

**Statement of Laurence F. Jones**  
**Expansion of the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Overlay Zone**  
**District of Columbia Zoning Commission**  
**Monday, September 22, 2008**

Good evening, Commissioners.

My name is Laurence F. Jones. I am a resident of the 1400 block of Emerson Street, NW and represent a coalition of residents committed to maintaining the residential integrity of the community.

I am here to provide testimony in support of the expansion of the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Overlay Zone.

Zoning determines land use pattern, building and population density, and ultimately, a neighborhood's quality and character. The District of Columbia's residential zones also permit development of certain institutional uses as a matter right.

There are approximately 50 such institutional uses in the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Heights neighborhood. Consequently, the unprecedented expansion of institutional uses in our neighborhood makes a compelling argument that "matter of right" development, particularly in residential zones, is an outdated concept. As applied in my neighborhood, the R-1 zone's matter of right does not afford protection of the neighborhood's residential integrity and quality of life. The 16th Street Overlay Zone expansion, if approved, will address the institutionalization of the R-1, single family residential neighborhood between Colorado Avenue, NW and Decatur Street, NW.

Overlay zones provide what the "matter of right" clause in residential zoning districts subverts: additional regulatory control that forces developers and District government agencies to make a more definitive, detailed review of the effects of proposed developments on neighborhoods.

**ZONING COMMISSION**  
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Overlay zones give neighborhood residents a voice in the development review process. The dynamics of the District's demographics and land use pattern demands revision of the city's zoning districts, particularly its residential zones, that balances a well-conceived vision for future land use development with protection of neighborhood integrity.

Specifically, the 16th Street Overlay Zone is intended to curb further expansion of non-residential, institutional uses in the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Heights neighborhood based on:

Negative land use impacts caused by non-conformity of institutional and non-residential uses with the predominant residential scale and character of the neighborhood;

Increased traffic and on-street parking congestion generated by institutional and non-residential uses;

Negative environmental impact caused by increased air and noise pollution from commuter traffic, institutional staff and building service traffic and diminished green space;

Increased demand on the city's already burdened infrastructure systems (e.g., water and sewer services); and

Loss of taxable land area.

The proliferation of institutional and non-residential uses in 16<sup>th</sup> Street Heights has created a critical mass that threatens to further diminish my neighborhood's quality of life. Consequently, I respectfully request the Zoning Commission approve expansion of the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Overlay Zone.