

Testimony in support of ZC Case No. 08-06A – Subtitle C – Parking February 26, 2014 My name is Mary Reuling Lenaiyasa. Unfortunately, I am unable to attend the ZRR hearing on February 26th due to a prior engagement, but I would like to submit my written testimony for consideration. I am 34 years old and have lived in DC (1434 Florida Ave, NW) for the past four years. My husband and I moved from Silver Spring, MD to DC primarily due to the central location, the walkability of the neighborhood and the close proximity to public transportation. At the time when we moved to DC, my husband was attending the University of Maryland in College Park, MD and I work at the U.S. Census Bureau, which is located in Suitland, MD. Therefore, since we do not own a vehicle, being close to the metro (specifically the Green line which provides easy access to both College Park and Suitland) was an important factor when we were searching for a good location to purchase a home in DC. We originally moved to Silver Spring from Madison, Wisconsin. In Madison, it was necessary to have a car because the public transportation system was not very reliable or widespread, making a car a necessity for most residents. We brought our car with us when we moved to the East Coast. In Silver Spring, we rented a parking spot under our apartment building, but ended up using our car only once or twice a month since we had such easy access to the metro and the bus system. By the time we moved from Silver Spring to DC, our car was on its last legs and we found no reason to buy a new car because of the walkability of our new neighborhood. The fact that we did not require a car in DC and did not have to factor in the cost of a vehicle to our monthly expenses made buying a house a more affordable option for us. One of the aspects that I enjoy the most about my neighborhood is the fact that, for the most part, everything that I need is within walking distance and what we cannot walk to is easily accessible using public transportation. We now have two children, ages 3 and 9 months, and one of the great benefits of our neighborhood is that we are able to walk to our daycare, elementary school, grocery store, YMCA, pharmacy, drugstore, pediatrician's office, numerous restaurants and shops. In addition, the close proximity of the U Street Metro station opens us up to the rest of the DC metro area, all without having to own a car and take on the significant additional expense of gas, car insurance, and renting a parking spot or the hassle of competing for on-street parking. In addition to using the metro and bus system when we need to go to areas that are not within walking distance, using Uber and TaxiMagic provides us with easy and reliable access to DC taxis. I have never participated in an ANC or Zoning Commission meeting in the past, but I wanted to express my support of the proposed reduction and removal of parking minimums in Subtitle C and the allowance for an increase in corner stores. It is clear that the demand for parking spots by residents in multifamily housing is often significantly lower than the amount of parking that the buildings are mandated to provide for their residents. In order to keep housing less expensive in my neighborhood, I think that it is important that this loss in parking revenue by the building management companies, due to empty parking spots, is not then passed on to residents that do not even own vehicles, through higher rents or mortgage prices. I believe that this proposal will help make our neighborhoods more walkable, decrease traffic congestion, and support the more environmentally sustainable transportation choices of the nearly 40% of DC households that, like us, do not own a car. Thank you for your consideration of my testimony, Mary Reuling
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