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TO Zoning Commission

SUBJECT Zoning Case No 14-13

I am writing in strong opposition to the Office of Planning's proposal to use a small change in the Height of Buildings Act (HBA) to create what can only now be called the **Hats-on-Buildings Act**.

The Office of Planning's unpopular proposals to raise heights around the city were resoundingly rejected by the public, Council, NCPC and Congress. Now, that same agency has presented a proposal that would increase the height of many buildings with residential, commercial and entertainment structures 20 feet tall, requiring only minimal setbacks and permitting substantial roof coverage. Developers have joined OP's chorus that this is an urgent matter, seeking to reap a benefit they never imagined would be possible.

This proposed text amendment feeds public cynicism that planning in DC is largely driven by an addiction to greater density and a desire to please developers, with little respect for the Comprehensive Plan. OP and the Zoning Commission will be in violation of the public trust if they fail to conduct a thorough analysis of its impact on older building stock, an objective study of how it might create incentives for tear downs or how it would affect different corridors in different parts of the city.

Rejection of this opportunistic proposal would help to restore some sense of confidence that the Zoning Commission is not a rubber stamp of the Office of Planning but insists on adherence to the Comprehensive Plan, requires thorough analysis of potential unintended consequences and refuses to dismiss an open public process that values the wisdom and will of the public.

Meg Maguire

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 14-13
EXHIBIT NO. 28
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