

Testimony by Holly Chase, Tenleytown resident
Before the DC Zoning Commission
RE: ZC Case Number 08-06A, Subtitle C – Parking
November 19, 2013

My name is Holly Chase, and I live in Ward 3. I would like to testify in support of the proposed update to the zoning code, specifically the reduction in minimum parking requirements.

Reducing parking minimums is very important to me both professionally and personally; I am a transportation planner as well as one of the many DC households that do not own a car. Biking is my primary form of transportation, in addition to walking, transit, and occasionally carshare. I value the amenity of living in a neighborhood where car ownership is unnecessary for my day to day. In fact, although I work in Maryland, I choose to live in DC and reverse commute by bike exactly because this is so important to me.

Although I would prefer to see all parking minimums removed, the zoning code update as proposed is a critical step in the right direction. It will support and encourage sustainable, active transportation options. In contrast, mandating an arbitrary amount of off-street parking in excess of market demand incentivizes driving. Parking oversupply influences our travel behavior over time, leading to congestion, pollution, and a streetscape that is hostile to anyone not insulated by a car. Not updating the zoning code is in direct conflict with DC's goal to achieve a more balanced modeshare of 75 percent non-auto commute trips.

Although I am a relatively new DC resident, I care about the future of the District and hope to become a homeowner here in the future. However, that opportunity will only become more difficult for me and for many others if DC continues to bundle the cost of housing with the cost of constructing and maintaining parking spaces. Reducing parking minimums is one way to help keep DC affordable and inclusive for residents spanning the age and economic spectrum. Carless households should not be forced to subsidize those who do own cars.

I feel very strongly that abundant and free off-street parking is an outdated, unsustainable expectation. Reducing parking minimums will offer DC residents more, not less, transportation choice. Thank you for your consideration.

Holly Chase
4112 Ellicott St. NW Unit B
Washington, DC 20016