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2015 MAY 11 PM 1:31



C-2-A Penthouse on top of pop-up

Zoning Commission
Case 14-13: Rooftop Penthouses

May 11, 2015

Chairman Hood and Commissioners,

My name is Betsy McDaniel and I am a resident/homeowner in the Bloomingdale neighborhood in Ward 5. Bloomingdale is a predominately R-4 rowhouse neighborhood, with small pockets zoned C-2-A comprising rowhouses and a few commercial buildings which abut rowhouses. These comments are to follow up on the testimony I offered at the April 30 hearing. To the Commissioners who questioned the panel about their opposition to this case, I would like to say that for me, as a concerned citizen with limited time to deal with all of the issues that seem to arise for DC homeowners, it would be impossible for me to comment on all elements of this case. In fact, it is even impossible to state definitively that I support or oppose the plan when there are so many options presented. Therefore, I would like to present my "asks".

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO. _____

EXHIBIT NO. 191

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.14-13
EXHIBIT NO.101



R-4 Penthouse on top of a pop-up

Penthouses in R-4 and C-2-A should be by **special exception only**, and then **limited to 10 feet**. I would like to align myself with the testimony by Mr. Hargrove on the impact of the scale of rooftop structures on shorter buildings. As you can see from my pictures, penthouses in these two zones, often appear as an additional floor. For penthouses where a FAR calculation is made, the penthouse should be included in the calculation. C-2-A buildings in residential neighborhoods are unlikely to install elevators, and those cases can be dealt with by special exception.

Any penthouses allowed in R-4 and C-2-A should be **set back** from all walls/property lines and should **"harmonize"** with the main structure in architectural, character, material, and color".

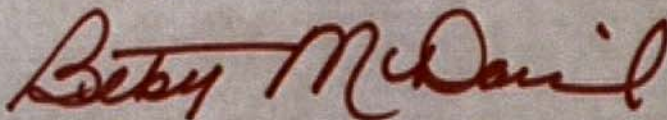
Penthouses, when allowed by matter of right or by special exception, should **not** be used for habitable space in R-4 or C-2-A.

Any penthouses in R-4 and C-2-A should be limited in **area**. Current provisions that limit the penthouse area to 1/3 the area of the roof below are too generous for larger buildings.

Any penthouses in R-4 and C-2-A should be **vertical**. Any deviation from vertical should include a regulation that requires the allowed area to be measured from the **largest area of the penthouse**, wherever that is on the structure. (As you may be able to see in the first picture, the penthouse has sloping walls on two sides of the structure.)

While many have objected to the entire 14-13 on the basis that it needs further consideration, another ask would be to consider changes just for zones of 50 feet or less. If the Zoning Commission determines to delay action on 14-13, I would ask that you include penthouse changes in Case 14-11 proposal for R-4 zoning.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter. Our city is known and loved for its rowhouse districts, and the proliferation of penthouses is not very different from billboards and other visual clutter that blight many cities. Please do not encourage this penthouse palooza and restrict the addition of penthouses for extraordinary circumstances.



Betsy McDaniel
202-656-1727



C-2-A Penthouses on North Capitol - Ward 5
Gateway to our Nation's Capitol



My husband, and our son, are working and travelling in China, but have sent me this picture of a penthouse in Shanghai as an expression of support of my testimony.