

June 1, 2015

Sharon Schellin,  
Secretary to the Zoning Commission  
Office of Zoning  
441 4th Street, N.W , Suite 200-S  
Washington, D C 20001

RECEIVED  
D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING  
2015 JUN -1 PM 2:59

Dear Ms Schellin

My name is Rashida Brown and I am the Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for the 1A10 Single Member District. I am writing in response to the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for Zoning Commission Case No 14-11 - Text Amendments to Chapters 1, 3, 4, 26, and 31, Maximum Height and Minimum Lot Dimension Requirements and Use Permissions in the R-4 District – or the "Pop-Up" Regulations published on Friday, May 1, 2015, in the D C Register

I support the Office of Planning's proposal and Zoning Commission's text amendments to the District's R-4 zoning regulations. I believe these changes will restore the original intent of the R-4 language and help control reductions in existing family-sized dwellings. It provides a necessary and appropriate balance that would allow property owners to continue developing mezzanines, rooftops, basements, porches and an additional story while addressing issues with height and density related to conversions in R4 zones.

On October 8, 2014, the ANC1A unanimously passed a resolution in support of the Office of Planning's Text Amendments to regulations related to R-4 zones and proposed additional changes for the Commission's consideration. I stand in unison with my community and fellow ANC1A commissioners in urging you to address this issue and move forward with these text amendments.

As you are aware, ANC1A is located in an R-4 zoned district. For years, I have been engaged in ongoing conversations with community members about the various types of development we see in our neighborhood today. We recognize quality development that brings meaning to our community and can identify those that have become detrimental. My neighbors have been very vocal about the rapid growth of single family row house conversions into multi-unit buildings and residential development involving poorly constructed "pop-ups" and "pop-outs." Their major concerns mostly involve issues with the height and density related to *particular* projects that add to existing single family structures throughout the Ward and abutting their properties.

We agree that there are projects that provide quality enhancements and add value to properties. But there are others that are designed in a way that pulls away from the natural character and unique features of traditional neighborhood row homes. This inconsistency jeopardizes the integrity of our neighborhoods.

ZONING COMMISSION  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO. 14-11  
EXHIBIT NO. 328  
ZONING COMMISSION  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO. 14-11  
EXHIBIT NO. 328

I have provided pictures attached to my testimony for the record, sharing an example of such development. Two in particular are built on my block. The developers of these projects live outside of the District and did not consider the potential impact on the community. The structures include massive additions that have affected residents' air, light and quality of life. Once the existing structure of a neighborhood row home has been gutted out and converted into a multi-unit dwelling, it is impossible to gain it back. What was once a three bedroom row house with a basement, is now a four level multi-unit building.

Some would argue that creating multiple units within these structures would provide opportunities for affordable housing in the District. But these units are typically priced at a rate that is comparable with today's market and are unaffordable to the average individual living with a modest income. Housing prices are rising much faster than household incomes. As young people grow older and seek to start a family, they often choose to live outside of the District to obtain greater space in an area they can afford. Single family dwellings in affordable neighborhoods help families make a sound investment. Park View, the neighborhood that I have lived in for seven years, is known for its affordability and attracts many families who seek housing. I would like to see this be preserved.

Family investment is critical to our neighborhoods. It ensures long-term sustainability, maximizes our chance to have long-term residents and minimizes transition and constant turnover. We must have better policies in place that support families' ability to afford to live here and make it easier for them to invest in the District. The city could work with the community to identify appropriate venues for a wide variety of affordable housing options. But in the meantime, I am urging you to move forward with the proposed text amendments to the R-4 regulations released by the Zoning Commission.

Thank you

*Raashida Brown*

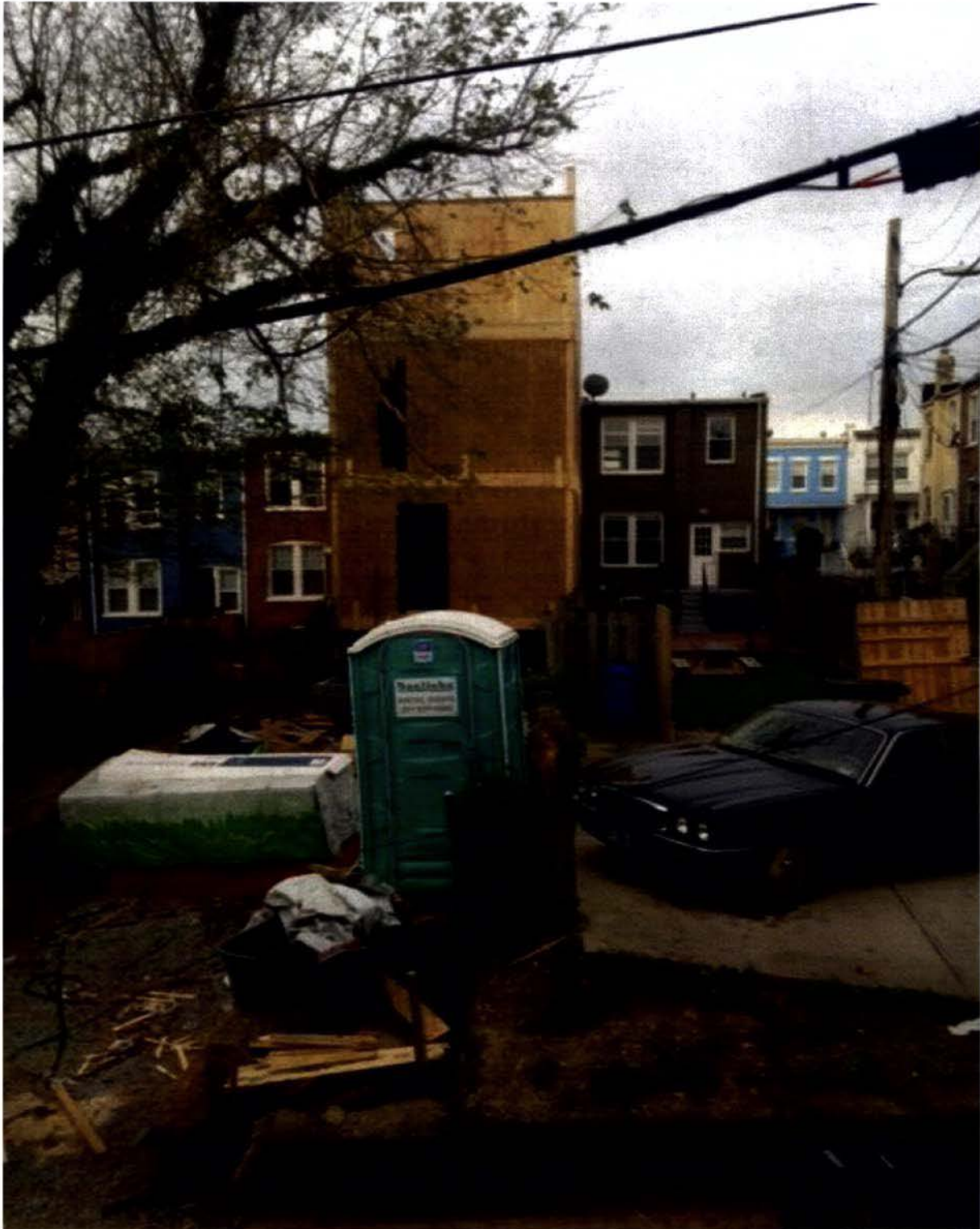


Columbia Road & Warder St. NW



3015 Warder St. NW





3015 Warder St. NW