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June 1, 2015

Zoning Commission
District of Columbia

**Regarding Zoning Commission Case No. 14-11
R-4 Text Amendments**

We request that the ZC reinstate and adopt Recommendation 5 from the Office of Planning Report of June 24, 2014. By eliminating matter-of-right conversions, the Zoning Commission can provide protection for remaining single family homes in our neighborhood, Mount Pleasant, and R-4 zones generally as directed by the Comprehensive Plan

It is known that when two competing uses are allowed, in this case both single family/flat use and multi-unit, the use that provides the most profit will win out over the use that provides less profit. Continuing to allow these multi-family conversions throughout R-4 districts will fuel the developer-driven trend to divide DC's character-defining rowhouse neighborhoods into luxury condo neighborhoods. This is not a trend driven by data – Office of Planning clearly provided data showing that the small percentage of our city lands designated R-4 should be preserved as larger 3 and 4 bedroom family housing– or by the residents of these districts who have organized and testified repeatedly in favor of preserving our existing housing stock - or by the Comprehensive Plan put in place to guide your work that mandates the preservation of our diverse housing stock

What justification do you provide for ignoring the Comprehensive Plan in favor of your latest proposal? Affordable housing? Of the nearly 200 houses in our historic rowhouse neighborhood that are large enough to convert, 75% would not reach the threshold to trigger any Inclusionary Zoning. I am sure the developers' lawyers are already working on how to avoid the IZ for the other 25%.

Potentially, these are 200 houses in Mt. Pleasant that developers will outbid prospective homeowners for, preserve as little historic or character-defining material as allowed by law, cut corners on construction materials and methods in order to maximize profits, as well as build up and out as much as allowed

Allowing this construction frenzy to continue may be good for the District's tax coffers in the short term, but development unchecked by meaningful planning or code enforcement is not good for the city's future. Catering to developers and flooding the city with 30 year-olds in one bedroom condos leaves the District vulnerable to another wave of flight out of the city when those same folks want to raise their kids here and are left with fewer, even more expensive housing options for growing families.

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We urge the Zoning Commission to embrace its responsibility to implement the Comprehensive Plan and repeal the matter-of-right conversion provision that is now subject to widespread misuse and abuse. This action is necessary to protect remaining single- and two-family houses in Mount Pleasant and other R-4 neighborhoods. We call on the Commission to approve this change without further delay and to ensure that it take effect immediately

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K. Callahan', with a stylized, flowing script.

**Kelly Callahan
Steven Bradley
1857 Park Rd. NW
WDC 20010**