

January 19, 2015

Office of Zoning
441 4th Street, N W , Ste 200-S
Washington, DC 20001
Re: Office of Planning's new rules for R-4

Dear Zoning Commission,

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on the Office of Planning's proposed new rules for R-4 Zones before the Commission takes a vote on this matter

As a DC native and current resident of Columbia Heights (in ANC 1B), I am acutely aware of the unique challenges of both preserving the city's historic and aesthetic character while also accommodating growth and ensuring the appropriate density

For these reasons I am very strongly opposed to the OP's proposals I should note that I am a renter, not a homeowner and not personally connected in any way (to my knowledge) with any developer or homeowner that has taken a position on this matter I am motivated instead out of common sense, a strong desire to see the city accommodate growth intelligently, and based on my experience serving on the ANC 1-B Design Review Committee

The OP's proposals would effectively downzone R-4, as vice-chair Cohen accurately observed The proposals will make it far more difficult for families and lower-income residents to find space and afford to live in the city It will, by greatly limiting growth, undermine the city's vibrancy and vitality and cause a housing crisis as the population continues to rise Furthermore it would punish homeowners who purchased their property cognizant of the future potential value of their homes should they decide to make it multi-unit or increase their by-right height The changes would only benefit a small minority - homeowners with no desire to see change and seeking to push away the ladder of opportunity to live in this great city This is a case of pernicious special interests

Importantly, the rules would undermine the role of a good design review process Many homeowners are rightfully frustrated with the design of some pop-ups It is the role of the city and the ANC to ensure that designs are appropriate and take into consideration the concerns of their neighbors. Strengthening this process is a far better way to address these concerns Instead, the OP is using a sledge-hammer where a scalpel is better suited.

In concluding, the proposed rules are short-sighted and will be detrimental to the District. I strongly urge you to reject these proposals and help DC grow responsibly and fairly

Best,



Matthew Eldridge
Ward 1 Resident and ANC 1-B Design Review Committee Member

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 14-11
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EXHIBIT NO. 132
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