

Z.C. Case No. 04-33A
Inclusionary Housing Hearing
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Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to comment on the inclusionary zoning proposal at this hearing. I would like to express my support for creating affordable housing opportunities in my neighborhood and in the District of Columbia . I believe that a program that is both widely generously mapped is the common sense way to do it. As someone who works in the nonprofit sector and who is involved in a local synagogue, I think this proposal would help sustain a viable urban community without a huge cost to the local government or developers.

As a recently married couple, my husband and I are considering purchasing a home in the near future and we currently rent in the Van Ness neighborhood. I am fortunate that my husband makes an income level that would allow us to look at homes in the District of Columbia , but if we were both making my nonprofit salary, we would have more difficulty pursuing our dream.

I came to DC after graduating from Columbia University with the specific desire to work in the nonprofit sector because I felt my passions lay in giving back to the community. Currently I work at the marketing director for Theater J, which is located on 16th and Q streets, near the fast developing 14th street region. While I've heaped many intangible rewards from my work in this arts organization and others, I've often noticed that nonprofit salaries do not keep up with the District's high cost of living and soaring housing prices. Many places like the 14th Street neighborhood have become bustling regions of commerce with many new apartments, but how many of these are affordable for people making \$30,000 a year?

I think it's wonderful that so many intelligent and idealistic individuals make their way to the District of Columbia to work in the regions many local and national nonprofit organizations. I think it's a shame that there are fewer and fewer options for these individuals wanting to make a home in the District. The District should help these individuals and others who are giving back to the community--such as teachers and firefighters--by enabling them to live where they work. Otherwise we risk losing them and the diversity and energy that they bring.

My husband and I are active members of a flourishing synagogue on 16th Street and Jonquil called Ohev Shalom, the National Synagogue. Since we started attending two years ago, the synagogue's membership has exploded due to the tireless efforts of its charismatic rabbi. However, one of the major obstacles to the synagogue's future growth is the dearth of affordable housing in the Shephard's Park neighborhood. I

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inclusionary zoning program equitably applied throughout the city would be an important way to ensure the survival of this Jewish community—a community that has meant so much to people like me and my husband—and other religious communities in D.C.

Inclusionary zoning is an important means for meeting the high demand for affordable housing for District residents and ensuring we can all enjoy the benefits of living in an urban environment. The program should cover as many neighborhoods as possible to ensure that it is equitable and effective. If we do not take measures to create these housing opportunities for those hardworking people who provide many needed services, not only do they lose out but so do we.