

**TESTIMONY IN *SUPPORT* OF THE
CAMPAIGN FOR MANDATORY INCLUSIONARY ZONING'S PROPOSAL
Case No. 04-33**

July 25, 2005

I am Renee Bowser and I live at 5322 2nd Street, NW in the Petworth neighborhood of Ward 4. I have lived and worked in DC since 1983. I am Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for ANC Single Member District 4D02. I am testifying on behalf of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4D which is composed of 6 single member districts which cover a substantial portion of Petworth. On February 15 this year, ANC 4D passed a resolution in support of the DC Campaign for Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning's Proposal for mandatory inclusionary zoning. (Cover letter and resolution are attached.) My ANC strongly supports the Case No. 04-33 proposal.

I have learned from long term residents that Petworth has been an economically diverse community since they pushed back segregation in the 1950's. Many Petworth families built their lives and supported their families with earnings from blue collar jobs. As the cost of housing rises exponentially, building a life on such income is becoming less and less possible.

I bought my home in 1989 from a man, who with his wife, moved to Petworth in the mid-1950's. He worked as a taxi driver and she as a teacher. At \$410,000, the price a row house on my block sold for this year, that same couple who worked and served this city would not be able to build their family in Petworth today. Another nearby neighbor, who along with her husband, bought a house in the 1950's, also would likely not be able to afford their home today, because she, now retired, was a hotel worker. Two other nearby neighbors bought their home in 1959. This husband and wife nurtured ten children through Rudolph Elementary school, college, and other successes, with the husband working as a taxi driver, letter carrier, and other jobs when necessary. These neighbors would be priced out

**ZONING COMMISSION
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today. As a Union lawyer, I would struggle to buy where I now live.

Contrary to the MANNA's representations that inclusionary zoning prevents program participants from realizing the American dream of moving up and out of a neighborhood, settling in a safe, attractive neighborhood like Petworth facilitates these families in achieving their dreams. Having affordable and livable communities in Petworth helped them to build and grow their lives. Studies show that growing desirable community conditions takes stability. The May, 2004 report by the Greater Minnesota Housing Fund titled Importance of Stable Housing for Children stated that "insecure housing and frequent mobility have been shown to result in frequent absences and poorer school performance." A 1994 federal GAO study found that residential changes experienced by students, primarily caused by the housing system, trigger damaging educational moves. Home ownership brings stability to families and their communities. And Petworth used that stability to create a wonderful community. Clearly, the skyrocketing housing prices in Petworth are placing at risk the economic and cultural diversity of this community. Prices have never dropped since I've lived here. Walking through my SMD, I observe the paucity of safe, affordable rental and home-owner housing for low and moderate income residents.

The developer representatives are wrong; inclusionary zoning can have major impact. David Rusk, a former Albuquerque mayor and New Mexico state legislator and a member of Innovative Housing Institute, calculated the impact if inclusionary zoning laws had applied to the 100 largest metro areas over the past 2 decades. He says between 1980 and 2000, 30 million housing units were built in the 100 largest metro areas, almost all by private for-profit builders. Applying a hypothetical IZ law, like that under consideration here, of 15% set-aside to new housing development of 10 or more units, Rusk says IZ would have produced 3.6

million inclusionary zoning units. "Inclusionary Zoning - Gautreaux By Another Pathway," D. Rusk, January/February 2005 issue Poverty & Race.

Mandatory inclusionary zoning must be one of the District's affordable housing initiatives if we are to maintain Petworth as an economically and racially diverse community. Mandatory inclusionary zoning is one of the tools, along with housing produced through the housing production trust fund and tenants' first right of purchase, that will loosen the grip of slum landlords in my community by producing safe and affordable housing as an alternative. Slum landlords have a captive market because low and moderate income families have so few alternatives. Additionally, all of these means of producing housing for lower and moderate income residents will restrain the rise of property taxes on existing home owners.

The families who have built and continue to serve the District should have affordable housing for rent and purchase so they can continue to live in the District.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this pressing issue of community survival.

