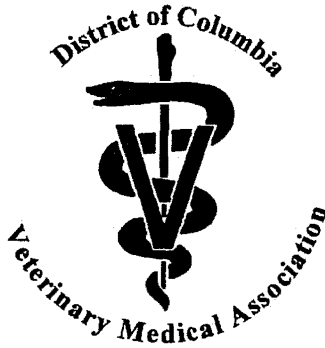




Secretary of the Zoning Commission
Office of Zoning
Suite 210
441 4th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

June 27, 2006

Case No. 05-21A (Text amendment to permit pet grooming, pet shops, veterinary hospitals, and animal shelters as a special exception within the C-2, C-3, C-4, C-M and M Zone Districts).

The proposed legislation would greatly increase the time and expense to obtain proper permitting and zoning to open a new veterinary facility. The time and expense effectively would prevent the development of new veterinary medical facilities that ultimately contribute to protecting animal and human health in the District. We believe this places an undue and unfair burden on the practice of veterinary medicine in the District of Columbia. The following are some key points that the membership of the District of Columbia Veterinary Medical Association wishes to present to the Commission for their consideration

- Developing areas of the city that are underserved by veterinary facilities and appropriate animal care facilities. In the future, the demand for services will grow.
- Veterinary and animal-related services need to be located near where people reside; within a city, less people drive and many use these services on a daily basis.
- One of the members of the District of Columbia Veterinary Medical Association, Dr. Dan Teich, has been researching this issue recently. To his knowledge, no veterinary practitioners were consulted regarding the proposed legislation.

ZONING COMMISSION
CASE No. 05-21A
ZONING COMMISSION
EXHIBIT No. 12
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 05-21A
EXHIBIT NO. 12

- According to the policy analyst of the American Veterinary Medical Association's Government Relations Division, the zone restriction proposed has not been raised by any state or local Veterinary Medical Association. The AVMA is not aware of similar or special exception zoning restrictions in other jurisdictions. We would like time to poll other state organizations to see if they have been faced with such a restrictive proposal to veterinary practices.
- Veterinarians are medical practitioners whose main source of income is generated through diagnostics, vaccination and medical/surgical treatment. They generally do not board dogs.
- The legislation focuses on all animal boarding - presumptively this includes cats, birds and small mammals. These animals have very little possibility of public nuisance and should be excluded from the boarding regulations.
- There are more appropriate legislative venues to pursue abuses - enforce noise ordinances, waste removal procedures, etc.

In addition, veterinary clinics provide the invaluable service of neutering animals whose reproduction would otherwise go unchecked - causing a public health nuisance and greater cost to the city. Veterinary hospitals and humane organizations provide rabies vaccination clinics at little and no cost, also protecting the public health. Most clinics also do pro bono work for people in need. All of this adds up to an important service to the District of Columbia that ultimately protects animal and human health and welfare. We implore the Commission to consider the negative impacts of this proposal on the practice of veterinary medicine and surgery in the District of Columbia.

Submitted by:

Dr. Bonnie Buntain, President
District of Columbia Veterinary Medical Association