

Chairman Anthony Hood

District of Columbia Zoning Commission

441 4<sup>th</sup> Street, NW Suite 2105

Washington, DC 20001

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**RE ZC Case No 14-11 – Response to proposed text amendment application**

Dear Chairman Hood and Members of the Commission,

In brief, I moved into my neighborhood, the 1200 block of 'T' Street, NW, in 1985 when more than a third of the houses on my block were abandoned. I worked tirelessly to buy and rehab some of those houses on my block in an attempt to restore my neighborhood and to improve the conditions for my long term neighbors, some of them residents for as long as three generations, that had persevered through the decline of the neighborhood. In 1999, I moved around the corner on the same square to 1825 13<sup>th</sup> Street NW. The property had a house from 1885, with an addition on the 2 lots next door, and was used for a short time as an hotel. It was then used for many years by the DC Dept. of Corrections and left a disaster. It was on the market for 3 years before I bought it, and my plan was to restore the house, and eventually when I could afford it, to redevelop the two lots next door as the addition was comprised of tiny bedrooms with bathrooms. The building was poorly constructed, and after so many years of abuse has required a large amount of investment just to break even. There are several points I would like to make as follows,

- 1) All property in an R4 zone isn't even remotely the same. The lot sizes are different and the sq footage is different and the neighborhoods can be different. My home on T Street was approx. 2500 sq. feet, and my neighbor's on the next block was approx. 1800 sq feet. My current property, that I would like to redevelop is approx. 4600 square feet. I have friends two blocks away in an R4 zone and their home is approx. 6400 sq. foot. I have grave concerns about proposed constraints regarding the possible development or redevelopment of R4 zone housing when there is such a difference in properties and sq footage and neighborhoods in the R4 zone. I thought that the goal of the BZA, was to examine the differences and to determine what was feasible with the differences in properties, given the surrounding neighborhoods.

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- 2) My home is in a Historic District, a district that I spent many hours documenting as a single parent, carrying my daughter around taking pictures and doing research at the National Archives. My plans for the two lots next door would be to build a dwelling that is apartments, but would look like a single family dwelling. It would restore the street view of my block significantly in addition to increasing to the tax base of the city. Another benefit is that My project would be very appealing to residents that don't need cars to get around as I am located by Metro.
- 3) My impression from what I have read over the last few years is that the city is in favor of generating more residential density close to Metro. My property is 1 and ½ blocks from Metro. Currently, half of the 1300 block of U Street, NW is being demolished for new apartments. It is troublesome to me, that this is large development is being permitted, and yet I am a block away, and would be bound by the proposed new restrictions. Furthermore, the building immediately North of me is 14 apartments. The building just North of that is also zoned R4, and is at least 24 apartments. The proposed zoning changes leave me in limbo as to what I could do with my property that would make any sense. I have been committed to my neighborhood since 1985. I do understand the concern, and outrage with pop-ups, and I share those concerns. I am also concerned that the proposed changes are going to harm my neighborhood from improvement as it relates to projects like mine that restore the streetscape and provide housing opportunities for the people that are looking for a residence in this neighborhood.
- 4) There have been a handful of houses in my immediate neighborhood that were abandoned, and a developer renovated them into multiple units. In the five cases that I am aware of, the end result has been very positive. The houses were made habitable, and have improved the look and feel of the block. It has brought new families into the neighborhood, which supports our local businesses.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,



Gary W Hyde

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1/26/2015