

2/12/2014

Good Evening,

My name is Carol Newmyer Spiegel I wanted to speak tonight, not because I am an expert on regulations, policy or procedures but because of my personal history as a fifth generation Washingtonian who feels very invested in D C. and the direction that outside influences would have it go My family in DC dates back to the 1840's where my Great - Great Grandfather had a Dry Goods store at the corner of 10th & Pennsylvania Ave and sold Civil War uniforms My Great Grandfather had The "Marble Saloon" in the old Justice building and my Grandfather was a prominent D.C. attorney who was called in by Judge Sirica on the Watergate case My father was an established civil suit attorney and his brothers started Armand's Pizza My husband, children & I went to D C public schools and I actually graduated here at Wilson in 1973 Washington is in my blood and I feel the need to speak up for it! Some people think of D C as only a transient, political town but D C is very much a home town For the city whose job it is to be the guardian of our nation's history, it is inconceivable that more protection and respect not be given to preserving what we have from those whose Only motivation is money, greed, influence and power The "Red Fir" research center just said that Upper NW D.C. is the 4th most desirable neighborhood in the country My point being. .If it ain't broke. Don't fix it! I have been a sculptor with the Zenith Gallery here in D.C. for the past 36 years and know a bit about aesthetics Once you start chipping away at what makes us most desirable, you can never go back and restore the unique Charm, Character, Beauty and Skyline that make D C. so special. I think of DC as a beautifully intricate and Unique, fine woolen tapestry, lovingly passed on to us from generations of Washingtonians I don't want to replace it with a machine made, polyester, cookie cutter, mass produced quilt made in China! It is one thing for a Big Box store to go into a dying neighborhood to help revive it. It is another thing all together to come into a thriving community with vast disregard to what is working well there. Our unique small businesses would be put in tremendous jeopardy just because the Big Box stores, poised like vultures are waiting to Capitalize on and Conquer their last frontier of urban development We didn't let the English conquer us! Washington needs to be protected from the homogenization and Wallmartization of our unique, special neighborhoods. Our officials should always keep DC's best interest in mind and also remember the horrible economic impact that that could occur if our small businesses are driven out We could lose major tax revenue because Big Box stores pay their taxes to their headquarters state. We would reduce our consumer choices, increase traffic congestion and create numerous planning problems Washington DC is different and it should be treated as such and respected for the history it protects and represents. I suggest that Big Box stores be defined & required to obtain a special exception which would include community input and an economic impact study

Thank you!

Carol Newmyer (Ward # 3)