

Good evening Chair Hood and members of the commission. I am Denis James, a 42 year homeowner in Adams Morgan.

I'm here tonight to comment on a few sections of subtitle G that I believe will have a negative impact on residential life in my community.

Section 303.2: This provision would allow 25% additional commercial use for buildings of 10,000 square feet or less, in the C-2-B and C-2-A strips of Adams Morgan on 18th Street, Columbia Road, Adams Mill Road, Kalorama Road, and Florida Avenue.

Adams Morgan currently contains approximately 300 businesses, 85 of them in ABC licensing use, and of those, 74 in on-premise restaurant or tavern use, containing over 7,000 seats of ABC occupancy. This over-concentration of one use has kept a moratorium on various licenses in place in Adams Morgan for the last 13 years. Allowing by-right expansion of up to 25% of the on-premise ABC use, by increasing the over-concentration, will have serious negative impacts on the community, including more public drunkenness, more disturbance of the peace, order and quiet, and add more stress on residential parking needs and vehicular and pedestrian safety problems.

This provision is inconsistent with the DC Comprehensive Plan, Policy MC-2.4.2, which calls for encouraging small businesses that meet the needs of local residents rather than... concentrations of liquor-licensed establishments”.

Policy MC-2.4.2: “Preference for Local-Serving Businesses: Enhance the local-serving, multi-cultural character of the 18th Street/ Columbia Road business district. Encourage small businesses that meet the needs of local residents, rather than convenience stores, large-scale commercial uses, and concentrations of liquor-licensed establishments. Consistent with this policy, the conversion of restaurants to night clubs or taverns and the expansion of existing night clubs or taverns into adjacent buildings should be discouraged. 2014.6 “.

903.2: I note that the uses banned by the Reed Cooke Overlay are deleted in the OP proposal. This is a serious mistake, obscuring the purpose of the existence of the zone in the first place. For the Reed-Cooke Overlay, this provision 903.2 allows for a larger development from 1.5 to 2.0 FAR, which if in one of the uses that the overlay was originally instituted to guard against, would have negative effects upon nearby residences.

Sections 905.2; 905.3 and 905.4.

The rear setback rules are absurdly difficult to follow, but seem to encourage deeper development of the commercial lots below the 25 foot “horizontal plane”.

905.4(a)(1) should not include a measurement taken from the middle of a public alley. There should be no merging of public property rule with those of privately held property. This provision seems likely to lead to commercial trash containers lining and blocking the public alleys, in many case alleys where the other side is in a residential zone. This will impede traffic flow, access of fire, EMS and MPD vehicles and presents public health concerns.

The lot occupancy and rear yard requirements should remain unchanged.

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