



COALITION FOR SMARTER GROWTH

December 21, 2009

Mr. Anthony Hood
Chairman, D.C. Zoning Commission
District of Columbia Office of Zoning
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210 South
Washington, DC 20001
Via Fax: 202-727-6072

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RE: Support with amendments: Case Number 09-16: Permit carsharing parking spaces as MOR

Please accept these comments on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth, a regional organization based in the District of Columbia focused on ensuring transportation and development decisions are made with genuine community involvement and accommodate growth while revitalizing communities, providing more housing and travel choices, and conserving our natural and historic areas.

We would like to express our support for the proposed text amendments to permit car-sharing parking spaces as a matter of right in certain zoning districts. However, I request that the language be amended to permit carsharing spaces in place of a number of required parking spaces. Allowing parking spaces for carsharing vehicles to take the place of several required privately-owned vehicles would be a sound action by the Zoning Commission to increase transportation choices while increasing affordability of housing and commercial space in the city. Provision of carsharing parking spaces and discounted memberships and usage are all part of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) tools that enable the city to increase housing and commercial space availability while reducing the amount of vehicle traffic generated by the new space.

The Office of Planning report cites Zipcar's information about its D.C. members. My personal experience bears out the validity of this information. I joined Zipcar soon after the company entered the D.C. market. When it was time to renew my 10 year old vehicle's registration and go through a smog test, I decided that the availability of car sharing vehicles for personal or business use made the continued ownership of my old car a poor choice from a financial, convenience and environmental perspective. I got rid of my car -- removing a vehicle parked on the street -- and now occasionally use car sharing vehicles. I find that when you pay by the hour, you decide it's usually better to take the bus, Metro, bicycle or a taxi to your destination. When I do need a car -- or a truck -- I can easily book a Zipcar close to where I live or wherever I need to find one. I find it cheaper and easier than owning my own car. My transportation costs are very low, making living in the city more affordable. I also drive less than when I owned my own car, thus I have reduced the amount of traffic and air pollution I generate. I don't tie up a parking space on the street for an occasionally used car either. Many tens of thousands other Zipcar members in D.C. share my enthusiasm for carsharing. It's one of the things that makes living in D.C. so convenient.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

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EXHIBIT NO.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 09-16
EXHIBIT NO. 9

Zoning Commission Case 09-16
Coalition for Smarter Growth in Support of Case 09-06
Dec. 21, 2009

Carsharing can replace 15-20 personal vehicles. For this reason, provision of carsharing should be allowed to reduce the amount of private parking required in the zoning code. Carsharing works in concert with other urban transportation choices, giving residents and workers more affordable travel choices and allowing them to avoid the over \$9,000 per year cost of individual car ownership.¹ Encouraging carsharing gives D.C. residents better transportation options, reduced transportation costs and more affordable housing and commercial space.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Cort
Policy Director

¹ American Automobile Association (AAA), *Your Driving Costs*
<http://www.aaapublicaffairs.com/Main/Default.asp?SectionID=&SubCategoryID=9&CategoryID=3&ContentID=23>