
Letter in Support of ZC Case No. 25-06

From Samuel Kenney <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>

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

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Members of the Zoning Commission,

To the District of Columbia Zoning Commission:

I strongly support the proposed text amendment in ZC-25-06. Allowing more homes on alley lots is a practical way to add naturally affordable, small-scale housing in existing neighborhoods. Places like Snows Court NW show that well-designed alley homes can fit context, improve safety through active use, and add gentle density without large public subsidy.

DC is in a housing shortage that raises prices and displaces residents. There is no single policy that fits every block, so DC should use an all-tools approach. Alley homes are one of those tools. To maximize housing creation while maintaining good design and operations, I respectfully urge the Commission to:

Eliminate parking mandates for alley homes. Parking minimums add cost, consume limited space on small lots, and often are infeasible. Removing this requirement will make more projects pencil and keep home prices lower.

Align unit limits on alley lots with the underlying zones. In rowhouse zones that typically allow two units per building, alley lots should be allowed the same. In apartment and mixed-use zones, allow the number of homes consistent with the zone rather than capping at two. Where thresholds are met, additional homes would trigger Inclusionary Zoning and yield income-restricted units.

Align height limits for alley homes with the underlying zones. Allowing height consistent with each zone, paired with the unit alignment above, will enable more feasible, code-compliant designs and more homes.

I am invested in solutions that expand housing options. Gentle density like alley homes adds modest, lower-cost homes that broaden opportunity, support local businesses, and strengthen neighborhood vitality. This is not a substitute for other strategies; it is a necessary complement that can deliver results quickly with minimal public expense.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 25-06
EXHIBIT NO. 110

Thank you for advancing ZC-25-06 and for considering these improvements. Together, we can unlock the potential of alley homes to build a more inclusive, vibrant, and affordable DC.

Sincerely,

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Washington, DC resident

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