GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

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Office of the Director

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia

FROM: Ellen M McCarthy
Director

DATE. July 8, 2005

SUBJECT: **Case No. 04-34- Second Supplemental Report for text amendments to allow, but not mandate, use of pervious paving for certain parking and related facilities by amending 11 DCMR §§ 2301.1(a), 2117.10, 2117.4, 2117.3, 199 and 2403.9(h),** initiated by the Zoning Advisory Committee

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In response to requests for additional information by the Commission at the June 16, 2005 public hearing, the Office of Planning offers the following·

1 If this text amendment were adopted, would a property owner in a tree and slope overlay district be able to use pervious surfaces and expand their ability to develop?

Yes, because Section 1513.2 of the Zoning Regulations limits the maximum impervious surface coverage withm a Tree and Slope Overlay District to 50 percent. Both buildings and impervious driveways contribute to impervious surface coverage However, there are no limitations to the amount of pervious paving that could be provided and additional impervious surface coverage could be dedicated to building coverage.

2 Can the use of impervious paving, including its use for sidewalks, be prohibited within the W-0 Zone District?

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The Office of Planning does not recommend the prohibition of impervious paving in the W-0 Zone District. Use of pervious surfaces are encouraged in the W-0 Zone District However, there are instances when the use of impervious paving would be environmentally friendlier, depending on the use. Impervious paving is typically used in association with fueling stations to contain spills on-site, for loading areas due to the use of heavy trucks and for travel aisles within parking lots. Impervious paving could also be preferable for a "Mass Transit Facility", a use permitted as a matter-of-right within the W-0 District, depending on what form the facility takes.

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Pervious surfaces are appropriate for sidewalks and can be made ADA compliant, but most sidewalks are located within public space and therefore not subject to the Zoning Regulations.

3 What is the cost difference between pervious versus impervious surfaces to the City?

The differences in cost relate to the type of pervious surface used and how well it is maintained. Different surfaces absorb different amounts of precipitation. However, according to the Watershed Protection Division of the Department of Health, the amount saved is directly related to the percent reduction in storm water runoff. Therefore, a pervious surface that reduces runoff by 20 percent can be assumed to reduce storm water infrastructure costs necessary for the construction of the facility by 20 percent.

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