

Case No. 14-11

Dear Chairman Hood, Office of Zoning

I am writing to express my strong support for parts of the final proposal to change the zoning regulations to limit pop-up developments in R-4 Districts and more importantly the need for immediate effectiveness to stop further destruction of rowhouse neighborhoods by converting rowhouses to out-of-character condos. These conversions damage neighboring properties, reduce quality of living and decrease property values and investments of neighbors. I urge the Zoning Commission to make the final rule effective immediately upon publication and not delay the effective date.

There are a number of items in section 330.7 of the proposed rule that I support and would like to specifically highlight for its importance in limiting the destructive effects of POP-ups and bump-outs.

- (c) The maximum height of the residential building and any additions thereto shall not exceed 35 feet
- (g) No more than thirty percent (30%) of the gross floor area of the residential building shall be demolished as part of the conversion.
- (h) An addition shall not extend further than ten feet past the furthest rear wall of any principal residential building on an adjacent property. I recommend deleting the second "furthest" to make it clear that any addition shall not extend further than ten feet past the rear wall of any adjacent rowhouse. The language as currently written can be interpreted to mean that an addition could extend 10 feet past the rear wall of the longest adjacent rowhouse. I also recommend adding the ten foot limitation for conversion of a rowhouse into a flat.
- (j) Any addition, including roof structure or penthouse, shall not block or impede the functioning of a chimney or other external vent on an adjacent property required by any municipal code

The following items are not proposed in the rule but should nevertheless be included without delaying the immediate effectiveness of the final rule.

- Matter-of-right conversions of rowhouses should be limited to two dwelling units in order to protect the affordable single family housing stock in R-4 districts. More than two dwelling units should require special exception or a variance.
- In order to stimulate the urgently required increase of solar and renewable energy in the District, it is not sufficient only to prohibit the interference with the operation of an existing solar system on an adjacent property. If neighboring home-owners can demonstrate good solar radiation potential then their consent would be required for a pop-up structure that would remove the potential of adding a solar energy system.
- To protect homes in R-4 districts, the Zoning Commission temporarily should suspend the current regulatory sections that conflict with the proposed rule until the final rule is effective.

Kind regards and thanks for your urgent attention

Caridwen Cherry
Name

137 T St NW Washington DC 20001
Address

[Signature]
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