

February 11, 2014

Testimony of David Fehrmann in the matter of Zoning Commission Case No. 08-06A;

Title 11, Zoning Regulations – Comprehensive Text revisions; Subtitle X, Chapter 1:

Campus Plans and School Plans

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed revisions to the DC Zoning Regulations. My comments relate to the section on University and School Campus Plans.

I am happy to read many of the proposed rule changes. By combining most of the rules on school and university campus plans in one section, you make it easier for everyone to completely understand the process. Since schools and their neighbors are involved only once every ten years, making it easier to find and understand all of the rules & regulations will benefit everyone involved.

On the other hand I am discouraged by several proposed changes and will comment on 4 of them:

1st) I am opposed to the proposed Subsection 101.16 which would allow a public or charter school to operate in college or university campus facility, without counting toward an approved enrollment/faculty cap of the host university. This section proposes that the number of hosted students using the facility will not be regulated if they are not affiliated with the university; and the zoning commission would lose control of the impact this could have on the surrounding community by not counting all students using the facility.

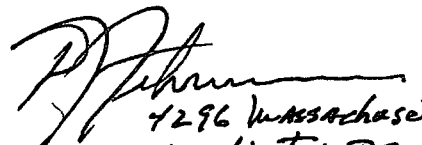
2nd) The proposed rules in Subsection 101.3 which would allow a university to maintain 10% of its gross floor area for retail purposes, is excessive. This subsection should not make it a matter of right; rather it should be rewritten so that the zoning commission will consider the impacts of retail property on the neighborhoods in each campus plan submission.

3rd) The rules for Further Processing in Subsection 101.8 should be changed to prohibit submittal of a 2nd stage Further Processing application with the 1st stage Campus Plan submittal. Combining these processes strains the abilities of the zoning commission, the ANC, and the neighbors to fully understand the impact of the proposal. These two processes should be separate activities, 1st a Campus Plan application and ruling; followed by a Further processing application.

4th) The proposed plan does not go far enough in Subsections 102.5 and 102.6 to address the university ownership of commercial property in residential neighborhoods. Universities that purchase nearby commercial property, then house campus offices and services in them, and more importantly hold student classes in them, and run shuttle busses to them, have an impact on the neighborhood. Not considering this impact is wrong and does not balance the desires for university growth with the impact on the neighborhood. These properties and uses should be considered by the zoning commission as part of a campus plan review.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to present these comments for consideration.

Zoning Regulation Changes: Personal Testimony


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ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 08-06A
EXHIBIT NO. 537