

SPENCER W. CLARK

3926 Morrison St NW
Washington, DC 20015-2945

Work: (202) 566-0729
Cell: (240) 205-4857
spencerwclark@gmail.com

9/22/2008

Sharon S. Shellin, Secretary of the Zoning Commission
Office of Zoning, District of Columbia
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001
Fax: (202) 727-6072

Re: Zoning Commission Case 08-09, 16th Street Heights Overlay

Dear Ms. Shellin,

I wish to express my **opposition** to the proposed extension of the 16th Street Heights Overlay (SSHO) District, which is being proposed by ANC 4C in order to effectively obstruct the construction of the planned Latter-Day Saint chapel on 16th Street, NW at Emerson St.

Washington, DC is my home town and a city that has throughout its history welcomed people of all nations and creeds to come together and form its uniquely diverse community. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints has been part of the community for over a hundred years, and built the landmark "Washington Chapel" on 16th Street NW in 1933, through much sacrifice despite the Great Depression. That building was sold in 1975, but remains today at the corner of 16th & Columbia Road as evidence of the Church's long citizenship in this neighborhood.
(<http://www.mormonhistoricsitesregistry.org/USA/washingtonDC/dcChapel/history.htm>)

Numerous beautiful church buildings from many denominations span the length of 16th Street NW in a true testament to the American ideals of religious freedom and harmony. 75 years after the LDS church first established its presence on this historic "Church Row," and after great growth of Church membership in the neighborhoods that surround it, there is a proposal to again build a church building that will allow the local congregants to come together in worship.

Those seeking to obstruct the construction of this chapel go against the very ideals central to the historic character of this neighborhood, including the previous usage of the site as a religious institution. The planned LDS church would enhance neighborhood quality and maintain the existing character of the neighborhood, while causing no negative external impacts on the housing supply or quality of life of surrounding residents.

As such, the proposed extension of the SSHO district to include Squares 2708 through 2716 is inconsistent with the guiding philosophy in Neighborhood Conservation Areas to "conserve and enhance established neighborhoods." To change the zoning so as to prohibit the continued use of the parcel at 16th & Emerson for religious purposes would be a tragedy not only to the local Mormon residents who need an adequate place of worship, but also for the city at-large and the values it embodies.

Sincerely,



Spencer W. Clark

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CASE NO. 08-09
EXHIBIT NO. 46