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Testimony of Anne-Marie Bairstow in Support of Zoning Case 08-06
Changes to Zoning Regulations Regarding Parking Minimums and Maximums
November 15, 2010

Members of the Zoning Commission:

My name is Anne-Marie Bairstow and I live in Woodley Park in Ward 3. I am sorry that I am unable to attend tonight's hearing but I appreciate your taking written testimony. I am writing in support of the proposed zoning changes that will remove most parking minimums and in some cases limit the amount of parking that a developer is allowed to build. As a parent of 3, I regularly visit the DC USA shopping center to pick up things for my family. I am always surprised how many empty spaces are in the garage, even at busy times. And I have never been to the second level of parking – there is never any need. I feel like this is a wasted opportunity; the resources dedicated to building that parking would have been better allocated to something else, like improving the Circulator connection to the development, for example.

I wonder if part of the reason that there are so many empty spaces in DC USA is because the roads surrounding it can't handle too much more traffic. I keep experimenting with different ways to get in and out, and yet I almost always end up sitting in traffic.

I also support requiring put aside space for secure bicycle parking and carsharing.

There are many of us who will bike even in bad weather, but don't want to leave our bikes out in the rain or worse to be stolen while we are inside. I think that the success of Capital Bikeshare in the few short months it has been operating is a testament to how many people will consider biking if it is easier for them.

The city should also do whatever it can to encourage carsharing. When I lived in Adams Morgan, I had a car for two reasons: to visit my brother in Northern Virginia and to run occasional errands in the suburbs. We used our car so infrequently that one time when we accidentally left the window open, we came back to find the car full of leaves. So most of the time our car was occupying a valuable Adams Morgan parking spot – had there been carsharing then we never would have considered the hassles of owning a car in that neighborhood; we would have just signed up. I have no doubt that many of the singles and couples moving into the new apartment buildings in the Riverfront and Columbia Heights and other neighborhoods feel the same way.

For these reasons, I hope that you will support the change in the zoning regulations to eliminate parking minimums and instead have parking maximums. Thank you for considering my input.


Anne-Marie Bairstow
2802 27th Street NW
202-441-9576

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
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EXHIBIT NO. 55

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FAX

TO: Zoning Commission

FROM: Anne-Marie Bairstow

DATE: November 15, 2010

PHONE: 202-441-9576

REGARDING: Support for ZC #08-06