

September 18, 2006

Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia
One Judiciary Square
Suite 210 South
441 4th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

ZONING COM. v.
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 06-06
EXHIBIT NO. 79

2006 SEP 18 PM 2:08

DC OFFICE OF ZONING

RECEIVED

Reference: Case 06-06 – Charter Schools Text Amendments

Dear Sir/Madam:

We write in opposition to the Commission's new amendment to previously proposed zoning text governing the location of schools in the District. This change would allow schools with 16 or fewer students as a "matter of right" in residential neighborhoods, effectively denying those individuals most affected, neighborhood residents, from any voice in the process.

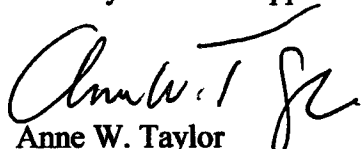
To propose such a change with its attendant impact in the time frame the Commission is seeking is not good government. The variety of institutions that could move into residential neighborhoods under this change is enormous – everything from pre-K to vocational to residential facilities. It is unfair to not give the most affected population enough time to respond to this proposed change. Thirty days during the summer months is insufficient time to respond to such a critical issue.

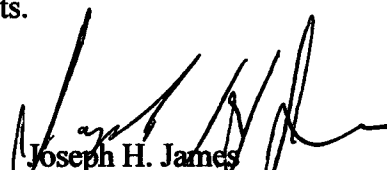
Not only is there insufficient time to respond to the Commission, but should this change be put into place without a special exception process, there is no way for neighbors to respond to these institutions when they suddenly appear next door. The character of our neighborhoods can be changed dramatically by the placement of these schools in inappropriate areas with absolutely no input from neighbors.

Under the proposed amendment, what is to prevent a charter school from opening multiple "matter of right" schools, either side-by-side or around the corner from each other, overwhelming the neighborhood with increased traffic, trash, noise and congestion - nothing!

Allowing schools, no matter how small, to open as a "matter of right" takes away a fundamental right – the right for people to have a say about: 1) the character of their neighborhoods if these schools open; 2) the impact of increased congestion, parking, noise and trash, 3) the appropriateness of additional after-hours uses of these schools, and 4) other issues that may arise, but cannot be addressed by the public.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.


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