

Testimony before the Zoning Commission of Washington, DC
Z.C. Case No. 04-33A

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1701 Park Road, NW #112
Washington, DC 20010
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Ladies and gentlemen of the Zoning Commission, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. My name is Evin Isaacson. I am a research analyst for the Service Employees International Union and a board member of Jews United for Justice. I live in Ward 1, near Park Road and 16th St, NW, very close to the new condo construction surrounding the Columbia Heights metro. I support the construction of affordable housing in my neighborhood, and ask that the Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning requirements be applied to my area and equitably across the city.

Rabbi Hillel, one of the great scholars and thinkers of the Jewish tradition, issued a powerful imperative: *al tifrosh min hatzibur*-- do not separate yourself from the community. This means not only that individuals have a responsibility to engage in civic life, but that we must not physically isolate segments of the community from one another. In practice, that means we need to ensure that all of our neighborhoods contain affordable housing, setting the stage for economically diverse communities. Moreover, we need to ensure that the people who live up to the ideal of civic engagement every day -- those who teach our children, care for our sick, and protect our streets -- can afford to live in the communities they serve. As rents sky-rocket, our teachers, firefighters, police, nurses, office, service and construction workers find it harder and harder to cover the costs of housing in the District.

Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning addresses these troubling economic dynamics in a constructive way, by allowing the development of new market-rate housing stock while offering powerful incentives for the construction of affordable housing. I, and Jews United for Justice across the District of Columbia, support the equitable application of MIZ as detailed in the DC Office of Planning's mapping proposal and strongly believe that the policy should be applied to as many neighborhoods as possible, including historic districts. In this way, we believe that the District can make huge strides towards true inclusion and opportunity for all members of our community.

Thank you.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

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