

Zoning Case 14-11  
January 29, 2015

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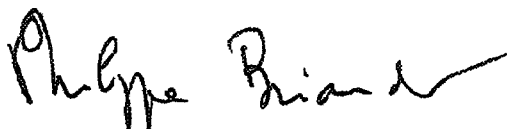
Chairman Hood and Members of the Zoning Commission,

As a homeowner in Bloomingdale, an R-4 neighborhood where home construction began in 1895, I am writing today to express support for the R-4 zoning amendment to lower the by right building height to 35 feet. While this is perhaps not the optimal change that would stop the proliferation of pop ups in Bloomingdale, it is the one available before you now. Just this morning, two houses came on the market in Bloomingdale, both advertised as perfect for condo conversions. It is the rare home in Bloomingdale that is popped up by a homeowner - pop ups are a result of developers' efforts to squeeze 3 bedrooms condos out of narrow rowhomes on lots that are typically 1700 square feet or less. Immediate action must be taken now before it is too late.

While my primary concern is for the aesthetics and preservation of one of our city's valuable historic assets, there is also a very serious problem that is not being addressed. Our home has had sewer backflow problems due to the inadequate sewer lines in this city. Our home has had brown-outs due to the inadequate power available for all of the new construction adding a burden to an antiquated system. Parking is frequently unavailable due to the increase in residents with vehicles. It is even more severe at the moment due to the number of construction projects. Just in the last two weeks, my wife has contacted DDOT about four roll off dumpsters which did not have permits or their permits were expired.

Another serious question is to the structural integrity of 100 year old rowhomes. Can they bear the added loads of multiple floors, with the accompanying plumbing, appliances, people, etc? If a structural engineer approves digging out a basement and adding new footings, does that also guarantee the party walls and the mortar that holds those bricks together can take the added stress? I have attached pictures in Bloomingdale - one of support bars between two rowhouses, one of a house that is bulging in the front face, and another of a recent conversion where the alley side of the house bows out and was stuccoed over. These are issues that are not being addressed by DC or the developers.

Thank you for your attention and implementing this change immediately.



Philippe Briandet  
1727 First Street NW

ZONING COMMISSION  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO. 14-11  
ZONING COMMISSION  
EXHIBIT NO. 183  
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