

Testimony of Thomas C. Hier

3908 Ingomar Street, NW
Washington, DC 20015-1916
11 February 2014

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

RE: Re: Zoning Case No. 08-06A, Subtitle C – Vehicle Parking Requirements and Parking Minimums

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

Good evening. My name is Tom Hier. I am the chair of Ward 3 Vision, a grass-roots Smart Growth organization, but I am testifying this evening as an individual citizen and not on behalf of the organization. I live on Ingomar Street, am a second generation Washingtonian, a product of Wilson High School and the DC school system, and a tremendous fan of our city.

My testimony this evening is to support revisions to the 1950s-era zoning regulations related to parking – specifically to urge the Commission to support the removal of parking minimums downtown and ease requirements for parking minimums in transit corridors across the city.

My support stems from an interest in making housing affordable and accessible to as wide a base of citizens as possible. I am obviously not young, but I know many younger folks who would like to put down roots in the city by purchasing a condo or a small home. They already lead car-free or car-lite lives, rely heavily on public transportation, and want good and easy access to transit.

Requiring parking minimums unnecessarily burdens new housing developments and makes it more difficult to create new developments in transit zones – the very place where these developments should occur to take advantage of the city's significant investment in public transportation.

The cost of parking (which can add as much as \$50k per space) burdens homeownership unnecessarily, making it increasingly likely that the very folks who bring new life to the city will, out of necessity rather than desire, leave for cheaper alternatives in close-in areas of Maryland or Virginia.

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Washington has changed so much in the past 50 years since the last zoning regulations were created. Once vibrant neighborhoods that declined during the era of the car and the flight to the suburbs are becoming vital once again. A good part of this vibrancy comes from new residents who bring fresh ideas about ways of living, an interest in new and different kinds of services, and an energy to rejuvenate our street life.

We should continue to support the ability of a more diverse citizenry to be able to live in our magnificent city. For this reason, I strongly support the reduction and / or removal of parking minimums.

Thank you for your time tonight, and for all of the effort you have invested over the years on this most important undertaking.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Hier". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tom Hier
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