and bars. Nonetheless, this small commercial corridor is split in Two along Potomac Ave SE in the approved map. The Subcommittee this year and in prior maps values shared representation along existing commercial corridors share representation, such as along Connecticut Avenue in Ward 3 or Pennsylvania Avenue SE south and east of the Sousa Bridge. Shared representation better serves residents and businesses to ensure consistency in dealing with the impacts and mitigations related to transportation, community safety, ABRA licensing, and more in these commercial corridors.

3) Tract 71

The final map approved by the Council should not split Census tract 71 at Potomac Avenue SE. This oft-forgotten triangle between the Anacostia River, 11th Street SE, and Pennsylvania Avenue is a community centered on Chamberlain Elementary and Potomac Gardens and now Harris Teeter. It is a diverse, mixed income community often insularly focused as it continues to be hemmed in by freeways and freeway like roads on all sides. For nearly two decades and through four mayoral administrations, the community has been promised removal of the Southeast Freeway stub which forcibly separates this community from the Anacostia River. As this project, Southeast Boulevard, continues to lumber along, residents who would be most acutely impacted by this development would now be politically separated along Potomac Avenue SE.

4) Ensuring Single Member District representation at the DC Jail.

While recognizing that ANC redistricting comes after this process, we cannot ignore the impacts on our incarcerated neighbors at the DC Jail. Currently, the Jail shares a census block with Reservation 13. At the time of the census, the entirety of block 1013 in Census Tract 68.04 was in group quarters. 2,197 were incarcerated, 124 resided at Harriet Tubman Women's Shelter, and 29 were institutionalized the Department of Behavioral Health's Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program. Since then, hundreds of units have delivered and more are under construction at Reservation 13. This unique population mix and timing allows an ANC map with this block to separate representation of the Jail from Reservation 13. In order to allow continued representation at the DC Jail, an ANC comprising the Jail should be structured to allow for regular vacancies. In the approved map, the Ward 7 Redistricting Task Force would be forced to choose from a high turnover SMD in a 5-member commission or to simply combine the institutional and non-institutional populations in one SMD in a 5-member commission. Expanding the Ward 7 population to roughly equal Ward 6 would allow a 6- or 7-person west of the river ANC, making it easier to create structures to support and uplift a sitting commissioner from the DC Jail while also dealing with frequent vacancies in that SMD. This problem, even though the position was never filled until 2021, has long been recognized by the council and the ANC including the Jail SMD has

always been at least 7 commissioners (6C had 9 commissioners form 1990-2000, 6B had 11 from 2000-2010, and 7F has 7 now)

5) Historic Districts

We recognize that historic districts should not be the only factor in where Ward lines are drawn, but the Subcommittee explicitly used historic district boundaries split a census tract in the Mount Vernon Square Historic District explicitly recognizing some of the value in ensuring residents have representation on an ANC familiar with Historic District regulation. While the Subcommittee sought to prevent issues there, it failed to do so in the Capitol Hill Historic District. The approved map leaves less than 100 residents in contributing buildings in Ward 7, in an ANC where over 99% of the residents will not live in a historic district and would have no regular interaction with the historic district regulations.

Again, we do not oppose being part of Ward 7 and would welcome the opportunity to become a part of the existing thriving communities, dedicated and committed leadership, and amazing neighbors with shared interests on both side of the Anacostia River currently in Ward 7. If the Council moves forward with a map with Kingman Park and Rosedale in Ward 6, we respectfully request that the Council incorporates as many thoughts and suggestions in this letter as possible in equalizing the Ward populations between Ward 6 and Ward 7. Doing so would ensure the west of the river portion of Ward 7 would have the necessary political structure to ensure our community can be well represented by a functional ANC and be large enough to ensure our ability to organize and advocate for common interests at the DC Council is not unnecessarily limited.

The attached maps which would solve many of the problems. We encourage the Council to adopt one of the options *if Rosedale and Kingman Park remain in Ward 6*.

Respectfully,

Alison Horn, 6B09

Edward Ryder, 6B07

Corey Holman, 6B06

Option 1: 11th Street to D Street SE.

