

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: kwkeith@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 12:44 PM
To: DCOZ - ZC Submissions (DCOZ)
Cc: mireilleluc@aol.com
Subject: Comments on 19-21

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These comments are from Kenton W. Keith and Mireille Luc-Keith, 1714 Lanier Place, NW, Washington DC 20009. Phone 202 667-8778 (landline) or 202 468-8088 (cell). Email: kwkeith@aol.com and/or mireilleluc@aol.com.

We write to express deep concern at the continuing threat to preservation of the architectural nature of our townhouse neighborhood, the most recent example of which is an effort to establish loopholes in current regulations that could thwart the expressed will of current residents. We have been homeowners here for 23 years. In that time we have seen the neighborhood evolve from one that was not friendly to families to one that is now characterized by the presence of children of all ages, a pet-friendly atmosphere, and a healthy diversity. All of this has been buttressed by a respect for our historically important row-house. Before regulatory protection was established, we saw the threat materialize in the form of two pop-up multi-unit structures on Lanier Place between Ontario and Quarry.

Recently, the neighbors at 1716 Lanier Place informed us that they are in the process of selling their home to a developer. They said they had asked for assurances that the home would be sold to a single family, but acknowledged that the developer in question refused to make such a commitment. The threat to our neighborhood well-being is real.

We urge the Zoning Commission to delay approving any changes to the rules that protect architectural elements and solar energy systems and direct the Office of Planning to undertake additional research. Many years were spent developing rowhouse protections under 14-11. They are far too important to cast aside by adopting vague special exception standards. Many Zoning Commission members have already expressed concerns about these rules in earlier hearings. It's worth the time and effort to pause and do more homework.

We support extending the protection of solar energy systems to R neighborhoods so that homeowners can elect to participate in Sustainable DC efforts.

We support allowing rooftop architectural elements to undergo ordinary repairs and/or replacement as long as the replacements are visually indistinguishable from the original elements.

We oppose proposed OP language that will allow construction to evade the ban on destroying architectural elements in all cases.

We oppose removing U-320.2 (i), (j) and (k) protections for adjoining landowners against the adverse effects of converting a residential building to an apartment building.

The Office of Planning should be instructed to do more research to come up with clearer and genuinely effective special exception review standards, particularly regarding solar energy systems.

We oppose rules that would put RF zone rowhouse solar energy systems at risk under special exception language that is vague and imprecise. Any proposed regulatory language that allows construction to interfere with adjacent solar production should include a defined limit or else Sustainable DC Goals will be put at risk.

Sincerely,

Kenton W. Keith
Mireille G. Luc-Keith