

**Elizabeth B. Sandza
ANC Commissioner, 3D 01**

April 9, 2009

FAX to 202-727-6072

Mr. Anthony Hood
Chair
Zoning Commission
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 220-S
Washington, DC 20001

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2009 APR -9 PM 4:48

**Re: Case No. 08-06-8 (Comprehensive Regulations Rewrite: Low/Moderate
Density Residential)**

Dear Mr. Hood:

I represent ANC 3D 01, most of the Wesley Heights neighborhood and some of Berkley. I write to express the grave concern of the citizens of my Single Member District over changes recommended in the draft Comprehensive Regulations Rewrite with respect to Low and Moderate Density Residential areas.

SMD 3D 01 is blessed with a unique character of single family homes situated on large, treed lots. Much of our neighborhood is hilly, and it abuts considerable national parkland. As such, it brings a significant value to the District of Columbia in terms of aesthetics and also tax revenue because of those aesthetics. My constituents are concerned that the changes you propose will allow that neighborhood character to change without sufficient oversight and control by the ANC, the Office of Planning and the Zoning Commission. Your rewrite seeks significant standardization which, in a vacuum, might be a desirable thing, but in practice can not work in a City that has single family housing stock that ranges from townhouses to mansions. Both are charming and attractive, and, therefore, both should be protected. But they can not both be protected with a standardized approach.

Wesley Heights' character has been preserved through its "overlay" which was the product of citizen input about 20 years ago. The overlay standards were developed from a rigorous study of the existing setbacks and side yards, and then voted on by the residents. It was a compromise the residents agreed to instead of seeking historic preservation status. Similarly, an "overlay" was developed by the residents of University Terrace and Chain Bridge Road – two beautiful streets in which the houses appear to be situated in the country. The overlay in this area is particularly important to protecting the environment because the area is very hilly, and storm water run off from increased development would be devastating there.

Your document states, "Existing residential zones would be put into the template using their existing standards, and standards from overlays would be included in the zoning for those areas." This statement suggests that nothing would change. However, your rewrite also contemplates as much as 25% increased lot coverage. The residents of SMD 3D 01 would consider a 25% increased lot coverage to be a huge and devastating change to their neighborhood, and I would predict that they would take their disappointment out on the leadership of this City, at the voting booth.

If the Commission decides to proceed with its proposed remapping, I ask them, at least, to please remove all references to R-1 zones from Recommendation #1 and #8. As Recommendation #8 intends

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 08-06-8 (Rev)

to keep existing densities, the current zoning works well in this respect and doesn't need changing regarding single-family detached units.

Recommendation #6 and the general policies of Recommendations #9-14, dealing with lot occupancy, likewise work against the character of my neighborhood and the District in general. Recommendations #6, #7 and #11 will turn DC into a monolith of limited landscapes, and generate real problems for the environment with too much hardscape, fewer trees, more heat build-up and more run-off.

Recommendation #10 to expand non-residential uses within residential areas is not wanted or warranted in SMD 3D 01. Our neighborhood has plenty of near-by commercial activity. We do not need more, and we do not need to allow people, businesses, foreign countries and others setting up shop in neighborhood homes.

The document further suggests that controls would soon be relaxed. This uncertainty is particularly disturbing. What we need in the low and moderate density areas of town is more protection of the beautiful character that exists today due to the very thoughtful work of the city's residents over the last 20 years — not less control.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth B. Sandza", followed by a stylized flourish or initial.

Elizabeth B. Sandza, ANC 3D 01
202-866-0121

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**Mr. Anthony Hood
Chair
District of Columbia Zoning Commission**

**Re: Case No. 08-06-08 (Comprehensive Regulations Rewrite: Low/Moderate
Density Residential)**

From: Elizabeth B. Sandza, ANC 3D 01 Commissioner

Date: April 9, 2009

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