

Leach, Deonte (DCOZ)

From: Michael Maya <michael.maya@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2016 7:23 PM
To: DCOZ - ZC Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: ZC No. 15-09; Residents of Lanier Heights & ANC 1C

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Dear Zoning Commissioners:

We are writing to express our opposition to the proposal to rezone much of Lanier Heights from zone R-5-B to zone R-4. Although we share many of the concerns expressed in the letters on the docket in support of the proposal, in our view R-4 zoning is too restrictive for our neighborhood.

One of the primary themes in the letters supporting the downzoning proposal is a desire to retain housing that is suitable for families with children so that such families can continue to settle (and stay) in the neighborhood. In our view, the proposal would impede this goal, rather than foster it, because it would make it difficult or impossible for many homeowners to undertake the kinds of relatively minor renovations (e.g., the expansion of a kitchen, the conversion of an attic to extra bedroom, etc.) that might enable them to remain in the neighborhood as their families grow, rather than moving to lower-density locations elsewhere in the District or the suburbs. While some of these renovations might theoretically be possible in an R-4 zone, many likely would be impermissible here because many of the homes in the neighborhood would become non-conforming after the proposed downzoning. (We understand that the exact number of such homes is in dispute, but even using the maps attached to the Office of Planning's submission (Ex. 12), it is clear that many existing homes would become non-conforming.)

The proposal also poses risks to the wider Adams-Morgan neighborhood. My wife and I purchased our home in Lanier Heights in 2014 in part because of its proximity to amenities that depend on high population to density to survive (e.g., parks, transit, shops, restaurants, etc.). To avoid stagnation or deterioration in these types of amenities, we believe that population densities must be allowed to increase within reasonable limits. Although density can be achieved to some extent by the development of larger, multi-unit buildings along major arteries such as 18th Street and Columbia Road, we do not believe that dense development should be prohibited entirely in other parts of Lanier Heights. The current R-5-B zoning would allow such development to continue; R-4 zoning would not.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to reject the proposal to downzone Lanier Heights.

Sincerely,
Michael Maya and Rebecca Maltzman
1818 Ontario Place NW

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
ZONING COMMISSION
CASE NO. 15-09
EXHIBIT NO. 27