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Whereas adhering to that same height limit of 50' may be able to be approved by the Zoning Commission on March 14,

Whereas the proposal for the Takoma Overlay Zone explicitly states that its purpose is to implement the Small Area Plan for the Takoma Central District,

Whereas the Office of Planning's "Takoma Central District Plan" (January 2002) explicitly recommends that "New commercial and residential development should be neighborhood-driven in scale and approach." and that "New residential and commercial buildings should be no more than 2-4 four stories in height to match existing neighborhood scale."

Whereas buildings 2-4 stories tall are in keeping with the existing architectural character and scale which makes Takoma DC and surrounding neighborhoods unique,

Whereas the community celebrates its unique heritage as a diverse neighborhood and works to preserve its historic character,

Whereas those who support the proposed Overlay as is state that there is no intention for the proposed changes in building height (from 50 to 55 feet) to encourage a fifth story,

Whereas within a 50 foot tall building, 4 stories can be built with a 14 foot ground floor ceiling,

Whereas the minimum 14' ceilings for ground floor retail are required only in a minimum of 50% of the ground floor, thereby allowing for higher ceilings and higher rents or sale prices in 50% of the building,

Whereas, a number of residents support mixed income housing, and the different ceiling heights would lead to a significant difference in range of prices, albeit at the upper end of the scale for this part of the city,

We therefore recommend that the current limit of 50' be adhered to and that the Zoning Regulations be amended to also stipulate that the height of new residential and commercial buildings in the Takoma Overlay Zone be no more than 2-4 stories if either no additional review process is required or an abbreviated review process could be used.

3. Setback:

Whereas a minimum 15' setback from the curbline is considered "better" for residents and enjoys "widespread" support among residents as well as support by the Office of Planning's Development Review Specialist,

Whereas it is our understanding that proposing a minimum 15' setback from the curbline [illegible]essitate taking such a proposal through the review process again,

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We therefore recommend that a minimum 15' setback be approved by the Zoning Commission if an abbreviated review process could be used.

4. Appropriate Transitions from Commercial to Residential Zones:

Whereas appropriate transitions from commercial to residential zones have been considered in public forum only since February 21 in the ANC 4B02 Single Member District meeting,

Whereas, on the basis of this initial discussion of the subject, the Office of Planning's Development Review Specialist and the Plan Takoma Board were considering including this in its final report and letter, respectively,

Whereas, a number of residents are concerned about this issue,

Whereas the C-2-A proposed Overlay abuts residential zones in several places (See attached Exhibit 3),

Whereas the proximity of a tall, multi-story building next to a single family home or historically "contributing" building may significantly reduce the value of that overshadowed building as well as the light and space around it,

Whereas it is our understanding that approval of such a measure would necessitate taking the proposal through the review process again,

We therefore recommend that the Zoning Commission approve the following measures now if an abbreviated review process could be used.

Recommended measures. that the proposed Overlay be amended to require:

a) an appropriate setback from the property line shared with the adjacent residential zone,
b) a buffer which would provide an appropriate transition in height from the commercial/residential building in the proposed Overlay zone to the home in the adjacent residential zone,
c) a façade -- particularly on the side of the building that faces the residential zone, landscaping and streetscaping, sidewalk treatment, street furniture, etc., that is compatible with the adjacent residential zone in order to help provide an appropriate transition.