
Written Testimony for Case No.24-16, Grace Reformed Church

From Kathleen McDonough <kmcdonough7340@yahoo.com>

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To DCOZ - ZC Submissions (DCOZ) <DCOZ-ZCSubmissions@dc.gov>

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Dear Members of the DC Zoning Commission,

As residents of the city of Washington, DC, as well as citizens of the United States of America, we wish to go on record as strongly opposed to any rezoning of Grace Reformed Church for commercial use.

It is unthinkable that this building, the home church of President Theodore Roosevelt during his presidency, is not incontrovertibly recognized for both its historic and architectural significance and therefore worthy of preservation. Grace Reformed Church, constructed in 1902, is a rare and remarkably intact example of Romanesque Revival ecclesiastical architecture. Designed by noted architect Paul J. Pelz—best known as co-designer of the Library of Congress—the church features distinctive stone masonry, original stained-glass windows and finely crafted wood interiors. Its historic significance is equally intact, with the pew where President Roosevelt regularly prayed and pondered weighty matters of leadership and public service still preserved. In spite of the incessant demands of his office, this president maintained a close relationship with the church's leadership and valued its place in civic life.

It is incumbent upon all of us to make sure this living connection to one of America's most influential presidents is preserved. Please do not allow Grace Reformed Church to be gutted by commercial development, resulting in the destruction of this building's historic character and unique ties to Theodore Roosevelt's presidency.

We respectfully urge the Commission to honor the history, the architecture and the national significance of Grace Reformed Church and vote "no" on commercial rezoning.

Sincerely,
Kathleen McDonough and Jason Baum
Wesley Heights, Washington, DC