

To the Office of Zoning – Concerning Case 08-06A – From Andrew Krieger 2014 FEB 25 AM 10: 52

I happened to learn of this open forum to discuss proposed changes to the Washington D.C. Zoning guidelines by visiting the BZA offices at 4<sup>th</sup> Street to question another local zoning issue. I was totally surprised to learn of the massive rewrite that was taking place and my by-chance trip to the zoning office was the first I had learned of the rewrite project. A majority of owners, residents and neighbors in my Columbia Heights neighborhood have not seen or heard about this project or that the public was even encouraged to participate in this important review.

The failure to adequately communicate the process or provide the opportunity for public inclusion in it, nullifies the validity of process itself. The results of this rewrite are going to affect the profile, quality of life, neighborhood character and the world reputation of our city for perhaps the next 200 years or more. For the public, taxpayers, a resident to not be made aware of the depth and ramifications of these guidelines is criminal.

Residents already have serious questions about the current district guidelines, their experience with ineffective monitoring by government agencies, cross permitting, how development is strip-mining the character of their neighborhoods, zoning actions that are pushing residents into hardship and increasing levels of density under a foundation of faulty / worn out infrastructures.

Residents are asking, “ What is going on”. This is the District of Columbia. The Nations capital!!! – this city is supposed to setting the standard for the nation. The standards for comprehensive planning, leading the green revolution on the commercial and residential sectors – creating a healthy urban infra structure that can be an example of other American cities to study and model on. Are these concepts being totally dismissed and the city being sold to the highest bidder with little or no effort to approach these guidelines? Are the results of shortsighted planning and resource management going to be left for our children to live through and manage? What is going on???

We have developers that come to our communities to do projects and show respect, consideration and flexibility to their work sites. They have an organized responsible work forces and work practices. They have a good reputation; they walk away from their successful jobs to the next job, with recommendations and a profit!!!

We have many that seem unable to do this. Many operate their job site with little regard or respect for the community they are working in, have flagrant safety violations, flagrant health violations, push work hours, only get permits as they are harassed by residents to do so, work days in communities over holidays and have a general disregard / disrespect for the community they are making their profit in.

The office of planning / systems of enforcement seem to have been totally absent from many of the projects in our neighborhoods, there has been an absence of any comprehensive city plan or the numbers have been interpreted by the economic

commissars of the city and ANC to push blind growth. ANC; s are approving variances requests and making decisions on neighborhood profile changing projects- Projects that are beyond their skill level and knowledge. ANC's should not be deciding several million-dollar project issues with their level of expertise, this a volunteer level of government, and things like lack of knowledge and conflicts of interest might get in the way!!!

The ANC system and its role in development approval is one part of the system that many feel is broken and has to be overhauled. The purview of these bodies reevaluated. Taxpayer dollars should be going to revamp these grass roots aspects of our system and they are not. These systems are no longer relevant to an urban dynamic that is changing as rapidly as ours. Where are the professionals, the public servants that tax payers are paying for???

The policies of Laissez Faire economics that seem to run the zoning parameters in this city have to change – it is not about the money any more. This city is loaded and proper management and responsible stewardship will keep it solvent for some time. The foundations of healthy / vibrant communities, is the quality of life, not the money.

With the opportunities before us, this city has the possibility of creating a bountiful, creative, green based and exciting urban center – for the last fifteen years outside development has been throwing money at our city. Cannot elected officials look into the Orb of greater knowledge and realize the opportunity????? Can they not see with their wisdom and realize guidelines to build this city into a livable urban center for a diverse population, with a cross section of economic models with a growth paradigm in its future????

Sure, some things are going right “ even a blind squirrel finds a nut every once in awhile”. But allot is not, the zoning rewrite and the roll out, communication and attempt to include residents of city in this process, is one of them.

Until such time as revised zoning guide lines with public input are voted and agreed upon, a comprehensive city plan is in place, plans and a structure for enforcement of that guide line are in instituted, green guide lines for development are stressed, a professional body of urban planners / public representatives are integrated into the decision making process – all residential and commercial building in the District should be declared to be in a state of moratorium.

---

Some of the issues to be resolved during this process.

- 1.guidle lines for historic district zones
- 2.guide lines for neighborhood non-historic, profile and character zones (evolve to historic?)
- 3.a redefinition of the roles of local ANC's in neighborhood planning

4. Inclusion of the OP office in neighborhood planning as variances are requested, the profile, footprint and square footage of a structure request change.

5. Institute a system of only 2-3 meetings a year where several OP members attend ANC meetings for proposed neighborhood projects that impact profile, will alter the character of a neighborhood and are seeking a variance. OP sits in an advisory role, offering its expertise and advice to the community it is hired to serve. Residents are notified and encouraged to attend.

6. A city wide overview system that removes the right of 3<sup>rd</sup> party inspectors to be the sole green light of inspection on these projects to go forward.

7. put in an enforceable, or create an enforcement body to manage and penalize as necessary 3<sup>rd</sup> party inspection bodies if they are not operating in accordance with the laws or violate the laws and practices of the District of Columbia. Health and Safety, Hours of Work, Employment of a % of local residents on the job, Register sites so inclusion of DC trade schools in using these sites for educational on site training can take place.

