

Testimony by Peter Hartmann
In Support of ZC No. 04-33G: Making IZ truly affordable
April 14, 2016

Dear Chairman Hood & members of the Zoning Commission:

My name is Peter Hartmann. I was born in DC in 1992 and have lived here for almost all of my 23 years. As a lifelong District resident, an employee of my family's small local business, Open Studio DC art studios In Ivy City, and a volunteer for Jews United for Justice's Affordable Housing Campaign, I support option 1B for DC residents who have been displaced or are at risk of being displaced.

In the last 10 years, I've watched as the city's architectural and cultural landscape changes drastically. As it gains many new, unaffordable luxury condos, it loses so many longtime residents and cherished cultural institutions that once made up DC.

We must look at the Mission Apartments at 1350 R St NW, a building that use to serve as a homeless shelter, but is now a luxury condo with 1 bedroom apartments priced at about \$2,000 a month. They even kept the large neon sign from the former homeless shelter, with the words "Come Unto Me," which now have a whole new meaning. We must also look at the development happening right near Union Arts, in Ivy City, with the new Hecht Warehouse luxury apartments. With one bedroom apartments priced at around \$1,700 and 2 bedroom apartments priced at \$2,300, will any native Washingtonians from the real Ivy City benefit from these new housing options?

In a booming real estate market like this, private land owners alone cannot be relied on to provide affordable housing. It is up to you, the Zoning Commission, to make Inclusionary Zoning units available to households at the 60% AMI level, in order to slow down the rate of displacement of DC residents. This is crucial in order to maintain some small part of the character and soul of the DC. So many Native Washingtonians have either relocated or been displaced to "Ward 9" in PG county, to make room for newcomers. What will our city become when we lose all of the people who know and love it so deeply?

We need you, the Zoning Commission, to be the champions of a housing policy that will allow long-time residents to stay in the District; a housing policy that allows us to continue celebrating and building upon the rich and unique cultural history of the District, and not one that continues to erase and displace the communities and culture of longtime, mostly Black, District residents. What is a city if not the collective culture and progress of the people who are from here and who have been here for generations? Much of what was DC, has been pushed out. This kind of city where people of all levels of income can live together affordably will disappear if you do not act.

Thank you for your time.

Peter Hartmann

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District of Columbia
CASE NO. 04-33G
EXHIBIT NO. 198
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