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July 31, 2008

Chairman Anthony Hood
DC Zoning Commission
441 4th Street, N.W., Suite 220-South
Washington, D.C. 20001

Via Fax 202-727-6072

RE: In **SUPPORT** of Case No. 08-06-2 (Comprehensive Zoning Regulations Rewrite: Parking)

Dear Chairman Hood & members of the Zoning Commission:

I would like to express my support for the proposed revised parking regulations, especially to eliminate residential parking requirements. The current minimum parking requirements cause developers to make decisions that are not driven by market demand and building designs that are not consistent with the best design approaches to creating desirable and walkable neighborhoods. Further, and importantly, the current minimum requirements increase the cost of housing by 10 to 20 percent. The cost of parking should not be bundled into housing costs.

The production of new parking within developments will not solve the perception of the street parking problem. Market demand is capable of determining the number of new parking spaces that are needed. Residents will either choose not to own a car or to purchase in building that has on-site parking available. I would venture to say that in many existing buildings, especially those close to public transit, there are many empty parking spaces. For example, in my homeownership mid-rise building, located close to Metro and built close to 40 years ago under old parking standards, there are numerous empty parking spaces and spaces rent for \$40 to \$70 per month. This does not make good economic sense. If my building were being built today, the lack of market demand for parking would cause the developer to seek to greatly reduce the parking required to be built. It is time to recognize that that our urban environment has evolved and the market is capable of dictating the amount of parking that should be produced within private residential developments.

The current parking requirements are inconsistent with the urban fabric that we seek to create in our neighborhoods. By creating large spaces to store cars so that people can drive to work and shopping, we diminish the walkability of neighborhoods and the market for neighborhood serving retail by encouraging driving to shop.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 68-46-2
EXHIBIT NO. 34
ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 08-06-2
EXHIBIT NO. 34

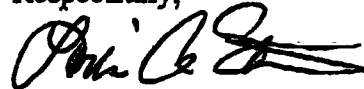
Finally of critical importance, by increasing parking requirements we drive up the cost of our housing, forcing people to commute further distances to work. We should give people the option to live in a convenient location and not have to pay for parking to store a car they don't own or subsidize others for their private car parking. We should seek to lower the cost of housing, increase public transit, and encourage retail in dense neighborhoods.

Many households make the trade off between owning no car and living in a more accessible neighborhood, or living in a lower density neighborhood where parking is plentiful but stores, jobs and transit farther away. The DC code should help not hinder people in making that choice.

As an affordable housing developer and advocate and long term resident of D.C., I urge the zoning commission to support increased housing and commercial space affordability by eliminating parking requirements. Let the market determine the parking to be built, facilitate the creation of an urban neighborhoods that are popular and viable, increase the use of public transit, and do not increase traffic congestion.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



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To: Chair Anthony Hood

From: Leslie Steen

Fax: 202-727-6072

Pages: 3 including the cover

Phone:

Date: 7/31/2008

Re: Case No. 08-08-2

CC:

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