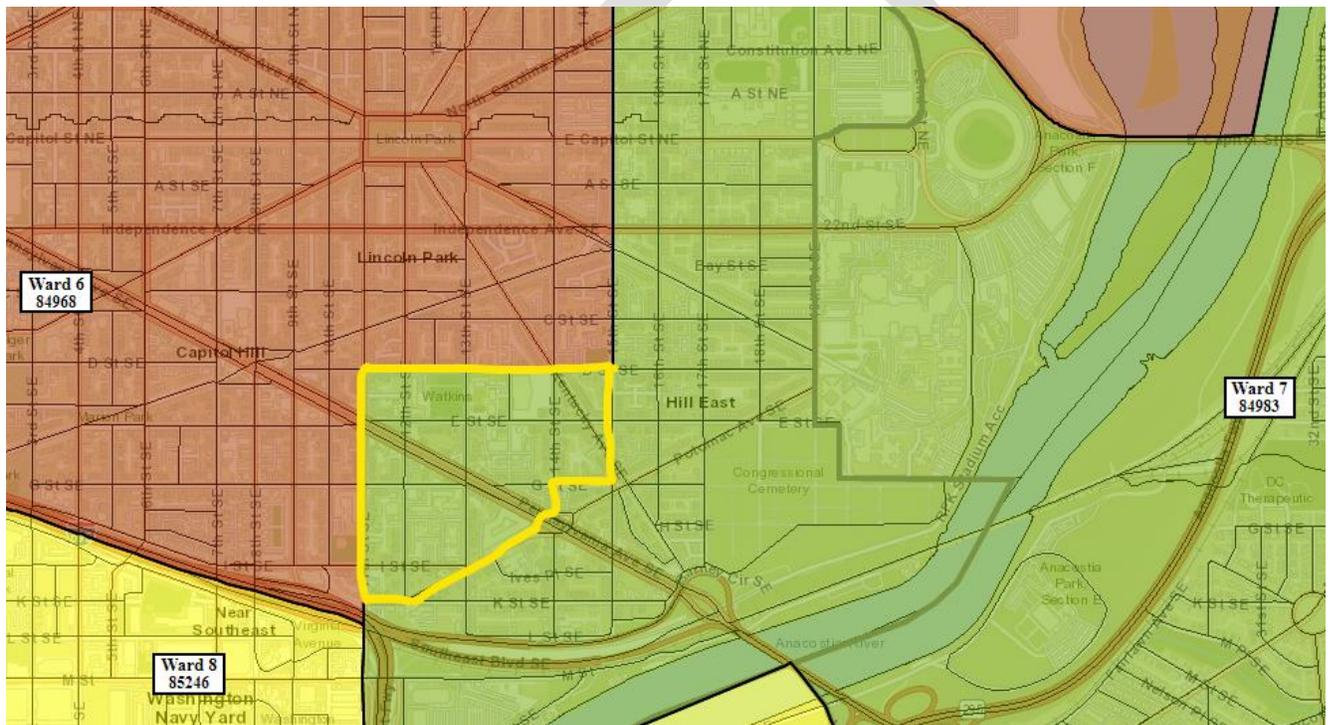
This map adds all of census tract 71 and a squared off portion below D Street SE to the approved subcommittee map. This map unites the existing commercial corridor in Eastern Ward 6. The populations of Ward 6 and 7 and within 15 residents of each other. This map adds about 3,000 residents to Ward 7, enough residents for a 6 or 7-person ANC. Approximately 500 residents of contributing buildings would be added creating somewhat more of a historic district base in the ANC.

Ward 6 would be marginally more diverse in this scenario from the approved 56.5% white residents reduced to 56.4%.

Ward 7 would become slightly whiter from 7.4% to 9.1%, but would not meaningfully dilute the power of the existing electorate.

