

June 20, 2002

Zoning Commissioners
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Attn: Mr. Alberto P. Bastida, AICP, Secretary

Re: Case No. 02-19 - Text Amendment
Forest Hills Tree and Slope Overlay District

Dear Zoning Commissioners:

I write in support of the Tree and Slope Overlay District proposed for Forest Hills. I am a resident of Forest Hills and have been involved with the process of analyzing and amending the text amendment providing for the overlay as well as explaining the ramifications of the proposed district to neighbors. I am also an architect with more than 20 years experience working on residential projects across the country.

As part of my contribution to the Ad Hoc Committee on Tree and Slope Protection Overlays, I analyzed the requirements of similar use groups in surrounding jurisdictions. I have attached a copy of a synopsis I prepared for the committee. The comparisons are enlightening and clearly show that the proposed conditions are similar to, and in many cases still less restrictive than, those used in other jurisdictions. In the preparation of the comparison, I used those residential districts found in areas similar to the Forest Hills neighborhood. I have ignored classifications such as Montgomery County's RE-1 and RE-2 zones that have requirements for minimum lot sizes of 1 and 2 acres respectively.

Lot size

The District of Columbia is unique because the minimum lot size of its most restrictive residential district, R-1-A, is significantly smaller - approximately 1/3rd the size - of similar zones in other jurisdictions. The other jurisdictions require minimum lot sizes of 18,000 to 20,000 square feet in similar neighborhoods. In DC, 7,500 sf is the largest minimum lot size. This puts incredible development pressure to tear down and subdivide lots on neighborhoods like Forest Hills, where a large number of the lots are twice or three times the minimum size. When the underlying zoning allows this as a matter of right, there is little that neighbors can do to protect and maintain the character of the neighborhood. The proposed Overlay District gives the neighborhood a reasonable chance of maintaining its character.

DC OFFICE
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ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

Case 02-19

Exhibit 105

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-19
EXHIBIT NO.105