

September 15, 2014

Testimony Zoning Case No.08-06A Subtitle D Accessory Dwelling Units

RE:

ZC Case No. 08-06A - Subtitle D (Accessory Dwelling Units).

My name is Lorrie Scally,

I am a longtime resident/homeowner in Washington D.C.

I admit that I had given up hope that my opinion mattered on the Zoning issues. There are many people I know who still feel the same way.

Until Chairman Hood made a statement asking the community to let him know how we feel, I felt we were superfluous to the ongoing rush to change our neighborhoods.

The rush to mostly suit the people and business who do not live in our neighborhoods:

People who want to make money with their own visions - visions that do not match the reasons and needs that we chose to purchase in not "mixed use areas" - but quiet residential neighborhoods to raise a family and age in place.

Despair materialized after attending OP meetings, where residential homeowners expressed their negative response at the thought of ADU's being allowed for rental in backyards, as a matter of right, and then found that the resulting zone proposals allowed them.

It seemed as if the city was willing to break the "contract" entered into when residents purchased their homes.

We knew where our property began and ended. We knew that the city had the right of way onto these properties to make repairs and other necessary alterations for the common good. We knew that there were rules to follow and as with any civilized society, we could not do

anything we wanted on our own land.

The Comprehensive Plan laid down those rules.

We also knew that we were buying into a single family neighborhood where commercial activity was restricted. Yet we now find that the attempt to convert our area to mixed use is almost an accomplished fact. Smart growth advocates have drowned out our voices.

No matter what the verbiage, these facts are clear. OP is suggesting that apartments be built in back yards that could house as many as five renters.

These apartments could also be places of business. They could crowd out light, cause soil erosion, water damage, noise, pollution and countless other problems, including safety issues. Homeowners would be crowded and no longer know who was a neighbor and who was a transient spending the night out back.

And homeowners would be powerless to object.

The argument for affordable housing in residential backyards fades when one reads about the buildings going up around the city to address this need.

No one is objecting to basement or in home rentals.

What becomes clear is that if the zoning laws are changed, any homeowner in any residential area may find themselves with an apartment next door, especially if the neighbors house is sold. That house may be torn down and two units built on one lot.

If "matter of right" is granted to rent ADU's, the voices of homeowner who object to ADU's next to them will be silenced forever. A matter of right for some will mean no right at all for others.

I believe the current zoning laws concerning **ADUs** should not be altered. With permission, aging parents or relatives already may live in them. People with household help may use their "carriage houses" to supply living quarters for these employees. However, rentals

should be denied. **They turn our neighborhoods into business zones.**

ADUs are of great concern to our residential neighborhoods, but they are just one of many issues confronting the Office of Zoning.

These complex issues deserve more time for research and community discussion.

I urge the Office of Zoning to further delay decisions on any of the important issues under consideration.

It is important to understand that there are many senior citizens who cannot attend zoning hearings for various reasons. The list also includes young parents with children and employed workers. There are also many people who have not even heard of the proposals. The newspapers have done a poor job of spreading zoning news to the community.

The Smart growth proponents flood the halls but do not represent that wishes and needs of the community as a whole. Most of them do not live in residential neighborhoods.

I started this testimony admitting that I had given up hope. Thanks to Chairman Hood, that hope has been allowed to flicker again. I now hope the candle he has lit all over this city will shine bright, a true light in the darkness.

Thank you,

Lorraine Scally

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