8. Infra structure capacities for zone development, public notice to upgrades and conditions

9. Guidelines and system of permitting and inspections (not 3<sup>rd</sup> party – or strictly regulated 3<sup>rd</sup> party with a review system containing harsh penalties for fraud, misrepresentation and negligence) that hold planning and inspections to neighborhood guidelines / standards.

10. the discontinuance of general variances – variances should be sought before a board of professional planners and the public, with public notice given with adequate time to alert the residents of this district for input.

11. the management and reallocation of permit duties so developers are not allowed to cross permit on their jobs and are governed by better systems of enforcement.

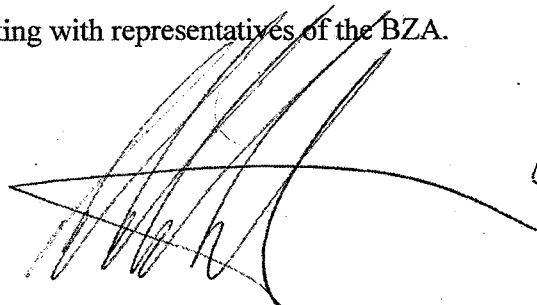
12. If variances are granted, a fund established comprised of 20% of gross project profits – funded by those granted the variances, funds will be used to assist others that have been put into hardship, their quality of life impacted – the enjoyment of the peace/tranquility of ones home compromised - by the granted variance. If no resident can claim this condition the funds would go towards a district or local scholarship fund for DC youth, the greening of the district and the needy.

13. As this will be the first rewrite of the zoning Regs in approximately 60 years, the next review of these guideline's and this process should take place in 5 years. An assessment to the City Council / Mayor by a body created to monitor and track this policy should happen at that time and with public input into its success. The existing regs should be tweaked as needed with a motion put forward to amend aspects of the process to keep up with the evolving issues, profile of day-to-day urban life and commerce in the District of Columbia.

14. The Zoning Regs of the District of Columbia be put on a long term schedule for discussion and review, 5, 5 10 or 3, 5, 5 – etc.

I look forward to speaking with representatives of the BZA.

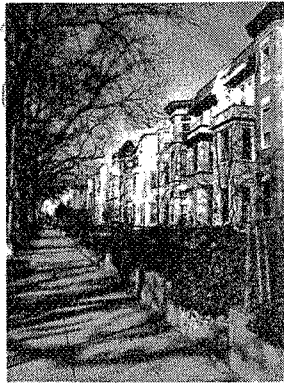
Andrew Krieger



2/25/14

**B7A - 08-1A**

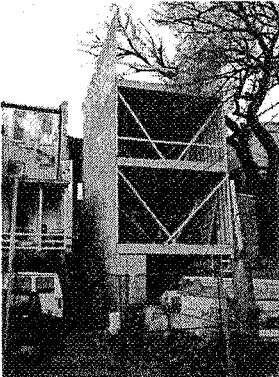
RECEIVED  
OFFICE OF ZONING  
FEB 25 AM 11:01



P1020841



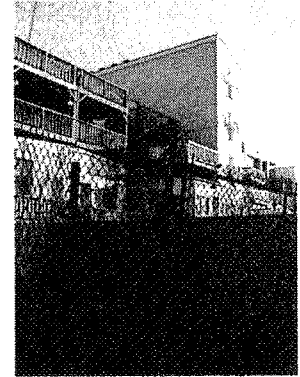
P1020870



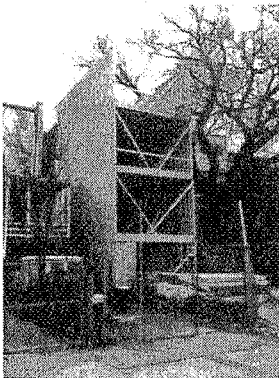
P1020889



P1020888



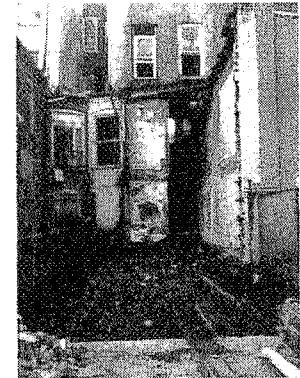
P1020869



IMG\_1456



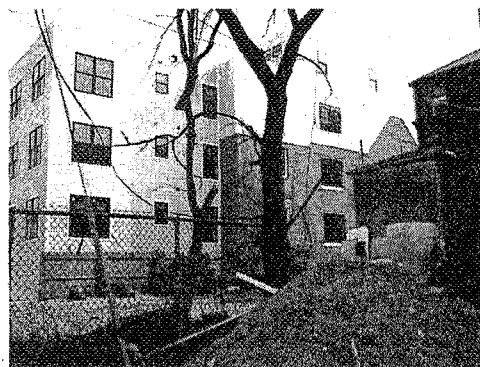
IMG\_1420



IMG\_1417



IMG\_1415



P1020875



2/25/14 ~~pro~~