

Zoning Commission
441 Fourth Street, NW, Suite 210 South
Washington, DC 20001

RECEIVED 9/17/06
ZONING COMMISSION
D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING District of Columbia

RE: ZC Case 06-06 - Charter School Text Amendments 2006 SEP 18 PM 12:47 CASE NO. 06-06
EXHIBIT NO. 75

Dear Zoning Commissioners:

The July 10th changes proposed to the original February 13, 2006 Text Amendments present grave concerns.

Without casting aspirations on any individual or office, it is clear that all of the ramifications of these proposed changes were not identified. Allowing charter schools to enter any residential neighborhood without any notifications or restrictions removes the ability of D.C. citizens to control their neighborhoods.

It has always seemed to me that a city's lifeblood is their residents, and that any business entities are there to serve said residents. This proposed text change turns that concept on its head. By giving a matter of right to these business entities, they now become the force that shapes neighborhoods, not the citizens.

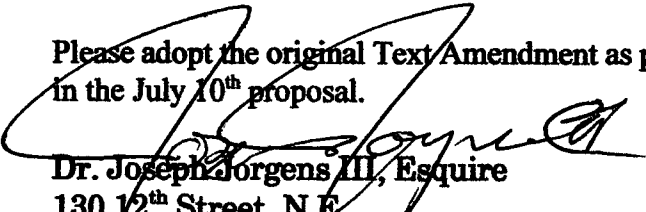
Identifying a special entity - the charter school - that can move into any neighborhood and completely change its character makes no sense. Think if that identified special entity was say - a liquor store, drug rehabilitation center or a gas station - the uproar would be incredible. Allowing a liquor store, drug rehab center or gas station to control the character of a neighborhood would not be tolerated. Here, for some reason, it has been proposed that charter schools be given that overbearing control of a residential neighborhood's characteristics.

There is not, and cannot be ANY supportable justification for identifying and allowing special entities to be able to define the character of a neighborhood - that is the realm of its citizens. Here, apparently because of external political pressure, charter schools has been identified as a special entity in these proposed text changes. There is nothing that makes the charter school any more deserving of the special treatment of being able to define the characteristics of a neighborhood than the liquor store, drug rehab center or a gas station.

We can all agree that education is a worthwhile goal, but so is drug rehabilitation. We have not identified drug rehab centers of 16 or less to be placed in neighborhoods as a matter of right, and we should not do so with charter schools. Both are worthwhile concepts, but neither should be allowed as a matter of right to be able to enter and totally change a neighborhood's characteristics.

Please review these concepts - say the charter school vis a vis the drug rehab - and try to conclude if there is ANY rationale other than outside pressure that could allow charter schools to be identified as said special entity. Once you have done this, the only conclusion that can be drawn is that the elected, appointed and hired government officials should not be influenced by outside forces, and should do what their duty is - to represent the interests of the citizens in their neighborhoods.

Please adopt the original Text Amendment as proposed on June 12, 2006, without the matter of right language in the July 10th proposal.


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