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Before the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia, Case No. 08-06A: Comments on Subtitle D

Testimony of Pamla Moore, President of the Citizens Association of
Georgetown on Subtitle D, Chapter 11

My name is Pamla Moore, President of Citizens Association of Georgetown and former Chair of the Historic Preservation & Zoning committee of CAG. We are pleased to be able to give our support for the portions of this Subtitle D applicable to Georgetown and in particular the Georgetown Customized Zone set forth in Chapter 11 of the draft regulations.

I would like to explain how we came to general community agreement on this customized zone for Georgetown and the important role played the Office of Planning.

Our effort began several years ago when a community meeting on the zoning rewrite, with a good bit of Q & A, was held with representatives from OP and the Committee of 100 on the Federal City. After this introduction to the community, a CAG zoning sub-committee was formed. We were fortunate that the sub-committee included members from CAG, several ANC2e commissioners, and a member of the Old Georgetown Board – this group brought to the table expertise in zoning law, architecture, historic preservation and a wide variety of views.

The Subcommittee's goal was to analyze the OP draft regulations and determine if any modifications would be necessary to preserve for future generations the identity and historic character of Georgetown, a National Historic Landmark District. Georgetown was incorporated in 1752 and preserves to this day through its small houses and narrow streets, some with cobble stones, the look and feel of the colonial port town that it once was. Its unique historic identity helps draw the 25 million + visitors to Washington, who are attracted by the well preserved historic housing, parks, and the premier collection of retail establishments that line the M Street and Wisconsin Ave commercial corridor.

While other neighborhoods such as Wesley Heights and Foggy Bottom already had zoning overlays, which were incorporated into the zoning rewrite, Georgetown had to start from scratch. In March 2011 our initial draft customized zone was shared with OP staff. From our first meeting Jennifer Steingasser and her staff have been good listeners, willing to hear our thoughts about what a historic district with a vibrant commercial district wants to preserve and helped us work our way through this very large 50 year old zoning document. Jennifer told us that OP viewed the Georgetown Customized zone as a useful prototype for other neighborhoods who may in the future seek customized zones for their neighborhoods, as other neighborhoods have done in the past through overlays.

Over the ensuing months we updated the CAG web-site with summaries of the draft Customized Zone, wrote articles for the CAG newsletter, which is distributed to over 1,200 households in Georgetown and available to the

public at local businesses and at the library. On February 6, 2013 we held another community meeting to bring the community up to date on the draft and we were pleased to have Jennifer join the panel to answer questions and clarify the process that evening. The well attended meeting was widely publicized and covered in the Georgetown Current in an extensive article.

On April 5, 2013 ANC2E passed a resolution endorsing the CAG draft proposal. A copy of the Resolution is attached to our written comments. Throughout this several-year process OP has always been there to assist. The end result is a truly collaborative effort during which we modified some of our proposals to address OP comments and the changes OP itself made in the its draft regulations based on public comments. We fully support the end product and urge that it be approved.

It has been a pleasure to work with OP and I commend OP for how it has tackled this enormous re-write job while responding to comments from us and others and engaging in sustained outreach to ensure the process was open and transparent.

In my written comments I have included a statement by CAG president Jennifer Altemus who worked closely with OP on the Georgetown University 2010 Campus Plan. She asked me to thank OP for the exceptional job OP did to help all parties reach an effective solution. (See below) I would be remiss if I failed to recognize the decisive importance of the role that this Commission played in encouraging and, on occasion, mandating that the parties to the Campus Plan proceeding work harder to achieve a resolution of the issues separating them. I am happy to report that the parties continue to work collaboratively and, so far, successfully to implement the new Campus Plan.

Georgetown has worked closely with the Office on Planning on several monumental tasks. The Georgetown University 2010 Campus Plan was several years in the making and required significant coordination with multiple agencies and community groups. The Office of Planning did an exception job of working on an effective solution with all parties involved. They were informed, creative, responsive and hardworking. The Citizens Association of Georgetown feels we can turn to the Office of Planning for help with innovative

solutions. They are readily available and forthcoming. They are a government agency at its best. A prime example of this is the rewriting of the DC Zoning Code. By: Jennifer Altemus

By: Pamla H. Moore, President
Citizens Association of Georgetown
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October 8, 2013

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2E



Representing the communities of Burleith, Georgetown and Hillandale

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April 5, 2013

Jennifer Steingasser
Deputy Director, Development Review & Historic Preservation
D.C. Office of Planning
1100 4th Street, SW, Suite E650
Washington, DC 20024

Re: CAG proposal re residential zoning in the Georgetown Historic District

Dear ~~Ms. Steingasser~~ *Jennifer*:

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2E, at a public meeting held on April 1, 2013, duly noticed, and at which seven of the eight commissioners were present constituting a quorum, unanimously adopted the following resolution:

With regard to CAG proposal re residential zoning in the Georgetown Historic District:

ANC 2E is pleased to endorse the prototype customized zoning plan proposed by the Citizens Association of Georgetown to the DC Office of Planning. Through a detailed and thorough process of examination and discussions with the community, this proposed plan for Georgetown recognizes the objective of preserving the historic character of the landmark district of Georgetown while addressing many of the goals set forth by the Office of Planning in developing a comprehensive, city-wide zoning review. Indeed, in promoting such goals as urban density and mixed use, we believe that Georgetown in its development as a community represents the achievement of such goals and can serve as a model for other communities in the District of Columbia.

ANC 2E supports the components of the Georgetown prototype customized zoning plan addressing building height, lot occupancy, front and side setbacks, use categories, accessory buildings, accessory dwelling units, and alley lot buildings. We believe that these provisions proposed in the Georgetown prototype plan are compatible with the goals of the comprehensive revision of DC zoning regulations while maintaining the desirable elements of the historic character of

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Georgetown embodied in much of what is envisioned by the Office of Planning for neighborhoods throughout the city.

We greatly appreciate the enormous amount of productive work the Office of Planning is doing on the zoning rewrite project, and we hope these comments will be helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ron".

Ron Lewis
Chair, ANC 2E