Corrected Statement of Paul Alan Levy in **ZC Case No. 08-06A**

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I have lived in the Lanier Heights section of Adams Morgan since 1978. I grew up in the suburbs of New York City, and I have lived in a few cities along the way—Portland, Chicago, Detroit and New York—before settling down in DC.

WHY WE MOVED TO LANIER HEIGHTS

My wife Nancy and I first lived in a coop apartment building on Clydesdale Place—in fact, we met there, having lived across the hall from each other—and bought a house on Lanier Place in the summer of 1984 after living in Manhattan for a year while I was on sabbatical from my current job. We raised our two sons in that house, both of them attended the DC Public Schools from pre-K though 12th grade, then took advantage of DC TAG to attend state universities paying in-state tuition. Our older son teaches in the DC Public Schools, and has bought a house in Pleasant Plains where he and his fiancée can live close-in the way he grew up; the younger one is doing a masters program in social work and hopes to come back to DC the same way.

I moved into Lanier Heights for several reasons, some of which no longer apply. For example, the extraordinary racial and ethnic diversity that characterized the neighborhood when I got there has been destroyed by gentrification (of which, I recognize, I was a part). There is another feature of Lanier Heights that remains, and that is different from many other cities where I have lived: because of the wonderful collection of row houses, you can live within walking distance of downtown jobs and still have enough living space to raise a family. The row houses have fostered a stable population; we have known many of our neighbors for dozens of years.

THE THREAT TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD'S STABILITY

But just as the next generation of young families has begun to grow in our neighborhood, that aspect of our neighborhood is under threat because developers have noticed that Adams Morgan row houses could provide for them the raw material from which they can make big bucks by buying, adding more stories and/or building back in the lot, turning the buildings into multi-unit condos, and then selling for twice as much as what the building is worth as a row house. For example, in the building next to ours, four apartments were carved out of a single row house, and sold for a total of $2,415,000. As it happens, this building was purchased in a highly deteriorated state; it was hard to watch our former neighbor slip into mental illness and let his house go to ruin, while steadfastly refusing our offers of free help. But if developers can get that much money out of a single row house after tearing it up, it is hard to see how any row houses will sell in the neighborhood for their value as single-family houses plus basement unit, which is the current norm in the neighborhood.

If we let that happen, families with children won't be able to live close-in any more. Nobody is going to raise a family in an apartment with two tiny bedrooms the size of dormitory rooms, and without off-street parking for a car. Nobody is going to be hauling a toddler up and down three stories of a four-story walk-up. These apartments are designed to be starter homes, not homes for couples who want to be here for the long haul, where they are around long enough to know each other and are willing to invest their interest, time and attention in their neighbors, their local establishments, and their elected representatives. Transient residents have very little investment in the places they live temporarily. The huge investments that the city has made in renovating H.D. Cooke Elementary School and Cardozo High School and the Lincoln/Bell Multicultural Education Campus, and that the city plans for Marie Reed and Bancroft, will be wasted because there won't be children in those neighborhoods anymore.

Our neighborhood's devotion to protecting our row houses from being cut up and turned into little condominium apartments does not stem from any hostility to apartment-dwelling life. Our neighborhood has roughly two dozen apartment buildings, some of them quite large, and among those apartment buildings are several rental buildings and a good number of owner-occupied buildings, some organized as coops and many others organized as condominiums. This diversity in housing stock is one of the strengths of our neighborhood. There is no likelihood that the availability of apartment units for those who prefer such accommodations will be threatened. Indeed, more apartment units are coming on line, through the construction on the site of the former Ontario Theater on Columbia Road (across the street from Lanier Heights) and on the site of the former gas station at the corner of Lanier Place and Calvert Street. But the roughly 150 row houses (and the very rare detached houses) that still serve as dwellings large enough to hold family groups **are** threatened.

LANIER HEIGHTS' RESPONSE TO THE THREAT

Consequently, scores of neighbors from Lanier Heights are now working together to seek a rezoning of our area to preserve the stock of single family homes by maintaining the current density of single-family neighborhood lots, to stop out-of-scale heights and intrusive pop-ups, and to avoid exacerbating off-street parking by retaining existing minimum parking requirements for new development and institutions. Although the majority of the residents uninvolved so far are the owners of row houses, residents of area apartment buildings are chiming in with support for this movement.

The developers whose profits are threatened by our efforts have tried to argue that protecting our area row houses threatens the availability of affordable housing. This argument is laughable. The developers are not interested in affordable housing, they are interested in maximizing their profits. Using data obtained from MRIS, I did an analysis of all sales in our neighborhood for the past twelve months. There were 50 apartment units and four row houses sold. Four of the apartment units were the product of a recent pop-up/cut-up construction, and those four units were the most expensive, the fifth most expensive, the sixth most expensive, and the ninth most expensive apartments in the entire database of sales.

Another one of our residents took a sample of the apartment and row-house sales in our neighborhood over the past two years, using data obtained from Zillow, and calculated the average price per square foot of the different kinds of residences. He found that the average cost per square foot of the row houses was $398, but the average cost per square foot of the apartment units was $542. It is the row houses, not the new apartment units, that reflect affordable housing.

To that end, rather than allowing rapacious developers to impose a one-size-fits-all commercialization of our neighborhoods, I hope the Zoning Commission will let Lanier Heights residents decide what we want: Please allow the creation of a custom zoning overlay for our neighborhood that limits vertical construction (popups) that adds floors to our row houses, limits the depth of additions to existing row houses, which shrink the front and back yards of existing row houses, and limits to two the number of units per row house, in a designated residential area (the streets selected by and Lanier Heights group are: Lanier Place, Ontario Place, Ontario Road from Columbia Road alley to Adams Mill Road, Summit Place, 18th Street from Ontario Road to Harvard Street, Argonne Place, and Adams Mill Road from Lanier Place to Harvard Street).