

22 November 2013

Elizabeth L. Carswell
1604 H St. SE
Washington, DC 20003

Anthony Hood
Chairman
DC Zoning Commission
One Judiciary Square
441 4th Street NW, Suite 200 South
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Zoning Case No. 08-06A, Subtitle C – Vehicle parking requirements (parking minimums) and Subtitle D – Accessory apartments and corner store.

Dear Chairman Hood and the D.C. Zoning Commission:

My name is Elizabeth Carswell and I live at 1604 H St. SE in the Capitol Hill East neighborhood. I would like to express my strong support for the proposed update to the DC zoning code.

As you know, these zoning regulations have not been significantly revised since the 1950s. DC is experiencing a dramatic rebirth after years of challenges. Many areas of the city, to include my own neighborhood, are increasing in density. People move to the city in part because we are looking for a more walkable, vibrant and inclusive environment in which to live and work. Better options for creating an accessory dwelling unit, reducing parking minimums, creating reasonable allowances for corner stores, and simplifying the zoning code to make it more accessible will help make this city that I love even more vibrant and inclusive.

My wife and I have one car, which is used primarily for my work commute. Other than that we use the myriad transit methods that are available to us—Metro train, Metrobus, Zipcar, Smartcar, Capital Bikeshare, and just plain walking. All these options have reduced our need for cars. In fact, many of our friends don't have any cars at all.

DC is a dynamic urban area, rife with transit options and increasingly walkable. We should update zoning codes to reflect these realities and encourage greater walkability as we move forward. People move here because they want to live a true vibrant urban life...to connect to one another, know our neighbors and walk our neighborhoods. We are not looking for a suburban experience which is isolated and car-dependent.

We can improve the livability of this great city by making it easier for homeowners to rent basement and garage apartments which helps the homeowner and makes city

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living more accessible to more people, both young workers starting out and seniors who wish to age in place. Affordable housing is the key to retaining the vibrance and diversity I love here in DC.

Current parking requirements do not reflect the realities of life in this century. This is a walkable city and more and more people are moving here because they know they can live either without a car or live a 'car-lite' existence, as I do. As more apartment and condo buildings are built, they bring increasing population density...a good thing. However, parking requirements serve to increase housing costs, all to provide parking that many people do not need.

Corner stores in residential areas encourage walking...providing an opportunity to connect with neighbors, provide local jobs and enrich our neighborhoods.

Walkability and diversity (across many dimensions—age, ethnicity, gender, etc.) make this city great. Please update the zoning codes regarding parking requirements, accessory dwelling units, and corner stores so that we can continue to feed the fantastic growth this city is experiencing. DC is a fantastic place to live...let's make it even better!

Thank you for considering my testimony.



Elizabeth L. Carswell