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Mr. Alberto P. Bastida
Secretary of the Zoning Commission
DC Office of Zoning
441 4th St NW, Suite 210
Washington DC 20001

D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING
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Dear Mr. Bastida:

I have been a resident of Forest Hills since 1987 and strongly oppose the Tree and Slope Overlay (Case 02-19) being considered for this neighborhood.

The restrictions proposed for new buildings, additions and minimum impervious surface will not allow, or severely limit my ability to make improvements to my property along the lines made in the recent past by my neighbors. This is unfair, and I do not believe these restrictions should be applied, if at all, to existing property owners who have decided to make this neighborhood their home based on the current zoning restrictions.

Building restrictions and tree preservation restrictions like the ones under consideration may make sense in neighborhoods with large multi-acre lots where the percentages proposed will not limit reasonable additions, but they will impose a burden to Forest Hills homeowners whose average lot size is much smaller, often as in my case irregular in shape and topography. Our building and

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improvement options are much more limited, and our zoning should intelligently reflect this. The Tree and Slope Overlay does not.

In addition to unfairly restricting my ability to improve my property as our family needs change, this Overlay may cause me economic harm should I wish to sell my home to a buyer who is looking for a site where such improvements are possible. Zoning should preserve and enhance property values, not make a neighborhood less attractive to potential buyers. The Tree and Slope Overlay will reduce the appeal of Forest Hills to improvement-oriented buyers. This is self-defeating for the city as a whole whose property tax revenues rise as improvements add to real estate assessed values.

The restrictions proposed for tree cutting are also not well thought-out. If applied they will add to homeowner costs and increase risks to the personal safety and property of those in Forest Hills.

Forest Hills is a built up residential neighborhood, not a forest preservation zone like nearby Rock Creek Park. In Rock Creek trees can safely follow their natural life cycle of growth, maturity, decline and new growth without endangering nearby homeowners. In Forest Hills many of the existing mature trees offer hazards as well as beauty to the neighborhood. Many have been allowed to grow in ways that their existing branches tower over houses on their lots as well as neighboring structures. A strong summer storm, like that that caused great damage several years ago in Chevy Chase DC, could topple many of these, threatening lives and property. This is a risk to "healthy" as well as "diseased" trees.

Maintaining a mature tree on a Forest Hills lot is expensive. Regular fertilization

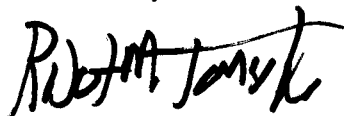
and pruning must be substituted for the natural process that take place in Rock Creek Park. As trees grow, at some point the ongoing expense of this care may become prohibitive, and zoning restrictions that limit homeowners' choice in removing such trees can threaten the safety of nearby residents as well as being an economic burden

If the goal of the zoning changes is to protect the character of this park-like neighborhood, the removal of existing too-large-for-an-urban residential-neighborhood-trees (and their replacement with young, new trees) should be encouraged on an ongoing basis, not restricted against. This is how nature works in Rock Creek. Trees keep growing, sometimes too tall for their environment. Thoughtful zoning needs to reflect this reality.

Finally, some of the press coverage of this issue suggests the Overlay has been advocated by a group of individuals interested in trying to limit building on a particular lot in Forest Hills. Hopefully the Zoning Commission can address that specific case on its own merits, without imposing such far-reaching, and, as I have tried to demonstrate, not well-thought-out restrictions on all Forest Hills homeowners. Such would be a serious abuse of the zoning process, something homeowners expect the Zoning Commission to protect us against.

I appreciate you considering my opposition to the Tree and Slope Overlay and its many serious, unintended consequences. Like many of my fellow homeowners I am unable to personally attend the June 27th hearing, but I hope this letter will serve as an adequate representation of my concerns. Please contact me if more information is needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Jansky". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and a stylized "J".