Ward 6 population: 84,968

Ward 7 population: 84,983



Option 2: The Historic District

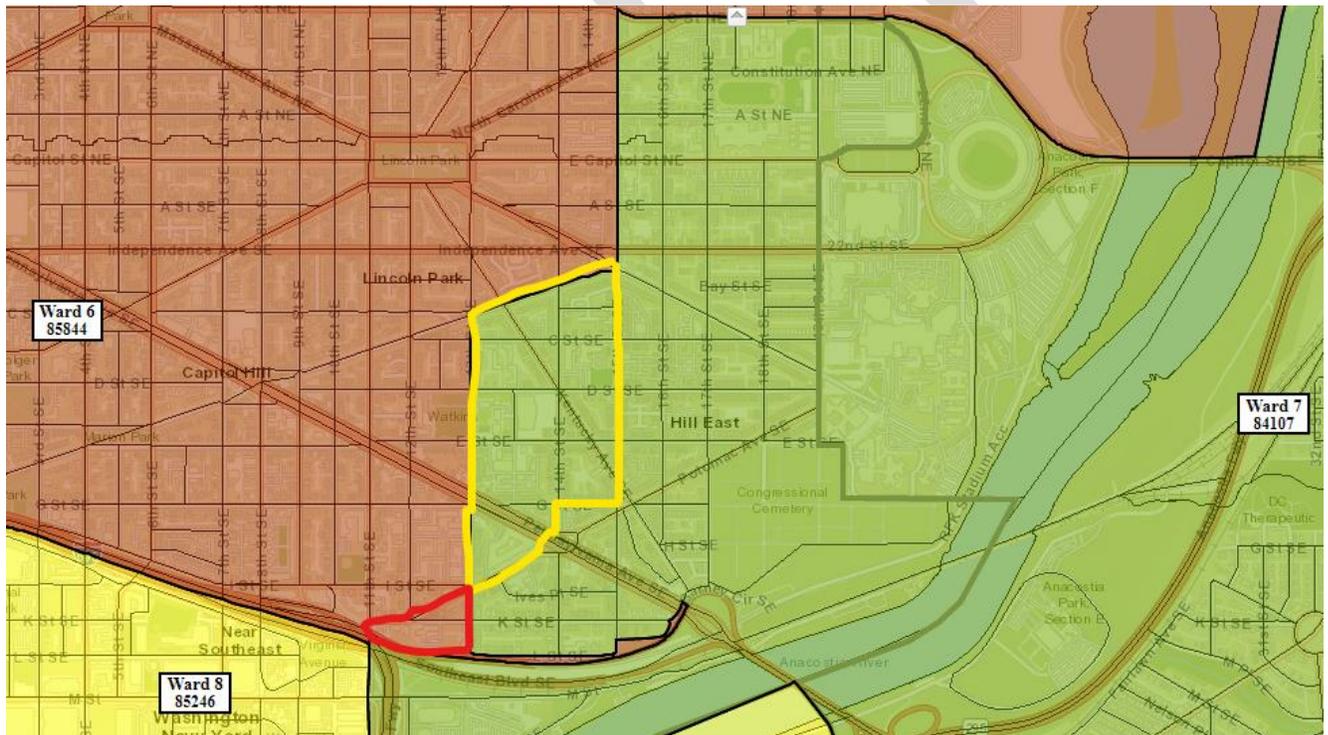
This map focuses on the Capitol Hill Historic District as the ward boundary. In this case, 321 residents are reassigned back to Ward 6 while 2,431 are assigned to Ward 7 from Ward 6. This map moves most of the eastern end of the Pennsylvania Avenue SE, does not contain any historic district blocks, and allows for a 6-person ANC, and unites Potomac Gardens and most of Hopkins (excluding 1430 L Street SE) in the same ward. Unfortunately, Tract 71 stays split and the commercial 1100 and 1200 blocks of Pennsylvania Avenue SE are separated.

Ward 6 would be marginally more diverse in this scenario from the approved 56.5% white residents reduced to 56.0%.

Ward 7 would become slightly whiter from 7.4% to 9.1% but would not meaningfully dilute the power of the existing electorate.

Ward 6 population: 85,884

Ward 7 population: 84,107



Option 3: 11th Street SE to Independence

This map uses Southeast Capitol Hill as a focus for Ward 7, a much more compact area than approved, drawn along the commuter routes of 11th Street SE and Independence Ave SE. It reassigns 5,155 from Ward 6 to 7 while returning 2,497 back to Ward 6. In this map, the entire eastern commercial corridor is in one ward. Census Tract 71 is unified. This map would support 6-person ANC. 2,737 residents of the Capitol Hill Historic District would be in this hypothetical ward, about 25% of the west of the river ANC.

Ward 6 would be more diverse in this scenario from the approved 56.5% white residents reduced to 56.0%.

Ward 7 would become slightly whiter from 7.4% to 9.5%, but would not meaningfully dilute the power of the existing electorate.

Ward 6 population: 85,240

Ward 7 population: 84,711

