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1669 Columbia Rd , NW, #116
Washington, DC 20009-3625

January 27, 2009

DC Zoning Commission
441 4th Street NW Suite 200S
Washington, DC 20001

Subject: Zoning Commission Case No. 14-11

Dear Sir or Madam,

I have just become aware of Zoning Commission Case Number 14-11 to restrict additions on rowhouses in R-4 zones and to restrict the conversion of these dwellings into multiple units. I am writing to oppose these restrictions.

I am an attorney with a master's degree in real estate and urban development. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, I volunteered in efforts to strengthen the District's rent control and condominium conversion control laws. In 1982, I authored a report, "**Meeting America's Housing Needs: A Progressive Agenda**" on behalf of the Conference on Alternative State and Local Policies. From 1987 until 1996, I worked for the Honorable Hilda Mason at the Council of the District of Columbia. Then I worked for the District Department of Public Works in transportation policy and planning until that unit became part of the District Department of Transportation. In late 2009, I formed Just Economics LLC, a public policy consultancy that assists communities in making economic incentives more harmonious with public policy objectives for job creation, affordable housing, transportation efficiencies and sustainable development. Most recently, I wrote a report for the DC Tax Revision Commission, "**Funding Infrastructure for Growth, Sustainability and Equity**." This report can be found at http://media.wix.com/ugd/ddda66_d46304b5437c178e2f092319a6f30364.pdf

I have worked throughout my career to support affordable housing. Zoning and tax policy are key determinants of a market's ability to create, improve and maintain decent and affordable spaces for families and businesses. The proposal contained in Case Number 14-11 will exacerbate the housing affordability problems that we already face here in Washington, DC. Demand for housing in the District of Columbia is higher than at any time within recent memory. Any action to restrict the amount of built space devoted to housing or to restrict the number of units of housing (at a time when many who are seeking housing are singles and couples) is an action that will increase housing prices above their already high levels. Higher housing prices will not only exclude newcomers with modest incomes, but will displace existing residents as well.

Houses in many neighborhoods have transitioned over time from single-family, to rental apartments and rooming houses, back to single-family homes and then to condominiums. Cities and neighborhoods are dynamic. Overly restrictive regulations, particularly those that limit the supply of living space or that increase the cost of providing it, threaten the District's economic viability which depends on people with diverse incomes and skills.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. **14-11**
ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
EXHIBIT NO. **146**
CASE NO. **14-11**
EXHIBIT NO. 146

There are some pop-up developments in my Adams Morgan neighborhood. Some look OK. Some don't. Even the ones that don't look so good would look better if they were surrounded by other pop-ups. There are other ways to deal with the aesthetics of pop-ups than through denying permission to build them. I care about how my neighborhood looks. But it distresses me greatly that, so soon after celebrating the MLK holiday, a concern over the aesthetics of pop-ups would motivate us to restrict the supply of housing and to create additional hardships for low- and moderate-income families who are already suffering due to the high price of housing here.

I have read the testimony of Harriet Tregoning regarding this case and I concur with her in every aspect of her submission. I would only add that the process of modifying buildings to add space or reconfigure the number of dwelling units provides jobs at a variety of skill levels. Once built, these spaces will need to be maintained and occasionally renovated. These jobs are an important source of income and cannot be outsourced.

I respectfully request that the Zoning Commission reject the proposed Text Amendments to restrict additions to rowhouses in R-4 zones and to restrict the conversion of these dwellings into multiple units.

Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Rybeck". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rick" and last name "Rybeck" clearly distinguishable.

Rick Rybeck, Director
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