

Zoning Commission, Office of Zoning
441 4th Street NW Suite 200-S
Washington, DC 20001
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Attn Ms Sharon Schellin, Secretary to the Zoning Commission
Re Support for ZC-14-11 (with revision)

Dear Zoning Commission,
Please accept this letter as testimony in support of the proposed zoning case ZC-14-11 (with revision)

I have been a DC resident for the past 23 years. My husband and I purchased a house 5 years ago in Bloomingdale. I am also an architect and I love living in the District. I am a proponent of urban infill and increased density in the city but I strongly oppose the insensitive new precedent that is being set in my neighborhood and elsewhere in the city.

Most of the recent house sales in Bloomingdale are to developers who are willing and able to pay cash to the sellers. Due to the unusually large lot sizes and increased demand to live in Bloomingdale, many of the recently sold properties are being converted to 3 units per the current zoning code. Developers are maximizing the matter-of-right development and now we are seeing that it isn't working very well. 42 W Street, NW is almost directly across the alley from my backyard. It has undergone a complete pop-up and pop-back, maximizing lot coverage and height. The result is a new structure that destroys the continuous roof line of W Street and dominates the alley in a very unfriendly way. The new addition is at least twice the length of the original house and is built to the side lot lines so there are no windows except for on the front and rear facades. It has blocked light and air from both of its adjacent neighbors and has generated a lot of concern among the neighbors.

Aside from changing the pattern and character of the neighborhood, I believe conversion developments such as 42 W Street, NW are in conflict with the fundamental intent of the Comprehensive Plan. Single family homes are being depleted in a city already exploding with apartments and micro-units. I support the majority of the proposed regulations but I believe conversions beyond two-family dwellings should be by special exception only.

67 V Street is another example of a proposed pop-up and back conversion to 3 units. If constructed as designed, it will destroy the roof line, remove the front porch from a street defined by front porches and will severely affect the quality of life for the adjacent neighbors. The developer has applied for the building permit and it has been mostly approved. Sadly, zoning comments have made the proposal even worse. The first permit submission had a 5' nonconforming court along the side of the property. While non-conforming, at least it gave some relief to the neighbor and allowed for windows on a side wall. In response to the zoning comments however, the developer is now proposing a much smaller set-back with a solid roof covering so it is no longer considered a court. Now there will be even less light and air. I very much support the new section 400.23 directly addressing quality of life.

I appreciate the effort and importance the Zoning Commission has given to this matter. Thank you very much.

Regards,

Megan Mitchell
37 V Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 14-11
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EXHIBIT NO. 300
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