May 1, 2005

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Ms. Carol Mitten, Chair
Zoning Commission
Office of Zoning
441 4th Street, NW, 210-S
Washington, DC 20002

Fax No.: 202-727-6072

Reference: Takoma Neighborhood Commercial Overlay District, Case No. 04-16

Dear Ms. Mitten:

I've waited a long time for the commercial district of Takoma to look good, so I want to be sure that the revitalization is done right. That's why I want the height limit for new buildings in the commercial zone to stay at 50' and the setback from the street to be at least 15' to the streetwall of the new buildings. Anything taller than that is too tall, and anything closer to the street than that doesn't look good. It feels too squeezed, and it doesn't allow enough room for two pairs of friends to pass each other going in opposite directions without having to go single file.

I want the Old Takoma business district to be a vibrant, welcoming and fun place to go to and walk around. If the sidewalks are wide enough to comfortably walk along with family and friends and wide enough so that pedestrians do NOT feel too dangerously close to passing cars, trucks and buses and their exhaust fumes, that will help make this a walkable community.

As for the 50' limit, one of the things that Takoma is known for is low buildings. The higher the buildings, the more you feel hemmed in by brick and mortar, concrete and steel. 50' is already higher than nearly any building here except the new ones around the Metro station. Taller buildings don't feel like Takoma, and still taller buildings would feel even less so. They make us less unique and more like any other place. And that puts us on the road to "no place" that anyone would go out of there way to visit or shop in.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 04-16
EXHIBIT NO. 64

Sincerely,

Maija L. Haag
517 Cedar St. NW
Wash. DC 20012

P.S. I am just 2½ blocks from the Takoma Commercial District and always walk to businesses in the area. It would make a difference to have a spacious sidewalk!

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.04-16
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