

9/8/14

Thank you for hearing my testimony this evening

My name is Tim Hampton, and I love DC. I've lived here for 10 years, I met my partner at a block party, and we are raising two native Washingtonians

I am here in support of the updates to the DC zoning code in general, and specifically of the alternative language used in the September update.

Our family is among the 40% of DC households who do not own a car. We live close to the 14th street buses, which I believe is one of the priority bus networks. Required parking along priority bus lines is unnecessary and burdensome. It drives up the cost of housing and subsidizes car ownership.

I'm grateful that our home was built before the current zoning code, because it would have forced our modest grassy backyard to become a parking lot. I'm grateful that the DC public school our daughter attends was built before the current zoning code, because 9 parking spots really are enough for 450 students and staff.. because it is close to a bus route. And I'm grateful that my office predates our current code, because it doesn't provide parking at all, and yet, it works fine. It is also on a bus route.

I also support accessory dwellings, and without making homeowners jump through hoops to get them. Obtaining a special exception is an onerous process that discourages people from doing something good for our city: adding affordable housing.

Although I do support the zoning code updates, I am saddened by how a proposal to eliminate parking minimums and finally trust people to build the right amount of parking, has been watered down repeatedly until now, it is such a tiny step forward that, even after it is enacted, I think it will quickly need to be updated yet again to embody a progressive vision that can remain relevant for decades to come. Although this stopgap update is a small step in the right direction, there is still a long way to go.

Finally, I know a lot of people have spoken at these hearings. But setting aside your evenings and traveling across the city is a privilege. Let's think about those who don't have that privilege, and whose voices are not being heard. People who are working two jobs, or have a job with an unpredictable schedule. People who can't afford to hire a babysitter. Or children – who will have to live with this zoning update. It is my belief that they would care most about the creation of as much affordable housing as possible, and that a reduction in parking minimums and the creation of accessory dwellings are two small steps we can take for them.

Tim Hampton

1360 Otis Pl NW

GREND4@gmail.com