

SUBMISSION IN OPPOSITION TO CASE 14-11

TO Anthony J Hood, Chairman, Marcy Cohen, Vice-Chairman  
Robert Miller, Michael G Turnbull, Peter G May

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D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING  
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Dear Zoning Commissioners

On behalf of more than 60 D.C. residents who have signed our online petition in opposition to the down zoning of residential neighborhoods in the District of Columbia, we respectfully ask the Commissioners to reject the proposals put forth in case 14-11 to reduce the existing zoning rights of District home owners in R-4 zones

The proposals in 14-11 are crafted explicitly to satisfy the over reaction of some current residents to the inevitable changes that occur in a growing and dynamic urban environment. The proposals in 14-11 give little consideration to the larger population of R-4 residents who are unfazed by these changes or to the many residents who actively welcome them.

The Office of Planning Exhibit 1 shows that 70% of residential housing is in R-1, R-2, R-3 and R-4 zones, while only 30% is dedicated to R-5 apartment zones.

In testimony before the Zoning Commission (page 48) on July 17, 2014, Director Steingasser described the R-4 zone, which makes up only 15% of our residential zoning, as a hybrid zone between single family detached zones R-1, R-2 and R-3 and multi-family apartment R-5 zones. The proposals in 14-11 attempt to shift the R-4 away from this mixed-use state and make it more like the lower density zones which already occupy the majority of residential space in the city.

The proposals in 14-11 suggest home owners can have "special exception" access to options they currently hold "by-right" under existing zoning. That will be small comfort to future home owners who spend additional time and money only to have their requests for special exceptions blocked by their ANC or denied by the BZA.

Rights once surrendered are difficult, if not impossible, to regain.

NEIGHBORS AGAINST DOWNZONING has estimated the potential lost property value to Lanier Heights row house owners at between 30 and 50 million dollars if proponents of down zoning were to succeed in their efforts to change zoning from R-5-B to R-4 in that neighborhood. This estimate is based on lost property value to only 150 row homes. The proposals under case 14-11 would affect more than 35,000 homes and lost property values could easily exceed five billion dollars.

We beg the Commissioners to consider the drastic impact these proposals will impose upon current and future residents of the District of Columbia and reject case 14-11 proposals on that basis.

Sincerely,

*Ronald Baker*

Ronald Baker  
Lanier Heights home owner  
Neighbors Against Downzoning

ZONING COMMISSION  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO. 14-11  
EXHIBIT NO. 154

ZONING COMMISSION  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO. 14-11  
EXHIBIT NO. 154