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Subject: Zoning Case 23-25
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Dear Commissioners,

Zoning Case 23-25 is to be decided as a Rule Making Setdown with no chance for any meaningful input from our Chevy Chase community. It has been shown by a community wide survey that the majority of the residents of Chevy Chase DC are opposed to any upzoning which will allow unfettered development along the corridor from Livingston Street to the Circle and which will destroy the park designated by the city as the Civic Core (aka The Chevy Chase Commons). Given that upzoning will destroy the character of our neighborhood this case should have been a Contested Hearing.

The commissioners have said that zoning has nothing to do with development. However it should be clear that without upzoning there can be no development. The two are implicitly connected.

The city proposes to turn the public park which includes our Library, our Community Center, a small playground and sports court as well as heritage trees, benches and green space over to private developers. In order to do this the city must declare the land surplus, that is, of no

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
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EXHIBIT NO.323

public use. The Library is one of the most used in the city; the Community Center has programs for seniors, teens and children of all ages. It has a thriving community playgroup. There is a citywide summer camp. AARP uses the Community Center in the spring to help file taxes for residents and the line is out the door. This fall Chevy Chase Day welcomed more than 1000 visitors to our Commons. To declare this property surplus is ludicrous.

Once the Commons is upzoned the proposal is to build 100 to 200 apartments on this small parcel of land and combine the Library and Community Center in the bottom. The public area will necessarily be reduced by approximately one half. Also the small parking lot which exists today will be gone and underground parking is very expensive. Children come from all over the city now for the first class ballet and fencing classes. Seniors and disabled persons who use cars because public transportation is spotty and is being reduced will have no way to get to the public facilities. The city says that green space is a vital for the city but this upzoning and development would destroy the only green space in Chevy Chase DC.

While it is true that there is a need for affordable housing in DC Chevy Chase is not lacking in affordable housing. Ward 3 has more rent controlled apartments than any other Ward save one. These Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) apartments are occupied by our workforce families (teachers, firemen, mid-level

government workers). NOAH housing would disappear as landlords empty these apartments and raise the rents as has happened in other parts of DC. Ward 3 also has more apartments filled with voucher residents than any other Ward save one.

If the public land at the Commons were to be privatized by developers as few as 15% and at most 30% would be designated "affordable". The rest would be luxury apartments. Chevy Chase does not need more luxury housing. Far from bringing diversity to the Chevy Chase corridor workforce and minority residents would be displaced as has happened throughout DC. Upzoned land would be turned into private apartments which would benefit the developers and no one else.

Upzoning the Connecticut Ave Corridor would be disastrous for local business and would destroy the welcoming village atmosphere. With the exception of Safeway, CVS and Starbucks the business are family owned and are all well patronized. We have a mix of family restaurants, dry cleaners, shoe repair shops, barbers and salons and even fish monger. Soon we will welcome a family owned Thai restaurant. Upzoning will force the displacement of these businesses as it has in other places in DC. They will no longer be able to afford the rents in the taller buildings and we will be inundated by chain stores and restaurants. Chevy Chase does not need to become another Bethesda in order to thrive. It is thriving. The percentage of occupied buildings far outpace that of other sections of the city where vacancy

is rampant.

Finally in its race to increase density and the tax base the city has done no feasibility studies. Will our ancient infrastructure support the added population? Our local schools are vastly overcrowded while schools in other parts of the city are under populated. What will be done to serve incoming students? This needs to be addressed and corrected before the commission upzones and the city hands the neighborhood over to developers.

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