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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 D - Regarding Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's)

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

Thanks to the Office of Planning's efforts to rewrite the zoning laws. I am happy with how it has moved forward and I am excited about the future progress that it will allow in DC.

I have lived in DC for more than 10 years. As a home owner in DC, I see these kinds of progressive policies as key to encouraging investment and economic growth in the District.

Most of my comments are about ADU's. Affordable housing options need to expand in the District. It has gone down a lot in the last 10 years - I've seen it with my own eyes. Home prices and rents continue to go up and young professionals and students and a range of universities - people who are key to the District's future economic growth - are having a harder and harder time to living in DC.

Allowing the growth of ADU's is a logical step we should take toward a better city. Allowing residential use the hundreds of DC alley lots is also a way of increasing affordable housing.

Under 1606.4 pertaining to ADU's, I understand the Board may waive up to 2 of the conditions set forth in 1606.4.g (and potentially more with a variance). However the Special Exemption process that requires a public hearing is too time consuming and many of the conditions set forth here are burdensome and not needed.

I strongly oppose certain conditions of the draft language under sections:

Minimum lot areas should be reduced to 1600 square feet under this section for all R zones.

1606.4(a): Minimum lot areas. The current minimum lot area requirements (4,000-7500 ft²) are *excessive* and would unduly impact the development of affordable ADU's across the city. A livable ADU may be built in a 300 square foot footprint, on a 1600 square foot lot with an existing two floor, 1500 square foot row house, even with the setbacks.

I support the *current* language in Chapter 16 Use Permissions R Zones that allows an accessory apartment by right in the R zones, and by special exemption in R-19 and R-20 (Section 1606.2, 1606.3). I also support parking reforms as currently stand in the draft, as a compromise that can support ADUs.

1606.4(e): *If the (accessory dwelling) apartment is located in the principal dwelling the following conditions shall apply: (1) The house shall have at least two thousand square feet (2,000 sq. ft.) of gross floor area, exclusive of garage space.*

The current rule is discriminatory against those who have smaller homes who wish to have an ADU. The minimum house size requirement should be reduced to 1000 square feet. Micro units are currently allowed under DC code (and being developed by PN Hoffman at the Wharf project) of 300 square feet, thus a small house with interior ADU that totals 1000 square feet is very reasonable.

1606.4(f) *(An accessory building that houses an accessory apartment shall comply with the following conditions...).*

(1) *The accessory building was in existence on January 1, 2013; Newer accessory buildings should be allowed an accessory apartment without a specific Board waiver (per 1606.4.g) if other conditions are complied with.*

Please eliminate the 1606.4.f.5.A, and reducing 1606.4.f.5.B to 15 feet.

(5) *Easement for permanent passage of 10 ft in width from front of house, or through an alley in back with a alley width minimum 24ft. The easement language appears to effectively preclude ADU's at all row houses in DC with shared walls. Most DC alleys are less than 24 feet wide.*

I oppose any time limitations on use of private property as an accessory dwelling, and recommend deletion of 1606.4.f.8. (see below)

(8) *An accessory building constructed as a "by right" accessory building after January 1, 2013 shall not be used as, or converted to, an accessory apartment except by special exception for a period of five years after the approval of the building permit for the accessory building.*

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1608 Alley Lot "By-Right" Uses Zones A/B/C

1608.1: *Alley lot uses.* I support allowing residential use of alleys not just in R-3, but in R-1, R-2 as well.

1608.2(c): *Residential conditions for alley lots.* For residential uses, there should be no limits on R zones, and minimum alley width should be 15 feet because the 24 foot standard you have now doesn't allow us to use most of alleys in the DC.

1609.1: *Alley Lot Special Exception Uses;* Alley lots in R-3 zones should be afforded residential use "by right", not "by special exception."

1609.2: *Alley lot special exemptions.* Alley width should be 15 feet, or less than 24 feet, not 24 feet. Fire codes concerns resulted in the 24 foot language, but this is excessive.

Thank you hearing my voice in this process. I look forward to helping to contribute to the District's housing discussions moving forward.

Regards,



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