Subj: **ANC 4B draft resolution on the overlay zone**
Date: 03/05/2005 5:13:57 P.M. Eastern Standard Time
From. bon@toad.net
To: Fewdcc@aol.com

Dear Commissioner Wheeler,

I am unable to attend the ANC meeting today. However, I wish to state my support for the draft resolution on the Takoma Overlay Zone. What happens in the Takoma Historic District commercial area will have longstanding impacts on the value and viability of Takoma as a place with a unique history and a small-town ambience. Without its special character, Takoma will simply be in commercial competition with Silver Spring and Wheaton, only with narrower roads and less parking.

I further think that the city should postpone any decisionmaking on this overlay zone in order to better inform *all* citizens of Takoma about the proposed change and its implications and to receive input from an INFORMED citizenry.

I think the concerns raised by Alan Abrams, yourself, TP councilwoman Joy Austin-Lane and others regarding the impact on the historic residential area surrounding the commercial corridor are valid and important.

It is also important that the community fully consider the issue of 14-foot retail space. Mr. Jackson of the Office of Planning has stated that the reason for 14-foot ceilings is that it is needed to attract retail from *outside* the community--that is, chain retailers This despite a clear expression by the community of a strong preference for locally based retail.

Moreover, the community needs to think through the possible result of adding a lot of retail space if the economy continues to soften, as is expected (due to high oil prices, & rising interest rates)--I thought it was instructive to hear the range of uses all that new retail space legally be put to in C-2-A zoning Citizens are foolish to assume that because they dream of nice bistros and restaurants or a hardware store, these things would be willing/able to come here or prove to be sustainable.

It's also important to remember that only *half* of the ground-floor space is required to be used for storefront retail. What will the other 50 percent be used for?

What if no one at all is willing or able to rent some of the new space?

The Office of Planning doesn't have any sort of plan for these contingencies, only a notion that 14-foot ceilings will attract national chains to our neighborhood. Despite the assertion quoted in the meeating notice from the Office of Planning's Central District Plan that "New commercial and residential development should be neighborhood-driven in scale and approach," the opposite is what seems to be taking place. I'm not sure where in the city their cookie-cutter approach is appropriate, but it is NOT appropriate for Takoma.

Thank you,

Bonnie Moss

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ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 04-16
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FAX

No. of pages: 3
Date: March 7, 2005

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To: Ms. Carol Mitten, Chair
Zoning Commission
Fax: 202-727-6072

From: Faith Wheeler
Fax: 202-882-7565

Subject: Takoma Overlay Zone, case no. 04-16

Please see attached copy of an email sent directly to me from a constituent, Bonnie Moss.