Good Evening, Chairman Hood and Honorable Commissioners. I am here regarding Case No. 08-06A I wish to restore the intent of the zoning provisions setdown from September 9, 2013. My name is Susan Kimmel and I reside at 4101 Albemarle St. NW in the Cityline condominiums in Tenleytown. For the record I note that I have been a member of Ward 3 Vision for the past 5 or so years. In addition, prior to joining the Ward 3 group, I had participated in the Sustainability Working Group organized by the Office of Planning for 6 or 7 of the sessions which were held in 2008-9

I regret that the hearings to update DC's zoning regulations have dragged on for so long, but welcome the opportunity to support Commissioners Cohen and Miller as they questioned how the revisions to the setdown language would impact 1) the enhancement of a multi-modal transportation network, 2) affordable housing choices, and 3) the availability of commercial choices at the neighborhood level

The Office of Planning invested years of research into drafting the revised regulations They studied the zoning theories and policies from other jurisdictions, analyzed them for relevance to DC, adapted them by discussion in working group meetings, used these interactions to craft the language of the zoning amendments, and evaluated a tremendous amount of feedback from public hearings It is the nature of the beast that those who oppose a change to the regulations rally together and persist in prolonging the battle and nitpicking the provisions It is time to cull through the modifications and only accept those that improve the original intent of the Sept 9th text

I have not followed the ups and downs of the parking requirements in detail for bicycles and cars. However, I support provisions which encourage and enable more bike transit and reduce required minimums of vehicular parking To me, after biking several miles to get to one's destination, parking my bike 50' or 120' feet from the door, probably does not make a lot of difference Having enough spaces for short- and long-term parking, though, is very important So I support aligning the number of spaces for residential buildings to match DDOT starting with 8 units instead of 10 I also think you need 10 spaces close-by the entrance, that is, within 50'

As for vehicular parking, I support restoring the provision which reduces the required parking by 50% along priority bus corridors If metro or other light rail transit doesn't reach all sections of the city, then we need to encourage more use of buses by discouraging private cars Similarly, there is no reason to overbuild excess, expensive parking It makes most sense to set the threshold for mitigation at the lower 1 5 times the required amount rather than at double the number of spaces Likewise, as the city grows and downtown spreads outward toward Georgetown, it makes sense to include the D-5 zone with the parking standards as proposed in the Sept. 9th draft.

The regulations regarding Accessory Apartments present a mixed bag. Overall, I support those rules which encourage the creation of this form of housing which fills a tremendous need for more housing options at a wider range of prices Not only do accessory apartments provide some affordable housing, but having income-generating property within or adjacent to their homes, enables seniors to age in place An additional benefit is that it fosters diversity within the community – multi-generational, varying economic strata – living side by side. The increased density may also help some neighborhoods support a greater diversity of retail and other commercial ventures nearby

Some of the amendments ease the ability to provide Accessory Apartments in less affluent parts of the city by not requiring a minimum lot size and reducing the minimum size of the primary house to 1,200 GSF But others make it more difficult to provide a realistic housing option as a MOR by disallowing the conversion of an existing garage into an Accessory Apartment The Zoning Commission should reject the July amendment and restore allowing pre-existing accessory buildings to be used as apartments Having an accessory dwelling in a separate building is ideal by offering residents of each structure greater privacy Yet, because there may be unanticipated impacts, it makes sense for new construction or additions to an existing garage to be required to go through the special exception process My only gripe would be to change the cut-off date for the existing structure to be a year later, to September 9, 2014! Likewise, limiting the total number of residents for both the principal and accessory apartment to 6 is detrimental to large families and the less affluent. It does make sense to limit the number of residents in the rental accessory unit, but the definition of family (which can include extended family members) for the primary residence should be consistent with other sections of the code Again, the Zoning Commission should reject the July amendment to increase the availability of affordable housing options

To me, the provisions proposed to govern corner stores have evolved into micro-managing that will be next to impossible to enforce Although we may wish these small markets to carry perishables and healthful fruits and vegetables, rather than just snack food, that may not be economically viable The mix of items may depend on demand and volume of business. I agree with the regulation requiring a special exception process for sale of beer or wine and for limiting the amount of shelf space allowed for these items -- though based on my observations of a deli in Potomac, MD, 15% may be too low.[1]

Thank you for your time and attention. I realize that it's difficult to make progress, but the hard work of updating the zoning ordinance by OP should bring the District into the 21st Century with a vibrant, dynamic, growing, exciting urban structure Sometimes progress staggers forward by taking 2 steps forward and one back, but DC has waited long enough, OP and ZC have done their due diligence, it is time to bravely move only forward!

In the words of Daniel Burnham

"Make no little plans, they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized Make big plans, aim high in hope and work "

[1] In this particular establishment, there is a deli counter serving prepared foods and making fresh sandwiches It takes up approximated 20% of the store There is a seating area comprising about 30% of the floor areas, packaged foods (mostly gourmet items) for 10% and the remaining 40% devoted to shoulder high cases of wine. I don't have the data to analyze the distribution of revenue, but I would guess that the deli generates 60%, the wine 35%, and other 5%. However, due to the cost of labor for the deli, the net revenue of the wine would be much greater I don't have a business model for corner stores, but I feel these regulations are too prescriptive and will assure failure