

Title 11, Zoning Regulations –

Comprehensive Text Revisions

Subtitle C – Parking Requirements

My name is Sandy Shapiro. I live on Harrison Street in Friendship Heights. I have lived here for 15 years, along with my husband and my two children who are now teenagers.

Everyone in my family feels very strongly about reducing our environmental footprint and doing our part to ease traffic congestion. We travel by foot, metro and bus frequently. However, we have many commitments and needs that require us to travel by car. We also do our best to support our local businesses, not only because we would like for our community to thrive, but also because it is convenient.

I am concerned about many of the proposed changes in the zoning regulations included in the text advertised in September 2013 and the alternative text advertised in June 2014. I do not think that either of the changes will lessen traffic and subsequently, it will discourage local patronage (due to the increased traffic and because of the lack of parking spaces).

I am particularly concerned about the proposed changes in the zoning regulations, which would reduce our already low minimum parking requirements citywide, and the impact of those changes on many DC neighborhoods, including my own neighborhood of Chevy Chase/ Friendship Heights. The current minimum parking requirement along much of Wisconsin Avenue is one space for every two units, and with the ZRR, this would be reduced to less than one space for every six units. New development in this area with one off-street space for every two units will result in spillover parking, making our currently tight parking situation even worse. The number of cars per household in DC has been constant at about 0.9 per household for decades. For some neighborhoods, like mine, the number of cars per household is even higher. The proposal to cut the minimum parking requirement by 66% makes the spillover problem even worse. This proposal is not supported by any empirical evidence.

DDOT's proposed solution is to raise the price of parking permits for residents of neighborhoods that are impacted by this unjustified change in the zoning regulations. This is an unreasonable way to handle the impact of allowing the developer to build inadequate parking and does not address the basic problem: New developments are increasing demand for parking at a higher rate than they are providing additional off-street parking.

I am also concerned about proposal for mitigating excess parking, where a developer who provides more than one space for every two units (September 2013 text) or two spaces for every three units (June 2014 text) will be assessed a penalty. As drafted, the penalty will be assessed even if the developer is providing less parking than the tenants are likely to need. This does not make any sense.

I ask that you drop the proposed changes to the parking regulations, and that any changes in the parking regulations be deferred until after the Zoning Commission has been presented with recommendations that can be supported with empirical data. The recommendations in the ZRR text under consideration now cannot be supported by empirical data.

Thank you.

Sandy Shapiro

Submitted on 9/14/2014 by:

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