
Writing in response to tthe OP Supplemental Report

From Karen Lightfoot <karenlynnlightfoot@gmail.com>

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

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Dear Chairman Hood and Members of the D.C. Zoning Commission,

I have lived in Cleveland Park for over 25 years, and I appreciate the Zoning Commission's (ZC) decision to reopen Case 25-09 in light of the many questions raised during the December 1 hearing. I am writing in response to the Office of Planning's (OP) Supplemental Report on this case to address several important concerns.

At the earlier hearing, the Zoning Commission asked why front setbacks were not included and suggested that the OP add language clarifying that additions and new construction should be subject to review by the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB). In its Supplemental Report, however, the OP deemed this suggestion "inappropriate." I find this puzzling. Setbacks are a crucial planning tool: the ZC uses them to ensure that new buildings do not overpower adjacent structures, while the HPRB relies on them to guide design modifications that make new construction compatible and clearly secondary to existing historic buildings.

The Zoning Commission should take steps to ensure that development standards explicitly recognize the need for gradual transitions between low- and moderate-density areas and that this principle is formally incorporated into zoning language.

Additionally, I believe there are other zoning designations more suitable for Cleveland Park's commercial corridor—ones that align more closely with the Comprehensive Plan. The ZC should carefully consider the area's contributing structures, the history of the commercial strip, and the impact that sharp height differentials could have on Cleveland Park's distinctive character. Please, pursue smart preservation that honors this historic neighborhood.

Finally, I want to express concern that nothing in OP's materials provides assurance that affordable housing will actually be realized in Cleveland Park—something I fully support. If additional density is permitted, it should be accompanied by a corresponding increase in the affordable housing requirement.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Karen Lightfoot

2904 Ordway Street, NW