



## ANC 4D 2025-2026

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Nov. 22, 2025

Zoning Commission  
441 4th Street NW  
Suite 200-S  
Washington, DC 20001

**RE: Z.C. Case No. 25-06 — Alley Lots Text Amendment — Support with Enhancements**

Dear Chairperson and Members of the Commission,

We write to support the Office of Planning's (OP) proposed text amendment to modernize regulations for alley lots and to respectfully urge the Commission to adopt targeted improvements so these homes can actually be built at meaningful scale. We represent ANC 4D, which covers Brightwood Park and Petworth. According to the OP setdown report, **ANC 4D has an estimated 64 alley lots, 46 of which are 450 square feet or smaller.** Overall, ANC 4D has the eighth-most alley lots in the District (tied with ANC 1B).

Alley homes are a **gentle, neighborhood-scale** way to add the starter homes and small apartments DC is missing. OP estimates there are **about 1,900 alley lots** distributed citywide—many in high-opportunity, transit-rich neighborhoods. Activating these underused lots will add more attainable homes, improve alley safety through regular use, and strengthen neighborhood character without changing the look and feel of street-facing blocks.

**We urge the Commission to strengthen the setdown text by:**

1. **Allowing parking flexibility for alley homes.** The Office of Planning estimates that about a third of alley lots, and over 40% of vacant lots, are smaller than 450 square feet. These lots are perfect for the sort of small, starter homes that DC currently lacks, but they may not ever be built because of expensive parking mandates. DC should give homebuilders the flexibility to determine parking based on their specific site and needs, rather than forcing arbitrary mandates that waste space and increase costs for renters.

2. **Aligning unit limits with the underlying zone.** Allow the same number of homes by right on alley lots as on street-facing lots in the same zone. This removes unnecessary case-by-case hurdles, reduces costs and delays, and in larger projects can trigger Inclusionary Zoning to deliver income-restricted, affordable homes.
  
3. **Aligning height limits with the underlying zone.** Where the zone anticipates apartment-scale buildings (RA/MU), alley homes should be allowed compatible height so that additional homes are feasible. This change, in combination with aligning unit limits with the underlying zone, will result in the creation of more income-restricted, affordable homes.

We respectfully ask the Commission to adopt OP's proposal with the refinements above. These three changes are **narrow, practical, and pro-housing**. They remove outdated and unnecessary barriers that suppress production and raise costs. Doing so will help DC meet its housing goals, broaden affordability, and welcome more neighbors into walkable communities across all eight wards.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to the District.

Sincerely,



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Commissioner Jenn Kauffman  
Chair, ANC 4D

**CC:** Office of Planning; Councilmembers