

Dear Chairman Hood and Members of the Zoning Commission:

I am writing in **support** of the proposed map and text amendments for Cleveland Park and Woodley Park.

My wife and I rent an apartment in Cleveland Park with our 17-month-old son. We pay \$2,181 per month for a little over 820 square feet in a rent-stabilized building, Quebec House. I've lived in Quebec House for twenty years, and my wife has lived here for the past ten. We would like to remain in this neighborhood long term, ideally as homeowners.

The proposed zoning amendments offer a real opportunity to expand the housing supply, including creating affordable ownership options. Cleveland Park and Woodley Park are ideally suited for this growth: Connecticut Avenue is a major corridor with two Metrorail stations, and building more homes where people already dine, shop, and work is simply good planning.

These changes would also strengthen the neighborhood's economic foundation—bringing more customers to support beloved local businesses, expanding opportunities for commercial ventures through increased FAR, and lifting the arbitrary cap on restaurants in Cleveland Park.

When I hear calls to “preserve neighborhood character,” I think of the parts of the neighborhood that could be so much more. Every day our family experiences both the charm and the missed opportunities along the corridor. A clear example is the former Walgreens, a one-story building that has sat empty for five years. It has a historic façade tied to the Yenching Palace site and its role in the Cuban Missile Crisis, yet it now feels surreal: visitors who pause to read the plaques are met with a prerecorded message warning them to leave or the police will be notified. Next door, our son waves to the firefighters at the neighborhood fire station—a small, joyful interaction in an otherwise hollow corner.

Thoughtful mixed-use development, guided by step-backs and design standards, could fill gaps like these with new homes, active storefronts, and a renewed sense of place. It would restore vibrancy while preserving the human-scale, family-friendly character we value. More housing means more neighbors, which means fewer empty storefronts in both Cleveland Park and Woodley Park.

The proposed amendments would bring additional housing, retail, and services within walking distance of our home. For families like ours, this means more accessible groceries, pharmacies, and daily amenities—and a better chance of finding a condo we can afford.

I urge the Zoning Commission to approve the proposed text and map amendments so that families like mine can remain in Cleveland Park and Woodley Park, benefiting both from the neighborhood's longstanding charm and from the expanded housing opportunities it urgently needs.

Thank you,  
Beau Finley