

Letter of Opposition – ZONING COMMISSION CASE NO 14-11
May 29, 2015

Anthony J Hood, Chairman, Zoning Commission for the District of Columbia

I strongly oppose the adoption of 14-11, I oppose the legislation for many reasons, and the main reason being 14-11 does not accomplish the intended goal. The 35' height will still allow a 3 stories structure which doesn't accomplish the real goal of "Pop Ups".

Personally I think there should be a design review board and all conversions should go through them as each property and neighborhood is unique to itself

I have purchased and renovated many apartment buildings in R-4 zoning that were either a prostitution or drug center or was abandon/condemned for years and now they are nice high end condos. There are a lot of R-4 apartment buildings in neighborhoods such as Trinidad, Woodridge, Brightwood, Petworth, Brookland, etc. that need to be rehabbed, but based on this new law the conversion will not be financially worth since a developer will not be able to add any more units and in order to make viable profit in these low margin areas. The new law will hinder the growth of new reasonable priced homes that is also allowing newer younger professionals to relocate to the Capital. Last few years the DC housing market drastically changed due to additional affordable homes as these new condos in low or run down areas sell much less than condos sold in Columbia Heights, Bloomingdale, or U St corridor, etc. This rule shall only apply to single family row dwelling as that's where most the concerns are raised by the neighbors, not in an apartment/multi-unit district within R-4.

The 3 units by right conversion I would ask for the 10' past a neighboring property and no more than 30% of gross floor area can be demolished shall not be added as it doesn't it's impossible to do a 3 units conversion. Else limit the number of units to 2.

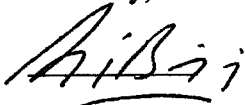
Shouldn't this apply to row dwelling and flats else these new homes couldn't have a legal basement or 2 units.

"If adopted by the Commission, the proposed amendments would reduce the matter-of-right height for R-4 buildings to thirty five feet (35 ft.), except that a height of a forty (40 ft.) would be permitted for new construction of three (3) or more immediately adjoining residential row dwellings built concurrently on separate record lots."

Last if the above rule is implemented there should be some vesting period as thousands of jobs are depended on this downsizing rule and effects many DC residents/families. Giving a vesting period will help these workers find work outside of DC (Virginia or Maryland).

Thanks for taking the time to read and considering my comments

Sincerely,



Sanjay Bajaj
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