Renee L. Bowser
ANC 4D02 Commissioner
Secretary, ANC 4D
143 Kennedy Street, NW
Washington DC 20011
(202) 466-1593 (o)
rbowser4d02@starpower.net

Attachment

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 4D
143 KENNEDY ST., NW, STE. #1 WASHINGTON, DC 20011
(202) 722-6830**

March 15, 2005

Ms Carol J. Mitten, Chair
District of Columbia Zoning Commission
441 4th Street, NW
Suite 210 South
Washington DC 20001

Ms. Ellen McCarthy, Interim Director
District of Columbia Office of Planning
801 North Capitol Street, NE
Suite 4000
Washington DC 20002

**RE: ANC 4D Supports Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning
Case No. 04-33, Inclusionary Zoning Overlay**

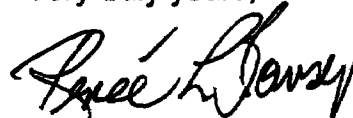
Dear Madames:

On February 15, 2005, at its regularly scheduled meeting, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4D passed the enclosed resolution in support of mandatory inclusionary zoning for the District of Columbia. Following a presentation and review of key components of the inclusionary zoning text amendment for the District, ANC 4D unanimously voted the resolution with one member absent.

ANC 4D is located in the heart of working class Petworth. Over the past year, housing costs in Petworth have increased more than any other area of the city. ANC 4D Commissioners have first-hand knowledge of low and moderate income residents being forced to give up living in the city. We consider the proposed mandatory inclusionary zoning to be an important tool to help maintain an economically diverse community.

Accordingly, ANC 4D urges the Office of Planning to release the text amendment for return to the Zoning Commission for favorable action.

Very truly yours,



Renee L. Bowser
Secretary, ANC 4D

Enclosure

cc: Hon. A. Fenty, Hon. P. Jones, Steingasser, DC Campaign, Mandatory Inklus. Zoning

ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 4D

RESOLUTION: Zoning Case No. 04-33 Text Amendment – Inclusionary Zoning Overlay

WHEREAS, ANC 4D finds that the District has become one of the strongest real estate markets in the United States. The escalating housing market is imposing significant housing cost burdens on low and moderate income residents and threatening to displace residents from their communities.

WHEREAS, ANC 4D finds that the strength of the District derives from its diversity and that mixed-income neighborhoods are thriving neighborhoods. In order to ensure that the District does not become a city of very rich and very poor communities, housing opportunities for low and moderate income households must exist throughout the city.

WHEREAS, ANC 4D supports the production of new units of affordable housing for low and moderate income residents that will help prevent displacement and provide new opportunities for District workers to reside in the city.

WHEREAS, ANC 4D supports creating homeownership opportunities for low and moderate income tenants and accepts that homeownership promotes residential stability and long-term affordability, and helps residents build wealth.

WHEREAS, ANC 4D contends that the development of affordable housing for low and moderate income workers is vital to attracting and retaining businesses to sustain the District's continued economic development.

WHEREAS, ANC 4D finds that for almost 30 years, hundreds of cities and counties throughout the United States, including areas neighboring the District, have been using inclusionary zoning to help meet their affordable housing needs and build vibrant, mixed-income communities.

WHEREAS, ANC 4D believes that mandatory inclusionary zoning is a critical tool for achieving the goals of producing affordable housing, discouraging displacement, creating opportunities for homeownership; and maintaining and creating mixed-income communities in the District by leveraging the expertise and capacity of the private market.

WHEREAS, the text amendment filed with the Zoning Commission in Case No. 04-33 would establish an Inclusionary Zoning Overlay in the District of Columbia that would meet ANC 4D's goals of producing affordable housing for low and moderate income residents and maintaining and creating mixed-income neighborhoods, at little economic cost to the District.

NOW THEREFORE, it is hereby

RESOLVED, that ANC 4D urges the Zoning Commission to schedule a public hearing on Case No. 04-33 as quickly as possible.

RESOLVED, that ANC 4D urges the Zoning Commission to adopt the text amendment submitted in Case No. 04-33 as quickly as possible.