

District of Columbia Zoning Commission
Public Hearing, March 21, 2016, Room 220 South at One Judiciary Square
Case No. 15-09; Residents of Lanier Heights & ANC 1C
Testimony of Nancy Huvendick, 1698 Lanier Place, NW

My name is Nancy Huvendick, I live at 1698 Lanier Place, NW. Thank you for the opportunity to speak this evening.

I urge the commission to approve the change to R-4 zoning in Lanier Heights as a sensible way to manage increased density while supporting the diversity and livability of the neighborhood - diversity and livability which has been a major factor in spurred positive growth.

I am a thirty-year resident of Lanier Heights and have been pleased by the increased residential and commercial density we have seen over those years. The row houses are crucial to preserving this increasing vitality because they:

- help preserve green space;
- foster greater diversity;
- support a strong base of families with children;
- make sustainable use of the District's public school investment.

Row Houses Help Preserve Green Space

Small row houses yards provide critical green space beyond the street trees on the public sidewalks. Trees and shrubs in these yards cut down on heat-island effects and soak up storm water. They help sustain wildlife by extending the habitat area of nearby Rock Creek Park.

Trees need light and air but so do people. Pop-backs and pop-ups nearly cover their lots to maximize profit. They greatly diminish green space by cutting out sunlight and reducing air circulation to all residents. It is easy to see the extent of this degradation in the Google Earth shot attached on page three where very little green space is visible along the alley behind Ontario Place -- except where row houses remain.

Viable Row House Communities Support Diversity

By holding onto a diversity in housing, we can support a vital community in the future that includes homeowners and renters of all ages and walks of life. The row houses provide a critical supply of prime housing. Most have several bedrooms, small yards and parking on site. They also add to density because most also have basement apartments. With front porches and back yards they foster a community of people who know one-another and are committed long-term to the neighborhood.

Row Houses Support Households with Children

The row houses can offer great housing for people with children. This encourages a stable community of families that at best creates a foundation of mutual support and community that is particular important to the parental leadership at local schools and hence to their success.

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While I strongly support efforts to increase new two and three bedroom apartments in our new multi-family buildings and I certainly support provisions for low income family housing, the most direct way to ensure a stable, viable community that can nurture children is to preserve the row houses.

Family Housing Utilizes Public School Investment

With \$32 million spent on HD Cooke in 2009 and more than \$62 million planned for Marie Reed next year, the city will have invested close to a hundred million dollars on the two public schools within one-half mile of this area. Besides education for children, these buildings provide open space, athletic space and assembly space for the entire neighborhood.

Elementary schools within 3/4 mile of Ontario & Lanier	Distance from Intersection of Lanier Pl. and Ontario Road	Modernization Year	Capacity	Public Expenditure
HD Cooke Elementary	0.20 miles	2009	440	\$32,500,000
Marie Reed Elementary	0.52 miles	2017	486	\$62,000,000
				\$94,500,000

Data from DCPS, DGS.

Without the row houses and larger apartments this public infrastructure will be used primarily by families outside of the walkable neighborhood, many of whom will have to drive young children to school. If we believe that sustainable communities include walkable elementary schools, helping to preserve row houses adds immeasurably to that end.

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***Google Earth photo., April 2015 Showing tree cover across row house backyards
between Ontario Place and Lanier Place N.W.***

